

From: Gabriel Kahn
Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2020 1:59 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Cc: [emails redacted]; Superintendent
Subject: [EXTERNAL] jews demand we include Arab American studies in ESMC

Hello,

I am emailing you to voice my support for the ESMC, including Arab American Studies because it doesn't have to have happened 100 years ago to be "history". Islamophobia and Xenophobia are undoubtedly part of our shared American history. In fact, a modern and informed understanding of how these forces affect our current moment is one of the most essential things an ethnic studies curriculum could provide.

Furthermore, a balanced study of the Israel-Palestinian conflict is non-negotiable to an ethnic studies curriculum. As a Jew, I am told that it is antisemitic to criticize Israel. However, it is the very root of my Jewish identity that requires of me to speak up for and defend the human rights of Palestinians. What is currently happening in the West Bank is the allocation of democratic rights on the basis of race. That is the textbook definition of an apartheid state. To call it anything else, or to ignore it as a central geopolitical struggle over the past half century, is to leave the field of social science and enter the arena of politics. Alongside an important conversation about America's history of antisemitism, any ethnic studies curriculum must also discuss Israel's human rights violations (and the US role in perpetuating them). If we are okay with Otherwise, I fear this project will be doomed before it begins.

I trust you all to do the right thing. Forego politics in favor of pedagogy. Create a critical ethnic studies curriculum must offer a history in which ALL Californian students can place themselves, and see their own truths reflected. That MUST include Arab Americans.

Best regards and hopefully,
Gabriel Kahn