

**From:** Yahya Josh Cadji

**Sent:** Sunday, August 9, 2020 1:29 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Cc:** Superintendent; [emails redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment in SUPPORT of Arab American Studies in ESMC

Hello Tony Thurmond and Linda Darling-Hammond,

My name is Yahya Cadji, and I am an Arab Jew who teaches World History at McClymonds High School in Oakland, CA. It is critical that Arab American studies is RE-INSTATED in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum and the ORIGINAL WRITERS are RECONVENED to determine the new draft of the ESMC. Our Arab and Muslim youth, which is a growing population in California, need curriculum that represent their histories of struggle, while helping them build bonds and bridges with other student groups, including African American, Native American, LatinX, Asian American and white students. It is a shame that Arab youth and their peers do not have access to this in their schools, which leads to lack of understanding and empathy, as well as racism, both within the classroom and broader society.

Please do not cave to the pressure of outside interest groups that are seeking to remove Arab American studies, despite not being Ethnic Studies writers or curriculum developers themselves. Please trust the experts, including the Association for Asian American Studies, who agree that Arab American Studies belongs in the ESMC under that discipline. Please do not water down the curriculum, since the original Ethnic Studies writers used a specific racial justice lens when developing this curriculum. Please make sure Arab American Studies, along with Pacific Islander Studies, is central to the curriculum that all of our students so desperately need right now, especially in the midst of so much racial divisiveness and the popular movements against it.

Please re-instate Arab American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum now!

Thank you.

Yahya Cadji

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