

To the Instruction Quality Commission (IQC),

As a student, I was lucky enough to receive a high school education that included Arab American experiences. This was central to understanding the influence of Arab Americans in the United States and unpacking the oppression and prejudice faced not only by Arab American community but also by countless other marginalized groups. I want to call on the IQC to include Arab American Studies in the revised CA Model Ethnic Studies Curriculum and demand that revisions that affect Arab American studies be made in collaboration with Arab American scholars and Ethnic Studies practitioners.

As a Jew, it has been disheartening to see Zionist groups discredit Arab American Studies with false claims of anti-semitism. Our historic marginalization makes it even more clear to understand the importance of education and visibility. Arab American Studies strengthens the Ethnic Studies Curriculum for all students, including Jewish students, not only by contextualizing their history in the US but also by exploring marginalized experiences and linking anti-colonial struggles. Exclusion does not bring us closer to understanding.

Lastly, it make sense geographically and categorically to include Arab American Studies within the pillar of Asian American Studies. It is not enough to say that good teachers and educators will allow space for students excluded from the four pillars to connect their own experiences to the Ethnic Studies Curriculum content. We have a chance to give real representation and space to the Arab American community, to allow Arab American students to see themselves reflected in their education, and we must take advantage of this opportunity.

Thank you,
Emma