

From: MADELINE OFFERMAN

Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 9:21 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [emails redacted]; Superintendent

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment: In support of including Arab Studies in the ESMC

Hello,

As a UCLA student and lifelong California resident, I am writing to voice my support for the ESMC, and furthermore for the inclusion of Arab American studies in the curriculum.

I believe ethnic studies is vital to raising an informed, compassionate, and anti-racist generation of studies, not to mention supporting and empowering students of racial and ethnic minorities. I also believe that due to the persistent presence of Islamophobia in post- 9/11 America, especially under Trump with the Muslim ban, it is critical that our students are educated about Arab history and culture.

I also want to express my deep support for featuring Palestinian history in this curriculum. I am utterly dismayed that removing Palestinian history is being considered under the pretense of antisemitism. It is not antisemitic to acknowledge the history and culture of a people that have existed for centuries, and have in fact existed on their land much longer than the country of Israel has existed. Furthermore, Palestinians have experienced a horrific amount of violence and oppression at the hands of the Israeli government (conditions at the Gaza Strip, illegal Israeli settlements removing Palestinians from their homes, and more), and this should not go ignored or disputed or ignored by our curriculum. Not acknowledging the very existence of Palestinian history paves the way for even more oppression, as if we are not aware of the group being oppressed then we cannot oppose the continued oppression. We owe our students an informed and accurate education, and removing Palestinian history from the curriculum is not an honest representation of our world.

I urge you to reach out to Arab scholars for further discussion on these issues, and include them in your curriculum development. It is unjust to remove their history from state curriculum without giving full consideration their views and ideas on this topic.

Thank you,

Madeline Offerman