

From: Sean O'Connor

Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 5:46 PM

To: Ethnic Studies; Superintendent; [emails redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Supporting the inclusion of Arab American Studies within Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Hello,

I'm a LA county resident writing to voice my support for including Arab American Studies in the Ethnic Studies Curriculum, under the rubric of Asian American Studies. As Xenophobia and Islamophobic racism are a core issue faced by our country, including the experiences of West Asian Americans in the ESMC is essential to equipping our young citizens with the education they need to engage with politics, life, and social responsibility.

In the era that's seen a continual war on terror in Middle Eastern countries, an uptick in violent hate crimes against Arab Americans, and our country's president discuss a "Muslim ban," it's clear that Arab Americans have a unique identity and experience on which our country's future citizens direly need education.

Furthermore, I think it's especially important to include the history and current struggles of Palestine in the curriculum, given the uniquely large role Palestine plays in our country's foreign policy. Palestinian-Americans have a unique experience that it is crucial for our education to include. US aid to Israel is more than aid to every other country combined, and our country is home to many Palestinian American refugees that were displaced from their homes with the support of American funding and weapons. Educating young people on Palestine is in no way anti-Semitic, and in fact will only promote a broad ethics of racial justice that includes opposing anti-Semitism. As our country continues to fund Israel in illegally annexing land, enforcing racially discriminatory policies, preventing millions of refugees from returning to their homes, and engaging in military actions that kill thousands, we need education on Palestine now more than ever.

Thank you for your consideration.