

From: Rebecca Romero

Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 1:24 PM

To: Superintendent

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Include Arab American and Pacific Islander Studies in CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Dear Tony Thurmond,

I am a descendant of Japanese and Mexican heritage and a resident of the Bakersfield Central Valley in California. I attended the University of California Los Angeles and San Francisco State University. I also work with young students of color in Bakersfield. I demand that the original committee of writers and experts be reconvened to revise the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). Additionally, I demand the inclusion of Arab American and Pacific Islander Studies. Ethnic Studies has positively changed my life and I know that it will do the same for other students of color like me who grew up disempowered by their academics because they didn't feel represented in textbooks. Rather I was portrayed as poor, powerless, and an enemy. This is inhumane and disrespectful to the amazing contributions that people like me have made to this country. I have a Master's degree in Ethnic Studies and Bachelor's in Sociology. I am currently in the process of applying for my teaching credential. I am ready to teach Ethnic Studies to students in my community at the college level and most importantly, to the high schools! Ethnic Studies will no doubt, save lives. With this said, I demand the following:

- Reconvene the original committee of writers and experts to revise the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). Ethnic Studies scholars and teachers are the experts on Ethnic Studies curriculum and pedagogy. Arab American scholars and teachers are the experts on Arab American curriculum and pedagogy.
- Pass an ESMC that includes Pacific Islander and Arab American studies course outlines and includes Palestine in Arab American studies.
- Maintain the Ethnic Studies framework—with disciplinary knowledge, language, and pedagogy. Don't dilute it or convert it to a different field (i.e., multicultural studies, diversity studies, or area studies). **This is an obvious racist attempt to keep us powerless!**
- Work within clearcut structures for accountability, transparency, and consensus-building. Center those structures on Ethnic Studies practitioners of communities of color and Native peoples throughout the entire model curriculum process, up to ratification.

Thank you,
Bakersfield Central Valley California Resident, Rebecca