

**From:** Rochelle Gause

**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 3:33 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Please save Arab American and Pacific islander Studies

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the CDE,

I have to be honest that I'm a bit surprised in progressive California, at a time of rising Anti-Arab racism, that including Arab-American and Pacific Islander Studies is even an issue being debated. We know how important it is for California's diverse student base to get to learn their own history for their engagement and success and how critical it is for white students, such as my own two daughters who attend Berkeley Unified Schools, to learn this history in order to be global citizens and powerful allies. So I'm writing to lift up the demands below by Arab and Pacific Islander communities in California. Please let's continue to allow California to be a powerful model for the United States, in times of rising white nationalism, of what it means to teach and anti-racist history from many lenses providing our children to have the depth of understanding to struggle for the collective liberation of all people.

1. **Reconvene the original committee of writers and experts of the 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.
2. **Pass an ESMC that includes Pacific Islander and Arab American Studies course outlines and includes Palestine in Arab American studies.**
3. **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).
4. **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,  
Rochelle Gause  
Berkeley, California