

Dear Education Board members (check exact titles),

My name is _____ and I am a member of the National Arab American Women Association (NAAWA). We are the committee in charge of education outreach.

1. We are here to speak to you and highlight the issue of meeting the specific needs of Arab American students in the MD school system. We are Arab Americans, citizens and residents of this country who are concerned about the recent increase in racism and islamophobia among other forms of marginalization. The Middle East, Islam, Palestine and other countries and issues are already misunderstood and mispercieved in this country.
2. One example is the Inaccuracies and biases in the way the Middle East is presented in textbooks approved by the Board undermine the goal of preparing our children to be citizens with a global perspective that will enable them to participate in a global economy. It will also deprive them of the possibility to analyze, synthesize and make conclusions on their own.
3. Students in the DMV area receive shallow and only one viewpoint on the region and are lacking the multiple viewpoints that democracy promises in the US. The information the next generation of Americans are receiving in schools will shape their perceptions and influence their understanding of critical issues for decades to come.
4. All students are being led into believing one story and one way of thinking. This will put all our children, Arabs and non- Arabs, at a disadvantage in the global arena. For example, in the text book on World History (9th Grade) the sentence on page _____ that “ _____ ” is inaccurate. It misleads Americans and encourages students to be fearful of people from the Middle East.
5. To master the disciplines of history and the social sciences, students need more than learn names and dates. They will benefit from engaging in historical thinking, where events are examined critically within a historical context. Currently, social studies students do not have the opportunity to exercise these higher-order thinking skills because the approved textbooks do not present the facts on the Middle East in an accurate and unbiased way.
6. We ask that students be given textbooks and supplemental learning materials that contain objective content on the Middle East especially those that are based on United Nations resolutions as a global entity. The national Arab American Women Association (NAAWA) has a link on the website with resources

7. We request that the Board establishes a process that involves the relevant subject-matter experts in the evaluation of public feedback to gauge the presence and significance of textbook inaccuracies identified.