



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: I

Date: November 17, 2022

Title: First Review of the Proposed Revised 2022 History and Social Science Standards of Learning

Presenter: Kim Richey, Deputy Superintendent of School Quality, Instruction and Performance
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Purpose of Presentation:
Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Executive Summary

The proposed, revised 2022 *History and Social Science Standards of Learning* describe the Commonwealth's broad goals for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 history, civics, geography, and economics. [Section 22.1-253.13:1 of the Code of Virginia](#) requires a review of each Standards of Learning subject area at least once every seven years. Pursuant to legislation from the 2000 Virginia General Assembly, the Board established a seven-year cycle for review of the Standards of Learning. Thus, the History and Social Science Standards of Learning originally adopted by the Board in 1995 were reviewed and revised in 2001, 2008, and 2015.

The draft standards were reviewed and revised through numerous phases of meetings convened with Virginia students, parents, educators, historians, college professors, and organizations. Additional citizen input was solicited throughout the process and through a public comment Google form. The standards align with Priorities 1 and 3 of the Board's Comprehensive Plan. The 2022 NAEP scores are a wake-up call for the Board, the Department, and every education division to double down on math and literacy teaching and learning. The 2018 NAEP history and civics results should have set off similar alarm bells. Only 24% of eighth graders nationwide were proficient in civics. The results reflect a prior de-emphasis on history and civics that

resulted in reduced instructional time, the omission of assessments, less reading of challenging texts, and minimal teacher training.

In August 2022 the Board received a presentation from VDOE about the process used to review and revise the standards to date. [Here is a link to that presentation.](#)

Continued review and edits to the standards over the past several months have strengthened the content at each grade level. The edits honor the work done previously by Virginians, and national and state experts.

Technical changes made to ensure a more complete, easier to understand and use standards document include:

- Corrected errors and omissions
- Removed repetitive and vague language to clarify content
- Moved useful instructional guidance to its proper place in curriculum
- Edited language to make the standards tighter and more coherent
- Reordered content to create a grade-by-grade and chronological progression
- Incorporated new content in some places based on feedback
- Emphasized facts and in the standards document and moved opportunities for critical thinking and inquiry into the curriculum frameworks
- Incorporated “essential skills” into the standards
- Checked for accuracy of facts
- Emphasized the most important content with additional details and standards

Content changes made to ensure that broad learning goals about history, civics, economics, and geography are comprehensive include:

- Adding more specific and thorough treatment of the issue of slavery, particularly by requiring more content in earlier grades
- Adding more specific and thorough treatment of the issue of segregation, particularly by requiring more content in earlier grades
- Adding more specific and thorough treatment of the Reconstruction era
- Adding more clear and thorough treatment of the issue of the Civil Rights Movement in Virginia
- Requiring the examination of important Supreme Court cases like *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Korematsu v. U.S.*, *Buck v. Bell*, *Loving v. Virginia* and others
- Further examining the critical role of the Founding Fathers and the principles of liberty expressed in the Declaration of Independence and codified in the U.S. Constitution
- Further explaining the importance of Women’s Suffrage and key events in history that led to the Nineteenth Amendment

- Providing more thorough treatment of the Constitution, the branches of government, the rule of law, how a bill becomes a law, and the role of courts, judges, and juries in grades K-3
- Examining the influence that the U.S. Declaration of Independence and Constitution have had on other countries throughout history
- Providing a thorough examination of the Electoral College and Federalist Papers
- Adding more clear and thorough treatment of the issue of the economic systems and philosophies
- Adding more American history content and more world history content in grades K-3
- Reverting to the 2015 eighth grade geography standards because of the deficiency in content in the August 2022 draft
- Creating a staircase of standards to build students' understanding of what citizenship is, detailing its rights and responsibilities

Action Requested:

Action will be requested at a future meeting. Specify anticipated date below:

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept the draft of the 2022 History and Social Science Standards of Learning.

Previous Review or Action:

Previous review or action. Specify date and action taken below:

Date: August 17, 2022

Action: First Review of Proposed Standards and Curriculum Framework

Date: September 15, 2022

Action: Presentation at Board Work Session on Updated Timeline

Background Information and Statutory Authority:

Section 22.1-253.13:1 of the Code of Virginia requires the Board to establish educational objectives to form the core of Virginia's educational program and require that the Standards be reviewed every seven years. It states, in part:

A. The General Assembly and the Board of Education believe that the fundamental goal of the public schools of the Commonwealth must be to enable each student to develop the skills that are necessary for success in school, preparation for life, and reaching their full potential. The General Assembly and the Board of Education find that the quality of education is dependent upon the provision of (i) the appropriate working environment, benefits, and salaries necessary to ensure the availability of high-quality instructional personnel; (ii) the appropriate learning environment designed to promote student achievement; (iii) quality instruction that enables each student to become a productive

and educated citizen of Virginia and the United States of America; and (iv) the adequate commitment of other resources. In keeping with this goal, the General Assembly shall provide for the support of public education as set forth in Article VIII, Section 1 of the Constitution of Virginia.

B. The Board of Education shall establish educational objectives known as the Standards of Learning, which shall form the core of Virginia's educational program, and other educational objectives, which together are designed to ensure the development of the skills that are necessary for success in school and for preparation for life in the years beyond. At a minimum, the Board shall establish Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history and social science. The Standards of Learning shall not be construed to be regulations as defined in § 2.2-4001.

The Board shall seek to ensure that the Standards of Learning are consistent with a high-quality foundation educational program. The Standards of Learning shall include, but not be limited to, the basic skills of communication (listening, speaking, reading, and writing); computation and critical reasoning, including problem solving and decision making; proficiency in the use of computers and related technology; computer science and computational thinking, including computer coding; and the skills to manage personal finances and to make sound financial decisions.

The English Standards of Learning for reading in kindergarten through grade three shall be based on components of effective reading instruction, to include, at a minimum, phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and text comprehension.

The Standards of Learning in all subject areas shall be subject to regular review and revision to maintain rigor and to reflect a balance between content knowledge and the application of knowledge in preparation for eventual employment and lifelong learning. The Board of Education shall establish a regular schedule, in a manner it deems appropriate, for the review, and revision as may be necessary, of the Standards of Learning in all subject areas. Such review of each subject area shall occur at least once every seven years. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Board from conducting such review and revision on a more frequent basis.

To provide appropriate opportunity for input from the general public, teachers, and local school boards, the Board of Education shall conduct public hearings prior to establishing revised Standards of Learning. Thirty days prior to conducting such hearings, the Board shall give notice of the date, time, and place of the hearings to all local school boards and any other persons requesting to be notified of the hearings and publish notice of its intention to revise the Standards of Learning in the Virginia Register of Regulations.

Interested parties shall be given reasonable opportunity to be heard and present information prior to final adoption of any revisions of the Standards of Learning.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

In anticipation of the Board’s acceptance of the standards for first review, the following timeline is proposed for next steps and actions:

- November 17, 2022: First review of standards document
- November 28-December 16, 2022: Public engagement sessions *
- January 9-13, 2023: Public hearings with the Board of Education
- January 2023: Review of public comments and incorporate warranted edits
- February 2, 2023: Proposed final review and adoption by the Board

*Public engagement sessions are smaller and more interactive than public comment meetings. Participation may need to be capped, and attendees will have “homework” before their session(s). The VDOE staff will present information about the standards to attendees and divide participants into small discussion groups depending on interest for each session.