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| **Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item** | **Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia** |

# Agenda Item: F

## Date: September 17, 2020

## Title: First Review of the Recommendations for Technical Edits from the Governor’s Commission on African American History Education in Virginia

#### Presenter: Dr. James F. Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction Ms. Christonya Brown, History and Social Science Coordinator

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**Purpose of Presentation:**

Other initiative or requirement. Specify below:

Review the recommendations made by the Standards Subcommittee of the Governor’s Commission on African American History Education in Virginia (the Commission).

## Executive Summary:

The Standards Subcommittee of the Governor’s Commission on African American History Education in Virginia (the Commission) recommended in their [final report](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/secretary-of-education/pdf/AAHEC-Report-Final_version2.pdf) to Governor Ralph Northam on Monday, August 31, 2020, technical edits to the Curriculum Frameworks for Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two, Virginia Studies, United States History to 1865, United States History: 1865 to the Present, and Virginia and United States History. These recommendations were for the purpose of “enriching the standards related to African American history.”

The recommendations have been organized into two categories for Board consideration:

* Category One: Board Decision - Technical edits to the Curriculum Framework and Board Decision edits. (Attachment A)
* Category Two: Considerations for the Review and Revision Process in 2022 - Substantive changes to content or additions to the Standard of Learning. (Attachment B)

The Board of Education has made a commitment to maintain rigorous and relevant expectations for student learning that meet or exceed national and international benchmarks for college and career readiness. The Standards of Quality require the Board of Education to review the Standards of Learning on a regular schedule.

[Section 22.1-253.13:1-B](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter13.2/section22.1-253.13%3A1/) of the Code of Virginia states:

“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 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…”

**Action Requested:**

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

Final review is anticipated at the October 15, 2020, meeting. A public comment period will be opened from September 17 to October 8, 2020.

## Superintendent’s Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the recommendations from the Governor’s Commission on African American History Education in Virginia.

**Previous Review or Action:**

No previous review or action.

## Background Information and Statutory Authority:

On August 24th Governor Ralph Northam signed [Executive Order Thirty Nine](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-39-Establishment-of-the-Commission-on-African-American-History-Education-in-the-Commonwealth.pdf) establishing the Commission on African American History Education. The Governor charged the group with reviewing Virginia’s history standards, and the instructional practices, content, and resources currently used to teach African American history in the Commonwealth; and with examining and make recommendations on the professional development supports needed to equip all teachers for culturally competent instruction.

Leading the Standards Subcommittee was Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Professor of History, Norfolk State University as chair. The Standards Subcommittee was divided into three work groups: Technical Edits, Standards Overhaul, and Process Review. Each work group worked independently but came together to review and approve final work products. The Technical Edit workgroup, led by Dr. Edward Ayers, Professor of the Humanities, University of Richmond, presented their work product for review through virtual meetings on July 6, 14, 15, and 16, 2020. The Standards Subcommittee reviewed and approved recommendations. Virginia Department of Education senior leadership and staff have reviewed the recommendations and organized the charts for the Board’s review.

The Standards Subcommittee made recommendations to the content available in the 2015 History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks. The recommendations, categorized as “technical edits” clarify, correct, or add context to statements or content presently in the Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework. While there is no requirement within the Standards of Quality or the Standards of Accreditation for the Board to approve the Curriculum Frameworks, or any changes to it, the Board has had a historical role in the development and approval of the Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework documents.

Originally, the History Curriculum Framework was called the Teacher’s Resource Guide. It was developed following the first administration of the history and social science Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in 1998 to address concerns from many Virginia educators that there was insufficient specificity in the history and social science standards to allow teachers to adequately prepare students for the SOL tests. In February 1999, [Superintendent’s Memo #43](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/1999/inf043.html) informed school divisions that the Board had directed Department staff to develop an “amplification” of the SOL to be used in determining the content to be assessed and thereby to be taught. This document became known as the Teacher’s Resource Guide for History. When the history and social science standards were revised in 2001, the Board directed the Department to update the Teacher’s Resource Guide. The Board held public hearings on the changes and approved it for use through a resolution, [Revising the History and Social Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework- July 26, 2001](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/resolutions/2001/2001-35.shtml), thereby adopting the name Curriculum Framework. The current [*2015 History and Social Science Standards of Learning*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/history_socialscience/index.shtml#sol2015) were approved by the Board of Education on March 26, 2015. The accompanying Curriculum Frameworks were approved on January 28, 2016.

## Timetable for Further Review/Action:

It is anticipated that the Virginia Department of Education will present the Board with a schedule for the full review and revision of the *History and Social Science Standards of Learning* at the January 2021 meeting.

## Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

The fiscal and human impact to the Department will be related to the development of resources and professional development associated with the Commission’s technical edits.