



MINUTES
SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 28, 2016

The Standards Recommendation Committee met for its third scheduled meeting at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's board room at 9:00 CDT.

Present.....9

Mr. David Barrett

Ms. Pamela Bobo

Mr. Bill Carey

Mr. William Freddy Curtis – Vice Chair

Dr. Shannon Duncan

Ms. Katherine Petko

Ms. Marsha Rains

Mr. Jason Roach – Chair

Mr. Todd Wigginton

Absent.....1

Mr. Louis Gallo

9:05 AM

Mr. Jason Roach called the meeting to order.

Mr. Roach asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

ACTION: **Dr. Shannon Duncan** moved acceptance. **Ms. Marsha Rains** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Roach asked for a motion to approve the September 23rd minutes.

ACTION: **Mr. Todd Wigginton** moved acceptance. **Mr. Freddy William Curtis** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Roach asked for a motion to approve the October 12th minutes.

ACTION: **Ms. Rains** moved acceptance. **Mr. Wigginton** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Roach began to explain new committee norms for today's meeting. He specified that it is critical to stay close to the time frames and that time had been added for additional discussion. He also said that looking at the feedback in the breakout sessions is important. He asked if anyone wanted to add to the norms.

He then brought up the proposed schedule meeting now that the committee amended the review timeline. **Ms. Laura Encalade** explained potential agenda topics for each of the future meetings. The committee members looked at each of their calendars to check their availability.

Mr. Roach asked for a motion to the proposed schedule of new meetings and change the March 31 date to March 29. **Mr. Wigginton** asked if this vote would include cancelling the November 10th meeting

ACTION: **Ms. Rains** moved acceptance. **Dr. Duncan** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

9:30 AM

Ms. Encalade presented an update on the current public feedback. The data is the latest from October 13, 2016. She explained to the committee that before the public has to register on the website, they are able to download the draft standards on the instruction page. **Ms. Encalade** also said that the current standards are now posted on the page.

There are two types of reports that **Ms. Encalade** gave to the committee. Subject level reports which combine data across all grade levels as well as a grade level report with data broken down by grade.

Mr. Roach asked **Ms. Encalade** what had happened to the only Tennessee History course that used to be required a long time ago. **Mr. Bill Carey** explained some research that he had completed to dig into that issue. He discussed that previous versions of the standards (circa 2000) included Tennessee History as a stand-alone course and that it was something he had been researching.

Mr. Wigginton and **Ms. Rains** discussed the ability to go deeper into the standards with the way the standards are currently written. **Dr. Duncan** discussed the necessity for the committee to consider age level appropriateness of topics and standards and the cognitive load within the standards.

Mr. Roach asked for **Mr. Carey** to explain more about his research with other states on state history. **Mr. Carey** said that he wanted the committee to know that he believes the state standards should be embedded, that it is best for his interest.

Dr. Duncan said that the standards can be perfect but if the time support is not there, if teachers don't have time to actually teach the content, then it doesn't really matter. She also asked if you pull Tennessee History out as an isolated class, how do you sufficiently teach without discussing what is happening in the rest of the country and the world?

Mr. Carey said that he is wondering if the committee should not focus on the forest first and think about ways to change how this is happening across the state.

Ms. Encalade indicated that the State Board also did some analysis on trends how and where particular content was covered in social studies standards across multiple states and that the resulting report that was developed had been sent to all committee members.

Mr. Dave Barrett said that he thinks that the committee needs to look at what are the absolute things students need to know when they leave each grade as well as remember that they cannot put curriculum in the standards because that is a LEA decision. He said that there have been media articles about the social studies standards being trivia and gave an example of how to make it go deeper.

Mr. Roach said that for generations of history teachers it has been the ‘sit and get’ model. What the model is becoming now is what skills can the students get to go on and expand their own understanding of history. What the committee needs to really look at are what skills do the students need to glean.

Mr. Carey gave an example of a Civil War standard from the set of standards previously adopted prior to the current version to illustrate why it is important to have specifics listed about Tennessee History.

Mr. Barrett reiterated that the specific curriculum decisions need to be left up to the LEA.

Dr. Duncan said that **Mr. Carey’s** concern with a previous standard that was used about the Civil War was a poorly written standard and now the committee has the option to write a much better, less vague standard.

Ms. Rains gave some examples of how she has taught specific events in Tennessee History that were not prescribed in the standards.

Mr. Roach said giving context to TN history is important to us. Local school boards need to be involved.

Ms. Duncan stated that this is where the supplemental document comes into play. This gives flexibility to teachers and allow them to be specific for areas.

Mr. Roach stopped the conversation to allow **Ms. Encalade** to finish the presentation before the scheduled break.

Ms. Encalade continued presenting some specific comments pulled out about different topics such as in Ancient History or Tennessee History. She next touched on overall themes found in the midway point for the public feedback.

Dr. Duncan asked if there had been public feedback on how the Educator Advisory Team had standardized the teaching of religion.

Ms. Encalade indicated that feedback on religion was being captured through the website and other public feedback avenues.

Mr. Roach asked for a break until **10:40 AM**

10:49 AM

The committee reconvened.

Ms. Encalade presented the higher education review feedback. She explained the goal of the review process and gave specifics on the feedback.

11:03 AM

Mr. Roach said that according to the agenda, it was time for the committee to break out into sessions. He asked for the committee to decide what way would be best to do the break out. He stated that the goal of the breakout sessions was to review the various forms of feedback to begin documenting trends.

The committee broke up into K-5, 6th and 7th grade with High School World History, 8th grade with US history, and the elective classes.

12:15 PM

The committee took their lunch break.

1:00 PM

The committee resumed their breakout sessions.

2:20 PM

Mr. Roach brought the committee back to full discussion. He said that he would like to have an open discussion regarding the conversations and trends that each breakout group noted.

Mr. Barrett said that his group was analyzing the secondary topics and looked at all of the website feedback, higher education feedback, and used their expertise to come up with a handful of suggested changes.

Mr. Roach said their group had suggestions to rearrange some things to make it more coherent. However, his group kept coming back to the issue of Tennessee History. He said the committee needs to have an honest discussion about curriculum and standards.

Mr. Carey said that he wanted to hear people's thoughts about reexamining the scope and sequence of the standards and whether Tennessee history should be embedded or a stand-alone course. The only grades he really felt needs to be re-sequenced are grades 3, 4, and 5.

Ms. Katherine Petko said she is favor of embedding Tennessee History standards and also wanted the committee to take a good look at the proposed standards to decide what is essential, what contributes to the big picture of history, and if things want to be specific or regional in a supplemental document. She wants to avoid a laundry list of facts except for what that contributes to the bigger picture of US history.

Dr. Duncan said that, while they have very little control of this, until our schools across the state can consistently have a fair amount of time that they teach social studies instruction, the standards will be the baseline.

Mr. Roach said that he believes embedding is the proper way to look at it because you are helping students understand US history through a Tennessee lens. When you talk about teaching with fidelity, with the correct method, you have to find the balance between getting enough material for students to walk away with a correct history knowledge. **Mr. Roach** said he feels like the committee has the same thought process but are disagreeing about where to draw the line in each grade level.

Mr. Wigginton said that to him, he wants students to learn the process of thinking rather than specific facts. He gave a few examples. He said that he can go either way on embedding or not embedding, but he cares about not cramming too much onto teachers and students. He said historians do not memorize lists and lists of things but rather learn to investigate.

Mr. Barrett said that the committee may want to look at the idea of embedding or creating some type of mandated program where Tennessee History is going to be taught at a certain point.

Mr. Roach said that the committee needs to remember that the standards are not a list of what we think teachers should be doing but rather a set of standards for what students should know at the end of a class. He said this is what the committee needs to step back and look at whole picture.

Mr. Carey said that if people are still confused about the embedding process so many years after it was created, does the embedding process actually work?

The committee asked **Ms. Kadie Patterson**, the Tennessee Department of Education's social studies coordinator, for her thoughts about embedding vs. a stand-alone course.

Dr. Pamela Bobo said that she has issues when her students at Tennessee State University don't know the three grand divisions. It does not matter to her if it is embedded or stand alone, it just needs to be covered.

Mr. Roach said that the conversation needs to focus on answering the issues of what is appropriate and when.

Dr. Bobo thinks that the Tennessee History standards can be embedded.

Mr. Roach said that what he heard is that the committee will continue to follow embedding.

Mr. Carey said that of all the subjects, the Civil War is the most important topic that happened in Tennessee.

Mr. Curtis asked how many high schools across Tennessee teach a Tennessee History elective course.

Ms. Patterson said she didn't have exact numbers but had received a lot of applications to offer it as an elective.

Ms. Petko said that she is interested to see the feedback about the early standards in third grade because the shift to a Tennessee focus was not a particularly popular idea at the roundtable she attended.

Ms. Rains said when **Mr. Carey** was discussing the different state examples, she looked up the third grade social studies Massachusetts standards. She gave some examples and pointed out that Massachusetts did not have a ton of standards. She also explained some of the other grade levels to the committee.

Dr. Duncan said she would be interested in looking further at different states and how they cover the scope of that state history. **Ms. Encalade** said that is something that the State Board staff can help support this committee by providing a research report on that topic.

Mr. Carey said that it is important to have this big discussion because it only happens every seven years.

Ms. Encalade asked the committee to let the staff know who else they would like to see feedback from. Suggestions from the committee included the following:

- **Ms. Rains** asked for more communication with Directors of Schools. Suggestions included adding more information to the Director's Update about reaching out to us with their specific feedback and reaching out to TOSS to help gather feedback from superintendents
- **Mr. Carey** brought up asking the people's opinion from the group who revised the standards previously. Several other committee members indicated that they did not think this would be a productive use of time. **Ms. Petko** indicated that several of those previous committee members had already provided feedback through existing channels.
- **Mr. Roach** asked that the committee hear from the state historian Dr. West at a future meeting and other committee members concurred.

Ms. Encalade asked whether the committee wanted the staff to conduct any additional feedback sessions with stakeholder groups like historical societies, museums or teacher groups like Tennessee Council for Social Studies. **Mr. Wigginton** said that they have had opportunities for feedback. **Mr. Roach** stated that he agreed that the extension of the deadline is enough

Ms. Encalade moved to discussing logistics since the review timeline has been extended.

Mr. Roach adjourned the meeting until November 17, 2016.