**Requested Changes to S.419 "South Carolina Career Opportunity and Access for All Act"**

*Page numbers listed in this narrative correspond to the printed pages numbers at the bottom of each page of S.419 "South Carolina Career Opportunity and Access for All Act" introduced on 1/24/2019.*

**"A Student Bill of Rights"**

In "A Student Bill of Rights" [3759-2] it is noted that all students should expect "an education tailored to students’ individual needs which prepares them to be college ready, career ready, and ***civic- ready*** for life beyond high school." (H. 3759, **emphasis added,** p. 10**)** Social Studies teachers firmly believe that civics instruction must be as integrated in schools as much as reading or math. Students must have social studies instruction every day to insure they are civic- ready. We know that removing accountability for social studies in elementary and middle school will have the unintended consequence of narrowing the curriculum to tested subjects, loss of social studies instructional time, and denial of access to quality professional development for teachers of social studies. To avoid these issues, social studies teachers would like to see additions to this bill.

Article 15 "A Student Bill of Rights"

1. Addition of language in "A Student Bill of Rights" to include “… well-rounded instruction and support in English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, the arts, computer science, and physical education from highly qualified teachers who strive to serve students with the highest professional integrity and always seek to improve their skills” (p.10)

2. Since state law already mandates that students take no more than eight hours of state assessment English/language arts, mathematics, and science in grades three through 8, we would like for the General Assembly to mandate the same restriction to district-mandated formative benchmark assessments. (p. 10) For example, Texas state law prohibits administering more than two "“district-required assessment instrument[s] designed to prepare students for a

corresponding state-administered assessment instrument.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The US Department of Education recommends states and districts “place a cap on the percentage of instructional time students spend taking required statewide standardized assessments to ensure that no child spends more than 2 percent of her classroom time taking these tests.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Administration of District-Required Benchmark Assessment Instruments to Prepare Students for State-Administered Assessment Instruments** (p. 18-19)

(a) In this section, "benchmark assessment instrument" means a district-required assessment instrument designed to prepare students for a corresponding state-administered assessment instrument.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), a school district may not administer to any student more than two benchmark assessment instruments to prepare the student for a corresponding state-administered assessment instrument.

(c) The prohibition prescribed by this section does not apply to the administration of a college preparation assessment instrument, including the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT, an advanced placement test, an international baccalaureate examination, or an independent classroom examination designed or adopted and administered by a classroom teacher.

(d) A parent of or person standing in parental relation to a student who has special needs, as determined in accordance with commissioner rule, may request administration to the student of additional benchmark assessment instruments.

**Subpart II Statewide Assessment Program Revisions**

1. With the elimination of social studies assessment, we want inclusion of language to indicate to make clear that it is not the intent of the General Assembly to narrow the curriculum to just the areas which are tested. "While the statewide assessment program must include the subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, and science, this should not be construed as lessening the importance of social studies, foreign languages, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and career or occupational programs." (p. 17)

2. Social studies teachers also seek language in this section which explicitly protects instructional time and resources for non-state tested courses. "Instructional time and resources for courses not designated for statewide assessments will not be reduced and will not affect or decrease the Defined Minimum Program or Carnegie Unit state requirements for the teaching of science, social studies, computer sciences, the arts, and physical education in South Carolina classrooms in grades kindergarten through twelfth." (P. 19)

**SECTION 59-18-350. Cyclical review of state standards and assessments; analysis of assessment results.**

The most recent review of the “South Carolina Social Studies Curriculum Standards” and the first and second drafts of the “South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career-Ready Standards” reinforces the crucial role the Education Oversite Committee (EOC) has in this process. Standardization of what is taught in South Carolina is perhaps the most positive thing to come out of the Education Accountability Act (1998). It is imperative that the EOC have future involvement in reviewing and guiding the revision process of social studies curriculum standards. With the elimination of state-mandated social studies assessment, we want language included which explicitly preserves the role the Education Oversight Committee has in reviewing social studies curriculum standards. "At a minimum, each of the academic areas in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies should be reviewed and updated every seven years." (p. 19)

**Amend SECTION 59-1-50. Educational achievement goals for high school graduates and students.**

In a social studies classroom, students learn about their community and understand their place in the state, nation, and world. Critical thinking applied in the Social Studies helps students develop the habits of mind and dispositions to become competent and responsible citizens who are informed and thoughtful, who participate within their community, who engage in civic action, and who develop moral and civic virtues. To that end, social studies teachers believe the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate should be amended to include:

*C) Students finally also must be offered reasonable exposure, examples, and information on the state's vision of life and career characteristics such as:  
  
(1) integrity;  
  
(2) self-direction;*

*(3) community and civic responsibility;  
  
(~~3~~ 4) global perspective;  
  
(~~4~~ 5) perseverance;  
  
(~~5~~ 6) work ethic; and  
  
(~~6~~ 7) interpersonal skills.*

**A Mechanism to Preserve Social Studies Instruction, K-8**

Teachers of social studies want an amendment to Section 59-29-10 included in H. 3759 related to social studies instruction in elementary and middle schools. The **“Social Studies: Every Student, Every Day Act of 2019”** would mandate instructional time at grades K-8, preserve pupil-teacher ratios in social studies classes, provide equitable access to professional development funds, and maintain quality classroom resources. (Inserted beginning on page 19)

SECTION 59-29-10. REQUIRED SUBJECTS

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO ENACT THE “SOCIAL STUDIES: EVERY STUDENT EVERY DAY ACT OF 2019”; TO AMEND SECTION 59-29-10. REQUIRED SUBJECTS, RELATING TO SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS, SO AS TO REQUIRE MANDATED INSTRUCTIONAL TIME GUARANTEES FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS; TO REQUIRE PARITY IN CLASS SIZES; ADOPTION OF QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS; EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT; IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY MANDATES; AND ACCESS TO QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL STUDIES

Whereas, social studies is the integrated study of civics/ government, economics, geography, and history; and

Whereas, civic education empowers students to apply core course content to current issues and situations in order to reach understanding through genuine inquiry and flexible thinking to address societal issues in a responsible manner; and

Whereas, economics and personal finance help young people understand how humans address the fundamental problem of scarcity by making choices based on the existence of limited resources; and

Whereas, geography literacy and skills help young people to understand past and current Earth conditions and better plan for the future; and

Whereas history helps young people interrogate source material to develop a unique capacity to comprehend human situations, challenges and interactions from the past and makes judgements about today ; and

Whereas the General Assembly recognizes the negative impacts of over-testing students in Kindergarten through grades eight; and

Whereas the General Assembly is cognizant that the lack of inclusion of social studies in state and federal accountability often has the impact of narrowing the curriculum, reduction of instructional time, and fewer resources dedicated to social studies instruction; and

Whereas, by ending state mandated social studies assessment, the General Assembly does not intend for there to be reduced time in the school day dedicated to social studies instruction; and

Whereas, the General Assembly has mandated social studies instruction through the following laws:

SECTION 53-3-20. Frances Willard Day. (4th Friday in October);

SECTION 53-3-30. General Pulaski's Memorial Day. (10/11);

SECTION 53-3-35. General Francis Marion Memorial Day. (2/27);

SECTION 53-3-60. South Carolina Day. (March 28);

SECTION 53-3-150. Patriotism Week;

SECTION 53-3-160. September eleventh;

SECTION 59-29-10. Required subjects;

SECTION 59-29-55. Instruction on Black history;

SECTION 59-29-120. Study of United States Constitution requisite for graduation; attendance at veteran's activities;

SECTION 59-29-130. Duration of instruction in essentials of United States Constitution;

SECTION 59-29-140. Enforcement of program of study of United States Constitution by State Superintendent;

SECTION 59-29-150. Failure to comply with requirements for program of study of United States Constitution as cause for dismissal;

SECTION 59-29-155. Founding principles instruction required; reporting requirements; professional development;

SECTION 59-29-165. Instruction in personal finance;

SECTION 59-29-230. Old and New Testament era courses;

SECTION 59-29-240. Civics test required; report;

SECTION 59-29-410. Development of high school financial literacy programs; areas of instruction;

SECTION 59-29-440; SECTION 59-29-450; SECTION 59-29-460; SECTION 59-29-470; SECTION 59-29-480; SECTION 59-29-490; SECTION 59-29-500; SECTION 59-29-510; SECTION 59-29-520; SECTION 59-29-530; SECTION 59-29-540; SECTION 59-29-550; SECTION 59-29-560; SECTION 59-29-570. South Carolina Financial Literacy Initiative;  and

Whereas, the social studies content, skills, and habits of mind are apparent trough out the World-Class Knowledge, World-Class Skills, and Life and Career Characteristics in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate (SECTION 59-1-50).  Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. This act must be known and may be cited as the “Social Studies: Every Student, Every Day Act of 2019”.

SECTION 2. (A) Chapter 29, Title 59 of the 1976 “Subjects of Instruction”.

(B) Article 1, Chapter 29, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended to include:

SECTION 3. Section 59-29-16 the “Social Studies: Every Student, Every Day Act of 2019”.

“Section 59-29-16. (1) Social Studies is the integrated study of civics, economics, geography, and history. Representative democracy depends on actively engaged members of communities. Social studies classrooms are were students gain the necessary skills, dispositions, and habits of mind to engage in their community. The goal of this article is to provide every elementary and middle school student with mandated guarantees of social studies instruction.

(1) (a) Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students in kindergarten through second grade must receive a minimum of thirty minutes of daily guaranteed standards-based social studies instruction;

(b) Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students in third grade through fifth grade must receive a minimum forty-five minutes of daily guaranteed standards-based social studies instruction; and

(c) Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students in sixth through eighth grade must receive a minimum sixty minutes of daily guaranteed standards-based social studies instruction.

(2) The certified teacher to student ratio as (stipulated in SECTION 59-29-200. Pupil-teacher ratios) is designed to provide students in kindergarten through eighth grade with scheduled social studies instruction every day throughout the school year and must be based on the South Carolina Social Studies Curriculum Standards.  The student to teacher ratio in a social studies class may not exceed the average student to teacher ratio in that of English/Language Arts or Mathematics class.

(3) Directs the State Department of Education to draft guidelines directing schools and districts to ensure teachers of social studies have equitable access to all federal, state, and local funds to be used for appropriate professional development designated for social studies as any other content area teacher.

(4) The State Department of Education, using procedures followed for other textbook adoptions, shall review and recommend social studies instructional materials for inclusion on the approved state textbook adoption list equitable to that of other content areas. Schools may select these materials in the same manner that other textbooks are selected from the list.

(5) This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor and is applicable beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

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1. Texas Classroom Teachers Association. (2014) Benchmark tests: Is your district complying with the new law?. https://tcta.org/node/13690-benchmark\_tests\_is\_your\_district\_complying\_with\_the\_new\_law [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. U.S. Department of Education. (2015) Fact Sheet: Testing Action Plan. https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-testing-action-plan [↑](#footnote-ref-2)