



SC Council for the Social Studies

Developing critical thinkers, problem solvers, and engaged citizens

February 21, 2019

The Honorable Raye Felder, Chair
K-12 Subcommittee of the House Education and Public Works Committee
South Carolina House of Representatives
P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, S.C. 29211-1867

Dear Representative Felder:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with Dr. Jerry Mitchell and me Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at the conclusion of the K-12 Subcommittee meeting where H. 3759 "South Carolina Career Opportunity and Access for All Act" was introduced. Social Studies teachers around the state applaud the General Assembly for making education a priority in this session. We are encouraged by the willingness of the House K-12 Subcommittee to meet with teachers after school hours to hear our concerns, not only about this bill, but also about conditions we face daily in schools across the state. Please keep these lines of communication open. Working as a team, I believe legislators and teachers can truly move education forward.

As described in my oral and written testimony to the K-12 Subcommittee, South Carolina social studies teachers have experienced the unintended consequences of the exclusion of social studies from federal and state accountability measures: narrowing of the curriculum to the tested subjects; reduction of instructional time; increased class sizes; reallocation of school funds from social studies to the tested subjects; and, a lack of access to social studies professional development.

To preserve the place of social studies in a well-balanced curriculum, we believe there must be legislative mandates to guarantee instructional time for social studies, specifically in grades K-8. While we understand the reluctance on the part of the General Assembly to prescribe instructional time by law, social studies teachers believe this is the only remedy to prevent marginalization of social studies. South Carolina law mandates required courses at the high school level. This prevents marginalization of social studies in grades 9-12. There are numerous examples in South Carolina Code of Lawsⁱ and South Carolina Code of State Regulationsⁱⁱ.

In the attachments, you will find changes social studies would like to see to the 1/30/2019 draft of H. 3759, including an explanation to the desired changes (b_Requested Changes to H3759.docx). The changes and insertions are highlighted in yellow and are underlined for easy identification within context of the 1/30/2019 draft of H. 3759 (c_H3759.docx).

Again, on behalf of social studies teachers around the state, we thank you and your colleagues for your willingness to consider changes to improve H. 3759. I would be more than happy to sit with your and other members of the K-12 Subcommittee to discuss the desired changes and our rationale behind them. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Charles F. Vaughan, Ed.D
South Carolina Council for the Social Studies
PO Box 11746
Columbia, S.C. 29211-1746
c884@belssouth.net
803.206.2258

ⁱ South Carolina Code of Laws 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 59-29-160. Two units of mathematics requisite for graduation; SECTION 59-29-165. Instruction in personal finance; SECTION 59-29-240. Civics test required; report; SECTION 59-1-525. grant program to enhance teaching of grade specific standards and increase K-5 performance in core academic areas; criteria and South Carolina Code of State Regulations 43-231. Defined Program K-5; 43-232. Defined Program 6-8; 43-234. Defined Program, Grades 9-12 and Graduation Requirements

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