



August 16, 2021

The Honorable Dr. Heather Mueller
Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Via Email: mde.commissioner@state.mn.us

Dear Commissioner Mueller:

We are writing to share our comments and concerns regarding the second draft of the proposed K-12 academic standards for social studies.

The second draft would require schools to teach ethnic studies, when no such requirement exists in state law. This is an obvious attempt to replace academic rigor with a political agenda. The new set of standards sets schools on a course to train students to be social justice warriors with a call to action to work toward an "equitable future" without clarifying or defining what is considered equitable.

The overall theme of the standards is to diminish any hint of American greatness or exceptionalism, and thus the role of America as a force for liberation and freedom are excluded in favor of a narrative framing America as an imperial or exploitive nation.

Students are asked to analyze key events, persons, or institutions without any clarity on the essential knowledge or skills the student is expected to actually know and understand.

Other considerations on the draft standards:

- In studying our nation's history there are no references to key figures including George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, providing no direction on how teachers should treat key figures being brought under greater scrutiny by the political left.
- In reviewing the history of slavery there is no mention of the Emancipation Proclamation, but the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights is referenced four times.
- Free-market (capitalism) and command (communism) economies are presented as simply different ways to accomplish the same goal lacking any content or context on the destructive nature of communism and authoritarian socialism.
- Students are to examine the internal struggle for liberation without any reference to our nation's role in advancing liberty and freedom around the world and defeating fascism and imperialism. There is no sense of American greatness or even an attempt to promote patriotism.
- Very concerning is after ignoring the Holocaust in the first draft of standards, the second draft would have students explore alternative narratives. What narrative other than the Holocaust being a systemic attempt at total extermination might students be asked to explore?

We stand ready to assist you in discussing these concerns and aligning this draft to state statutes.

Sincerely,



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Minority Lead, Education Policy



Representative Ron Kresha
Minority Lead, Education Finance



Minority Leader Kurt Daudt



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Representative Paul Anderson



Representative Jeff Backer



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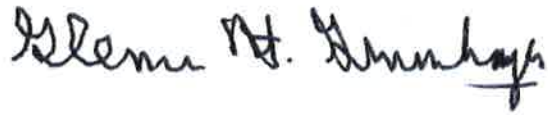
Representative Mary Franson



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Representative Glenn Gruenhagen



Representative Barb Haley



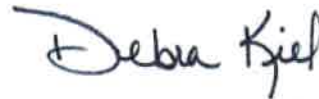
Representative John Heinrich



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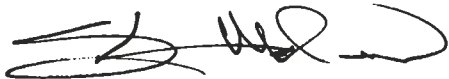
Representative Deb Kiel



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