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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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TIMBER CAUCUS
CHAIRMAN- KEYSTONE COMMISSION
ON EDUCATION

Original: 2253

April 4, 2002

Karl Girton, Chairman
State Board of Education
333 Market Street, 1st Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

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**PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION**

Dear Mr. Girton:

On behalf of the members of the House Education Committee, I thank you for your willingness to come before the Committee on April 3, 2002, and update them on the issue of diploma seals. Members told me later that they found the information quite helpful.

As you know, at the same meeting on that date, the Committee took up consideration and review of the State Board's proposed rulemaking, #6-275 and #6-276, the standard for appendix C (Government and Civics; Economics; Geography; and History) and appendix D (Arts and Humanities; Health, Safety and Physical Fitness; and Family and Consumer Sciences) of 22 PA Code, Chapter 4. The quorum needed to take action on submission of comments to the State Board was not present at that time and, consequently, no official committee comments have been submitted under Section 5(d) of the Regulatory Review Act of 1982 (P.L. 633, No. 181).

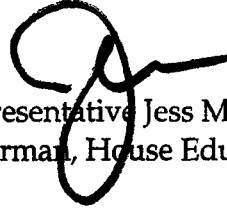
Enclosed with this letter, however, is a copy of the staff comments and suggestions for State Board consideration as it develops its final-form rulemaking for the two appendices. Many of the suggestions are for clarification or technical changes. The need to emphasize sexual abstinence and avoid sharing drug paraphernalia (per Section 4.29(b) of 22 PA Code) as ways of STD/AIDS/HIV disease prevention in the Health, Safety and Physical Fitness Unit, I believe, are important suggestions and I would ask the Board to consider placing them in those standards. I hope that these comments and suggestions prove helpful.

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Again, my sincere appreciation to you, Nanette Kimmel and Nancy Neil for participating in our deliberations. Best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Stairs', written over the typed name.

Representative Jess M. Stairs
Chairman, House Education Committee

JMS/er
Enclosure

cc: Members of the Committee

cc: *Ind. Reg. Rev. Commission*

House Education Committee Staff Suggestions for Changes to the Proposed Academic Standards

A. Civics and Government; Economics; Geography; History.

– General –

Use of the term “descriptor”.

This is not a common-usage term and appears to be a term coined for these standards. Staff suggests that the Committee recommend the term’s deletion to avoid confusion, if not now, then in the future when these standards are revised.

– Civics and Government –

5.1.3.H – “Identify framers of documents of government....” Staff questions how many and which “framers” students will be expected to know; also, which “documents of government” will be used. This might be an area where the standard is inappropriate for the age or grade category.

In 5.1.6.J staff suggests possibly amending the standard to read: “Describe how the government protects individual and property rights and promotes the common good.”

In 5.3.6.G, staff suggests possibly amending the standard to read: “Describe how the [government] law protects individual rights....”

In 5.3.9.F and G, staff suggests amending the standards to read: “F. Explain the election process...• National and State Party conventions;” “G. Explain how the [government] Bill of Rights [protects] guarantees individual rights.”

In 5.3.12.G, staff suggests amending the standard to read: “Evaluate how the [government] law protects or curtails...”

– Economics –

In 6.1.12.C, staff questions to what the phrase “to other years” refers: Is this to be a comparison of current times to the Depression or the early 1990’s, or is this simply a look at economic indicators for any given period of time? If so, some clarification or specificity should be provided.

In 6.2.9.E, staff suggests amending the language to read: “E. Explain the laws of supply and demand and how these affect the prices of goods and services.”

– Geography –

In section 7.1.9.A, under “Construction of maps”, staff suggests the use of the term “Key (or legend)” in place of “symbol systems”.

In section 7.1.3.B, staff questions why the symbol “i.e.” (meaning id est or “that is”) is used, rather than the symbol “e.g.” (meaning “for example”) that is used throughout the other levels of this section. Use of “i.e.” would indicate that those items are to be used specifically, rather than serving as possible examples of certain factors. Staff suggests changing the “i.e.” usage to “e.g.” usage, as we believe this might be misinterpreted.

In section 7.1.9.B, staff suggests an additional bullet to read: “•How geography has influenced certain events or phenomena (e.g. battles, natural disasters, settlement patterns, the rise of specific industries).”

In section 7.2.3.A, staff questions the age-appropriateness of the languages of the standard: “Identify the physical characteristics of places and regions.....

- Earth’s basic physical systems...
- Lithosphere
- Hydrosphere
- Atmosphere
- Biosphere”

Staff suggests that these four terms for third-graders be rephrased to something more meaningful, such as, “earth, water, air and life forms.” It is also possible that these concepts should be shifted to sixth-grade standards under 7.2.6(A).

In 7.3.3.E, staff thinks that it is inappropriate to expect all third-graders to “Identify... [the] type of political units (e.g. townships, boroughs, counties, states, county (nation state))... [and] political units in the area.” Knowing concepts such as counties, states and nations seems like fundamental concepts for first- through third-graders. Knowing and identifying local municipalities seems to be a bit complex. Staff suggests changing the section’s requirements. Also, why were cities and towns deleted from the list of local municipalities?

– History –

Staff believes the seventh paragraph in the preamble of this section needs revision to identify why these standards treat history as a narrative, open to an individual teacher’s interpretation of history or the subjective selection of key events, dates and individuals. If there is to be a “common cultural history”, as the paragraph states, there needs to be a greater emphasis on key – and, therefore, inclusive – information. Clarification of this paragraph is important.

In section 8.4 (World History), staff questions the use of the term “C.E.” meaning “Common Era”. (The symbol is used to indicate a method of dating accepted by different religions.) Staff suggests, for the sake of consistency with the United States and Pennsylvania history standards, that the references be omitted.

Staff believes that the following examples should be included in the appropriate sections of the history standards. (Suggested additions are in bold.)

- History
 Pennsylvania History (8.2)
 - 8.2.6-
 - A. Identify and explain the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to Pennsylvania history from Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Military Leaders, add George Washington, General Braddock and General Forbes.**
 - B. Identify and explain primary documents, material artifacts, and historic sites important in Pennsylvania history from Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Documents, add Penn’s Treaty**
 - **Under Artifacts, Architecture and Historic Places add Fort Necessity, Valley Forge, and Independence Hall.**
 - C. Identify and explain how continuity and change have influenced Pennsylvania history from Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Politics, add the Proclamation Line of 1763.**
 - D. Identify and explain conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in Pennsylvania history from the Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Military Conflicts, add the French and Indian War and the American Revolution in Pennsylvania.**

United States History 8.3

- 8.3.6-
 - A. Identify and explain primary documents, material artifacts and historic sites important to United States history from Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Documents, add the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights**
 - **Under Historic Places, add Mesa Verde, and Yorktowne.**
 - B. Identify and explain conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in United States history from Beginnings to 1824.
 - **Under Military Conflicts, add the French and Indian War.**
 - **Under Settlement Patterns, add Louisiana Purchase.**
 - **Under Social Organization, add Changes to the Native American Population.**

- 8.3.9-
 - B. Identify and analyze Primary documents, material artifacts and historic sites important in United States history from 1787 to 1914.
 - **Under Historic Places, add Fort McHenry and Gettysburg.**
 - C. Analyze how continuity and change has influenced United States history from 1787 to 1914.
 - **Under Social Organization, add Changes to the Native American Population.**

B. Arts and Humanities; Health, Safety, and Physical Education; and Family and Consumer Sciences.

– General –

The use of the term “descriptor”. This is not a common-usage term and appears to be a term coined for these standards. Staff suggests that the Committee recommend the term’s deletion to avoid confusion, if not now, then in the future when these standards are revised.

– Arts and Humanities –

Staff questions the age-appropriate standards, especially for third-graders, in the following sections:

9.3 Critical Response

9.3.3.A – “Recognize critical processes used in the examination of works in the arts and humanities:

* * *

- Analyze
- Interpret
- Form and test hypotheses

9.3.3.E – Recognize and identify types of critical analyses in the arts and humanities:

- Contextual criticism
- Formal criticism
- Intuitive criticism

These are higher-level processes and it is difficult to see how kindergartners through third-graders will understand them if they cannot do them. Staff considers this standard to be inappropriate for third-grade standards.

9.4.3.A – “Know how to respond to a philosophical statement about works in the arts and humanities. (e.g. Can artworks that depict or are about ugly or unpleasant things ever be beautiful?).” Are third-graders supposed to be critical? Is that the standard for which we are striving? Staff suggests that this standard needs clarification.

9.4.6.B – “Investigate and communicate multiple philosophical views about works in the arts.” Is the student to express multiple philosophical views about each work of art? About various works of art? Or is the student to express a philosophical view about multiple works of art? The standard is confusing as it applies to all sixth-graders. Staff suggests that this standard needs clarification.

– Concepts of Health –

In 10.1.6.E and 10.1.9.E, staff suggests that the use of “sexual abstinence” as a separate bullet (not simply as an example) should be included in standards on prevention of STD/HIV/AIDS and personal choice in disease prevention. Current regulations [22 PA Code, 4.29 (b)] emphasize that abstinence is the only “reliable way” to prevent

the transmission of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs). It should be emphasized in these standards as well.

– 10.2.9.D – “Analyze and apply a decision making process to adolescent health and safety issues.” Staff suggests that the example of teenage sexual abstinence should be included in this standard as well.

– 10.5.3.B, D and E, appear to be highly analytical and would be difficult for all third-grade children to achieve. Staff suggest that clarifying language or examples be used or that those standards, as written, be deleted.

– 10.5.6.B, D and E, appear to be highly analytical and would be difficult for all sixth-grade children to achieve. Staff suggest that clarifying language or examples be used or that those standards, as written, be deleted.

– Family and Consumer Sciences –

In 11.1.3.F, staff is concerned that all third-grade students might be instructed in the criteria for evaluating goods and services, but questions whether they will be able to apply those criteria.

For 11.3.3.G, staff questions how “sound” is relevant to classifying foods. This standard could use some clarification.

Staff suggests additions to the standards in the following areas:

- **Arts and Humanities Academic Standards**
 - The inclusion of “style” in the list of principles of music in 9.1.3.A.
 - **Glossary**
 - The addition of definition for “multi-media.” (Stated in 9.1B).
- **Health, Safety, and Physical Education Academic Standards**
 - The inclusion of driver’s safety education in the Safety and Injury Prevention sub-category, 10.3. Specifically, include vehicle safety, traffic safety, and basic driving skills to sub-categories 10.3.9 and 10.3.10.