



PARENTS DEFENDING EDUCATION

**ACTION**

**STATEMENT: Virginia Board of Education Postpones Vote  
on Politicized History Standards**

September 15, 2022

Yesterday, the Virginia Board of Education postponed a vote to approve an updated K-12 history curriculum that PDE Action has criticized as politically biased and lacking in academic rigor. PDE Action commends this decision and urges the board to consider all public comments submitted before voting on a final draft. The public comment period ends September 25th.

The proposed changes to Virginia’s K-12 History and Social Studies Standards of Learning reflect the failed educational priorities of former Governor Ralph Northam. Rather than focusing on academic achievement, the previous administration sided with teachers’ unions in their efforts to force deeply unpopular race and gender ideology on Virginia’s children.

The current draft promotes racial division and conflict. It is inordinately focuses on, and takes a celebratory approach toward, so-called “social reform efforts,” including the push for “gender equity” and “LGBTQ+ rights.” It erases George Washington's title as the “Father of our Country” and James Madison’s title as “Father of the Constitution”—which the board dismissed as a “mistake” after facing criticism.

The Board of Education is required by law to review the History and Social Studies Standards of Learning every seven years. This does not require the board to rewrite standards—or, in this case, rewrite the history of Virginia and the United States.

The Commonwealth is only beginning to see the detrimental impact two years of school closures have had on its children. During this time of recovery, it is vital that the Virginia Board of Education focuses on academic excellence—not politics.

PDE Action encourages the Virginia Board of Education to maintain the 2015 history standards until it develops a new draft that promotes academic excellence and avoids the trendy political causes that are undermining the quality of our education system.