

African American History Education in the Commonwealth and the Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

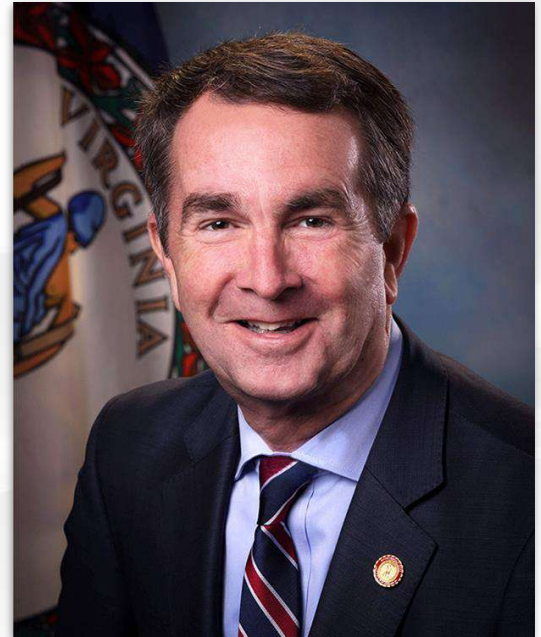
August 2, 2021





Background of the Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

- The *Culturally Competent Educators' Bill* resulted from Governor Ralph Northam's Executive Order 39, on August 24, 2019, which established the Virginia African American History Education Commission (AAHEC).
- The Commission was charged with reviewing Virginia's history standards, and the instructional practices, content, and resources currently used to teach African American history in the Commonwealth.
- Duties of the Commission included making recommendations for:
 - Technical edits to and recommendations for enriched standards related to African American history;
 - Broader considerations for the full history and social studies standards review process; and
 - Necessary professional development and instructional supports for teachers to ensure culturally competent instruction



(Final Report of the Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, August 2020)



Technical Edits Subcommittee of the AAHEC

- Technical edits are meant to be made to inaccurate statements found in the Curriculum Framework with the final approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and then communicated to school divisions.
- The Technical Edits workgroup of the AAHEC reviewed every Standard of Learning in Virginia's mandatory history and Social Studies courses to ensure the content was accurate, inclusive, and relatable.
- They made detailed recommendations for edits. They noted, "the workgroup recognizes that some of the edits may be beyond the scope of technical, and recommend that any changes that cannot be immediately made by the State Superintendent be considered by the Board of Education in the regular review of the standards in 2021."

(Final Report of the Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, August 2020)



The Technical Edits Subcommittee summarized the recommended changes as follows:

1. The elementary level language was changed to make it **more inclusive, cover diverse backgrounds, and highlight African American landmarks** so that students can become acquainted with community history.
2. Important **historical figures** with diverse perspectives and **contributions to the history and culture** of Virginia and the United States were included throughout the curriculum so it is up to date and contains a range of African Americans to whom students can relate.
3. Terms and content relevant to African American history are introduced in **earlier grades**.
4. **Information added and corrected** in the U.S. history curriculum on the topics of **slavery, the abolitionist movement, the Civil War, Reconstruction, lynching**, and other important matters in African American history that had been omitted or distorted.



Standards Overhaul Subcommittee

Recommendations

- Develop a curriculum framework that addresses key concepts that ensure African American History is not segregated from U.S. History.
- Revise or eliminate standards that are inaccurate or out of date.
- Secure funds for professional development to equip educators to teach to the new standards after they are implemented.
- Process Revision:
 - Convene a steering committee of historians, educators, and other individuals with content knowledge to review/revise the content recommended in the standards process.
 - Provide outreach to encourage parents, students, educators, and administrators across the Commonwealth to give feedback on the proposed standards as part of the public comment process.

(Final Report of the Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, August 2020)



Professional Development Subcommittee

- 82% of the educators employed by school divisions in the Commonwealth are white.
- 52% of Virginia's public school students are children of color.

“*...in order to teach without causing harm, educators must gain social and cultural awareness, content mastery, and discernment to teach this history in a holistic and humanizing way.” -- AAHEC*

Recommendations from this subcommittee included: revising performance standards for teacher and school leaders to include cultural proficiency, Cultural Competency training, and African American History content training.

(Final Report of the Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, August 2020)

Background of the Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

- On August 31, 2020, the Commission's final report was presented to Governor Northam, providing **extensive recommendations** regarding the content to be taught and the professional development of teachers.
- The General Assembly passed the legislation to support the recommendations of the Virginia African American History Education Commission, as well as **edits to the History/Social Science Standards of Learning (SOL)**.





Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

House Bill 1904 (Jenkins) and **Senate Bill 1196 (Locke)**, collectively known as the ***Culturally Competent Educators' Bill***, were passed during the 2021 General Assembly session, signed into law by Governor Northam, and became effective July 1, 2021.

- Requires teacher, principal, and superintendent **evaluations to include cultural competency.**
- Every person seeking **initial licensure or renewal of a license** from the Board of Education to **1) complete instructional training in Cultural Competency, 2) complete instruction in African American History for those with an endorsement in History.**
- Licensed staff must complete Cultural Competency training **every two years.**





What is *Cultural Competency*?

“ Having an awareness of one’s own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the within-group differences that makes each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry.”

*National Education Association
“Why Cultural Competence?”
August 27, 2020*



Background of Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

- Each licensed employee is required to complete cultural competency training and shall complete at least one training no later than the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year.
- No later than December 31, 2021, the State Board of Education shall issue guidance that establishes minimum standards for the cultural competency training required.
- Evaluations shall include an evaluation of cultural competency.

None of the new requirements as part of the Culturally Competent Educators' Bill will go into effect during the 2021-2022 School Year, however the different components of the law will be phased in over the coming years as regulatory changes are made and training is made available to school divisions' staff.



Implementation of the Law

During the State Board of Education's Business Meeting on June 17, 2021, actions were taken to begin implementing the law, to include:

1. Adopting a timeline to implement the recently updated Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers in the 2022-2023 academic school year. The Department will make training available in the spring of 2022.

New Performance Standard Based on this Legislation:

Performance Standard 6: Culturally Responsive Teaching and Equitable Practices*

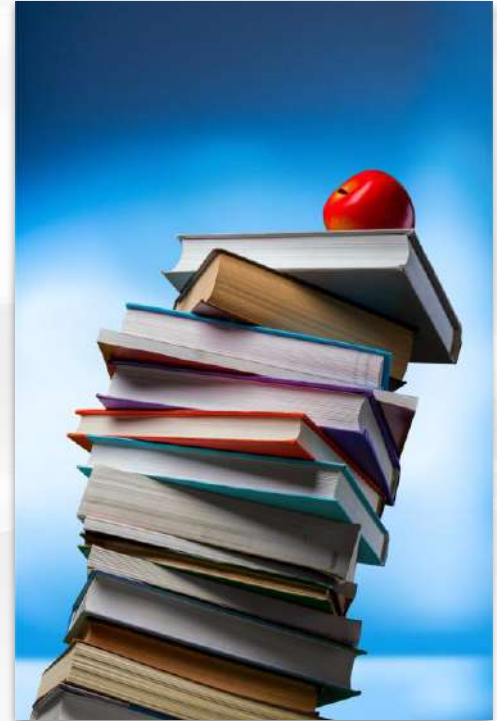
The teacher demonstrates a commitment to equity and provides instruction and classroom strategies that result in culturally inclusive and responsive learning environments and academic achievement for all students.

***Note:** Equity in education is achieved when student academic achievement cannot be determined by demographic factors.



Clarifying Culturally Competent Educators' Bill

- After the *Culturally Competent Educators' Bill* became effective on July 1, 2021, there has been confusion regarding this legislation and Critical Race Theory.
- Critical Race Theory **is not related and is separate from** the *Culturally Competent Educators' Bill*.
- Prince George County Public Schools has not adopted Critical Race Theory as part of the school division's educational curriculum, nor does the district plan to.
- During the July 14, 2021 Regular Prince George School Board meeting, the Board moved to not implement Critical Race Theory in Prince George County Public Schools.





What is Critical Race Theory?

“Critical race theory is an academic concept that is more than 40 years old. The core idea is that racism is a social construct, and that it is not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice, but also something embedded in legal systems and policies...The theory says that racism is a part of everyday life, so people - white or nonwhite - who don't intend to be racist can nevertheless make choices that fuel racism.”

EdWeek

“What is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?”

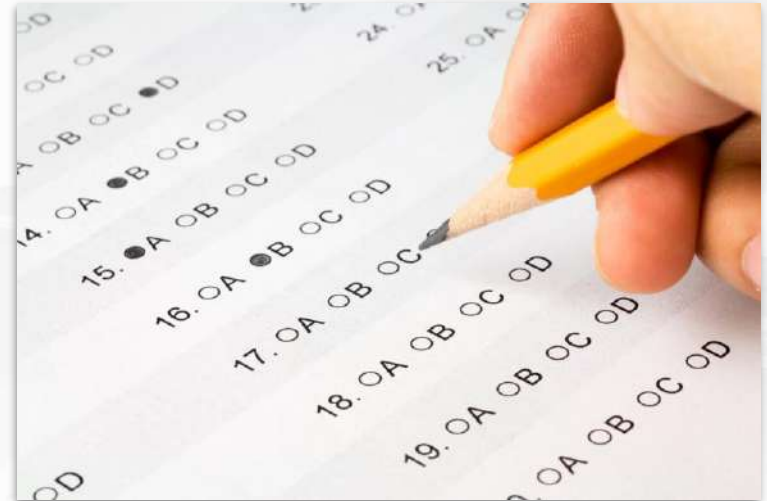
May 18, 2021

Critics of Critical Race Theory believe this leads to a divide that categorizes people into “oppressed” and “oppressor” groups.

History and Social Sciences Standards of Learning (SOLs)

- [Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth](#)
– *August 2020*
 - VDOE finalized and updated the Curriculum Frameworks in December 2020

[VDOE :: History & Social Science Standards of Learning Resources](#)





Chapter 13.2. Standards of Quality. (Effective July 1, 2020)

§ 22.1-253.13:1. Standard 1. Instructional programs supporting the Standards of Learning and other educational objectives.

B. The Board of Education shall establish educational objectives known as the Standards of Learning, which shall form the core of Virginia's educational program, and other educational objectives, which together are designed to ensure the development of the skills that are necessary for success in school and for preparation for life in the years beyond. At a minimum, the Board shall establish Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history and social science.



Chapter 13.2. Standards of Quality. (Effective July 1, 2020)

§ 22.1-253.13:1. Standard 1. Instructional programs supporting the Standards of Learning and other educational objectives.

The Standards of Learning in all subject areas shall be subject to regular review and revision to maintain rigor and to reflect a balance between content knowledge and the application of knowledge in preparation for eventual employment and lifelong learning. The Board of Education shall establish a regular schedule, in a manner it deems appropriate, for the review, and revision as may be necessary, of the Standards of Learning in all subject areas. Such review of each subject area shall occur at least once every seven years. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Board from conducting such review and revision on a more frequent basis.



Timeline for Revision of History and Social Science Standards of Learning

<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/2021/01-jan/item-t.docx>

October 2020 - Summer 2023



Timeline for Implementation of 2018 Science Standards of Learning (SOLs)

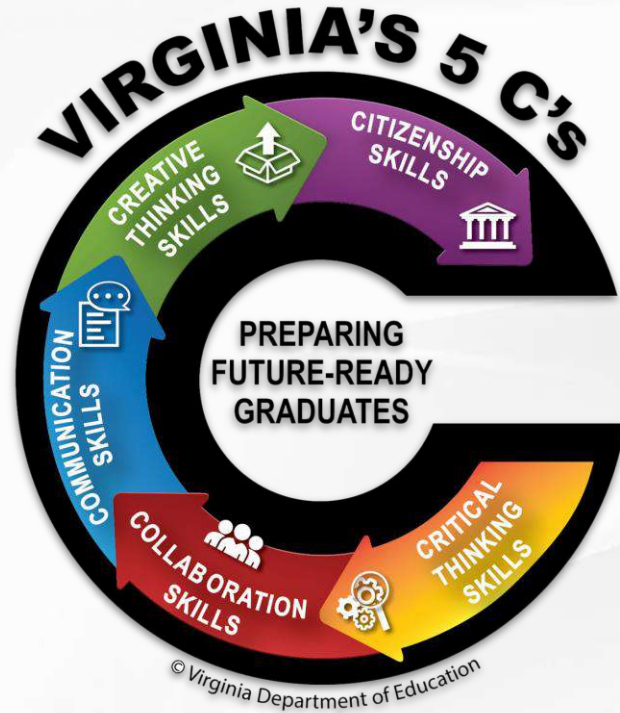
Recognizing that the 2020-2021 school year will present new challenges for school divisions and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the VDOE delayed the implementation timeline of the 2018 *Science Standards of Learning* in FY21 and for FY22.

[VDOE : Science Standards of Learning Resources](#)

**2010 Science SOLs will be Taught and Tested with the
Revised 2018 Standards in Crosswalk in FY22**



Virginia's 5 C's: Preparing Future-Ready Graduates





PGCPS' Educational Principle: Tiered System of Supports

- In every Prince George County Public Schools classroom and school, our instructional efforts are focused on personalized learning through the Tiered System of Supports.
- The Tiered System of Supports is a data-informed decision making framework for establishing the academic, behavioral, and socio-emotional supports needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students.
- PGCPS operates on a belief that a strong educational foundation where **children learn to become effective communicators, critical thinkers, contributing members of collaborative work groups, and positive citizens** of their school and local community.
- Our school division believes this is the best preparation we can provide our children with so they have many choices available to choose from as they transition out of K-12 education into the world.



Public Comment for Current Standards Revision Process

- Please send any comments and feedback on the current standards to instruction@doe.virginia.gov.
- Public comment will also be heard in person and by email by the Board of Education on proposed standards in Spring 2022.