

# R E S O L U T I O N

**WHEREAS** the State Board of Education (SBOE) is in no way attempting to restrict access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses in public schools; and

**WHEREAS** the purpose of College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and advanced high school courses is to develop key cognitive skills that include intellectual curiosity, the ability to analyze conflicting points of view, the capability to construct arguments based on valid evidence, and effective problem-solving strategies; and

**WHEREAS** the omission of multiple points of view within the scope of any curriculum framework undermines the basic tenets of our society and education system; and

**WHEREAS** the Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 28.002(h) states: “The State Board of Education and each school district shall foster the continuation of the tradition of teaching United States and Texas history and the free enterprise system in regular subject matter and in reading courses and in the adoption of instructional materials. A primary purpose of the public school curriculum is to prepare thoughtful, active citizens who understand the importance of patriotism and can function productively in a free enterprise society with appreciation for the basic democratic values of our state and national heritage.”; and

**WHEREAS** almost 500,000 U.S. students, including approximately 46,000 in Texas, take the College Board’s Advanced Placement U.S. History (APUSH) course each year, which may be the final and only U.S. History class for these high school students; and

**WHEREAS** in 2013, \$16 million in tuition was saved by those Texas students who attained the required level of achievement on the APUSH exam; and

**WHEREAS** the SBOE is elected by the citizens of Texas and empowered by statute to establish courses of study, and has rulemaking authority related to the AP coursework and to the use of the AP exam in performance acknowledgments; and

**WHEREAS** traditionally APUSH has presented a more balanced view of American history in concert with CCRS; and

**WHEREAS** the College Board, a private, non-elected organization, recently released the APUSH Curriculum Framework that moved away from a balanced approach with regard to many important events in American history; and

**WHEREAS** the Framework reflects a view of American history that is critical of American exceptionalism, the free enterprise system, and emphasizes negative aspects of our nation’s history while minimizing positive aspects; and

**WHEREAS** Howard Zinn’s book *A People’s History of the United States* is recommended as supplementary material in the four model syllabi originally presented at the APUSH 2014 Summer Institute and online; and

**WHEREAS** the Framework omits discussion of various critical topics, including the Founding Fathers and the Declaration of Independence, constitutional principles, significant religious influences, military history, commanders and heroes, as well as individuals who have traditionally been part of APUSH; and

**WHEREAS** the College Board describes the Framework and its learning objectives as the “required knowledge” for measuring student mastery of APUSH, thereby minimizing the teaching of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) mandated by the SBOE for high school graduation and necessary for college and career readiness; and

**WHEREAS**, in light of the foregoing and in response to the efforts of Texas citizens, parents, educators, and members of the SBOE, the College Board has indicated that it will take remedial action, including the following:

- Reformatting the requirements so that teachers are encouraged to use local content and the TEKS in teaching the APUSH course,
- Creating and maintaining a vehicle by which public comments and input may be provided, said vehicle also to include a compilation of comments and a response to same by the College Board,
- Reducing the emphasis on Howard Zinn’s book *A People’s History of the United States*, and
- Increasing the amount of resources available to teachers so as to clarify that alternative perspectives are encouraged, so long as they are supported by historical evidence;

**THEREFORE**, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the SBOE strongly recommends that the College Board revise the APUSH Framework so that it is consistent both with the course’s traditional mission and with the shared purpose of the CCRS, the TEKS and the Texas Education Code; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the SBOE respectfully requests that the College Board revise the key concepts of the APUSH Framework and examination in a transparent manner that accurately reflects U.S. history without an ideological bias and that restores and encourages flexibility to states, school districts and teachers in how to teach the course; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the SBOE will diligently monitor the proposed actions of the College Board to ensure that the remedial measures set out above are implemented in an effective and meaningful manner; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That upon approval of this resolution the Texas State Board of Education shall deliver a copy to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House.

**WITNESS** our signatures this nineteenth day of September, two thousand and fourteen, in Austin, Texas.

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Barbara Cargill, Chair

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Mavis B. Knight, Secretary