

TEKS Review

Provided by James B. Kracht

Expert Reviewer Nominated by SBOE Members Pat Hardy and Bob Craig

1. Do the TEKS ensure that social studies concepts are presented in an accurate and factual manner? Do the standards promote ideological neutrality by balancing people/events from various sides of the political spectrum?

Yes. The committee has done an excellent job of ensuring that the language of the TEKS for Social Studies portrays history and social science facts, concepts, and understandings clearly and accurately for teachers, curriculum developers, and textbook publishers. I have identified a few specific TEKS/SEs that seemed to lack clarity and have made suggestions for modification.

The committee's recommendations seem to maintain ideological neutrality throughout grades K-12. Their suggestions have resulted in providing balance to the curriculum.

2. Is a complete and logical development of social studies concepts followed for each grade level or course?

The TEKS for Social Studies are well organized and provide a logical development of social studies concepts and understandings at each grade level and course. The concepts and understandings are well supported by appropriate factual information. The content seems to be carefully articulated across grade levels.

3. Are historically significant events and people included at the appropriate grade level or subject, or are there significant omissions of important historical happenings and people?

In most cases, historically significant events and people are included at the appropriate grade levels and in the appropriate courses. The review team considered and suggested some modifications to the specific people and events included in the TEKS at particular grade levels. The changes recommended by the committee are useful and have resulted in suggestions that are appropriate to the age of the learners and the context of the curriculum.

4. Have the correct vocabulary and terminology been used?

The committee addressed the question of vocabulary and terminology throughout the TEKS/SEs. The suggestions that they made has tightened the language and updated the terminology used in the disciplines.

5. Are there areas that need to be updated?

The review committee seems to have given careful consideration to the need for updating based on changes in scholarship within the disciplines, events that have occurred, and changes in state, national and international relations. I find the work of the committee quite acceptable.

6. Are the social studies concept/content statements grade-level appropriate.

Grade level appropriateness is very difficult to determine as some educational research supports the idea that even very complex concepts can be taught to young children if enough time, suitable materials, and appropriate instruction are allocated to the task. If grade level appropriateness is taken to mean that there is significant continuity between the TEKS for Social Studies and social studies standards in the majority of other U.S. states, then the content of the TEKS for Social Studies can be considered to be grade-age appropriate. I would rate the success of the committee's work on grade-level appropriateness as mixed and have made some specific suggestions regarding their work.

7. Are the Student Expectations (SEs) clear and specific? Do they focus on academic content?

Student Expectations varied in their clarity and specificity prior to the work of the committee and they still vary. On the whole the review committee has done an exceptional job of revising the existing TEKS/SEs with clarity of communication in mind. In the few cases where I have disagreed with the committee, I have made specific comments.

8. Are the "social studies skills" statements at the end of each grade level/subject handled properly, or is there a better means to address these skills within the standards?

The committee seems to have concentrated on tightening the language and reducing the number of skills TEKS/SEs. In doing this they have not seemed to have lost the focus on these important elements of the social studies curriculum.

9. Do the standards promote an appreciation for the basic values of our state and national heritage? Are the significant aspects of our state and national heritage included at the appropriate grade levels?

The TEKS for Social Studies have a clear and convincing focus on the basic values and heritage of our state and nation at each of the grade levels. This focus first is found in the introductory statement for each grade level and course. Following the introduction, statements regarding our state's basic values and our national heritage can be found throughout the standards and the student expectations. While the citizenship and culture strands of the TEKS contain the majority of standards and student expectations related to state and national values and heritage, similar supportive standards and student expectations can be found within the history, government, and economic strands.

10. Do the standards promote citizenship, patriotism, and an understanding of the benefits of the free enterprise system?

The TEKS for Social Studies are replete with standards and student expectations related to citizenship, patriotism, and the benefits of the free enterprise (capitalism, free market) system. TEKS and SEs provide a consistent emphasis on citizenship and patriotism.

11. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the social studies TEKS can be improved?

The TEKS for Social Studies need a very careful and detailed examination by the review team to insure that they are accurate, up to date in terms of content and terminology, and well articulated across grade levels. Consideration should also be given to whether each standard and student expectation is clear and appropriate. Detailed recommendations for modification should be made by the review committee

When the TEKS for Social Studies were developed, there was the expectation that local districts would develop local curriculum documents based on the TEKS. It was expected that these local documents would contain suggestions for detailed lesson plans and a rich variety of resources to support the TEKS. In a few cases, this expectation was realized. In many cases, however, teachers were presented only with the TEKS. Local curriculum and resources were not developed. It is my suggestion that the SBOE consider establishing a series of grants to enable knowledgeable teams to research, assemble, and provide state-wide training around resources that would assist teachers in teaching and students in more fully attaining the TEKS for Social Studies. These resources might include curriculum units, lesson plans, child and adolescent literature, videos, primary source materials, etc.

12. Is the subject area aligned horizontally and vertically?

Yes. The TEKS for Social Studies are an excellent model of both horizontal and vertical alignment. As one of the early sets of state social studies standards developed, the TEKS for Social Studies became a national model for horizontal and vertical alignment. Although the committee has reduced the explicit reference to social studies SEs that overlap language arts, math, science the opportunity remains for sharing and reinforcing common knowledge and skills between and among the discipline areas.

The TEKS for Social Studies also are characterized by a strong vertical alignment of the standards and student expectations. There are many examples of well-articulated concepts and skills across the K-12 social studies standards.

Specific Suggestions on the TEKS/SEs Recommended by the Committee

113.2. Social Studies, Kindergarten

(5)(B) I disagree with the committee's modification. The committee has removed the identification of human characteristics of place. Places have both physical and human characteristics. It is important for children to be able to identify both.

Secondly, the committee has introduced a new statement "physical environment of a place affects the people who live there". This statement hearkens back to the "environmental determinism" which distorted and hampered geographic thinking for much of the early 20th century. The physical environment impacts humans, but humans also impact the physical environment. The modification provides children with only part of the relationship between humans and the physical environment and denies the interaction between humans and the physical environment. The statement, as modified by the committee, would engender strong disagreement from professional geographers.

(6)(B) I disagree with the new statement inserted by the committee. Economists take the stand that it is difficult if not impossible to differentiate wants and needs. Economists do

not waste time trying to differentiate the two and most commonly use the phrase “wants **and** needs”. A false distinction, not supported by the discipline of economics, is introduced here.

(11)(A) In my opinion, the committee took a fairly clear statement and converted it into a statement that is somewhat complex and confusing.

(14)(B) In my professional judgment, the word “maps” should be retained. The committee states that “maps” is redundant based on 4.C. In truth, they are used in 14.B as a tool for critical thinking. The cognitive objective of 14.B is different than 4.C and “maps” should be retained.

(15)(B) In my professional judgment, the word “maps” should be retained. The committee states that “maps” is redundant based on 4.C. In truth, they are used in 14.B as a tool for social studies skills. The cognitive objective of 14.B is different than 4.C and “maps” should be retained.

113.3. Social Studies, Grade 1

(1)(A) In common usage the spelling of “Veterans Day” does not include an apostrophe.

(6)(C) The committee has deleted “human characteristics of places”, a very important aspect of the way in which professional geographers describe, analyze, and interpret landscapes. The committee also has introduced a new statement “how the physical environment of a place affects...”. This statement harkens back to the “environmental determinism” which distorted and hampered geographic thinking for much of the early 20th century. The physical environment impacts humans, but humans also impact the physical environment. The committee’s modification provides children with only part of the relationship between humans and the physical environment and denies interaction between humans and the physical environment. The statement, as modified by the committee, would give rise to strong disagreement from professional geographers.

(18)(B) I recommend that the committee retain “pictures, maps, timelines, graphs” because they provide very clear examples and guide teachers in the types of materials expected.

113.4. Social Studies, Grade 2

(b)(1) In common usage the spelling of “Veterans Day” does not include an apostrophe.

(3)(B) The committee recommends removing “compare”. Children as young as 3 engage in “comparing and contrasting”. There is no reason to remove the cognitive skill of “comparing” from this statement. The SE as revised by the committee seems to lack clarity.

(6)(C) The committee removes “comparing”, stating that children do not have this skill. Children as young as 3 engage in “comparing and contrasting”. There is no reason to remove the cognitive skill of “comparing” from this statement. The committee, in fact, suggests an new SE (16)(B) that includes “comparing”.

(7)(A) Since “natural hazards” are incorporated into the new (7)(B), the phrase should be removed from (7)(A).

(11)(A) The elimination of “identify functions of government” seems to make the assumption that the only functions of government include establishing order, providing security, and managing conflict. In fact, government has many important functions that were included in the original statement, such as building roads, issuing money, etc. The revision eliminates the functions of government which most second grade students experience and are able to understand. I recommend returning to the original wording.

(18)(B) Maps are a rich and essential source of social studies information about both historical and contemporary settings. I recommend the retention of “maps” to provide clear and unambiguous guidance for teachers as to the types of resources that might be used in developing social studies skills.

113.5. Social Studies, Grade 3

(7) “Free enterprise” is a term that is seldom used by economists. A better choice would be “capitalist economic system”.

(7)(C) I would suggest that this SE be retained. It is very important and can be easily understood by 3rd grade students, e.g., we produce no shoes in our community. Because we produce no shoes, we depend on communities that do produce shoes. Those communities depend on our community and other communities to supply their needs.

(11)(D) I would suggest retaining “serving the community”. Identifying and explaining the importance of serving the community is an important part of citizenship.

(11)(E) My recommendation is to delete new SE added by the committee. It is ambiguous and is not observable or measurable.

(17)(F) I recommend the retention of this SE. The integration and application of mathematics skills in subjects other than mathematics is very important to the retention and mastery of these skills. In addition the interpretation of maps, graphs, charts, tables, and timelines frequently requires the use of mathematical skills.

113.6. Social Studies, Grade 4

(2)(B) I recommend the retention of Christopher Columbus. Columbus is not included in Grade 5 nor is he included in earlier SE. Columbus’s contact with the Western Hemisphere led to the eventual European exploration and settlement of Texas.

(4)(E) I would suggest the addition of “expansion of Anglo settlements” as one of the major elements that placed severe pressure on Native-American life.

(7)(B) As modified by the committee, the SE becomes more restrictive. Prior to modification, the SE included geographic regions based on landforms, climate, and vegetation. The modified SE seems to restrict the geographic regions considered to physiographic regions. The modified SE also implies that the only geographic regions of Texas are those mentioned. I would recommend returning to the original wording.

(9)(B) The addition of “such as shelter, roads, bridges, and dams.” focuses the SE more narrowly on the built environment and may lead teachers and textbook companies to neglect other adaptations and modifications such as removal of timber, agricultural land use, ranching land use, etc. I would suggest returning to the original wording.

(12), (12)(A), (12)(B), (12)(C) I support the parenthetical clarification of “free enterprise” as recommended by the committee. The inclusion of “capitalism, free market” clarifies the seldom used term “free enterprise”.

(13)(B) The addition of “...such as climate and natural resources” narrows the original TEK to just two geographic factors. I would recommend retaining the original wording or adding “location, transportation” to the modified SE recommended by the committee.

(13)(D) Please consider retaining the SE that the committee recommended for deletion on the basis of it being too advanced. I taught 4th grade and have designed instruction for 4th grade. The concepts of mass production, specialization, and division of labor are certainly within the cognitive ability range for 4th grade students.

(16)(C) The recommended new SE is ambiguous and as a result could be inclusive of a wide range of content that could involve a year’s course of study. While the topics suggested in the proposed SE are more appropriate to the content of grade 5, grade 8, and U.S. government, the committee should find it possible to define specific aspects of the content related to the study of Texas. I would urge the committee to clearly define content that is in keeping with the Celebrate Freedom Week law as it applies to the study of Texas. All three national documents mentioned in the suggested SE have had and continue to have an enormous impact on Texas.

(17)(C) I would recommend restating as follows “describe the origins and significance of statewide celebrations such as Texas Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo, and Juneteenth.” Even though Cinco de Mayo is not an official state holiday, it is celebrated statewide and even nationally. Cinco de Mayo could then be removed from (20)(B).

(22)(E) I suggest retaining this SE, perhaps substituting “point of view” for “frame of reference”. “Frame of reference” is a concept that builds upon the concept “point of view” which is introduced in the language arts curriculum. “Point of view” is not a complex concept for 4th graders and it is rather important to include the concept at grade

4, since so much of the 5th grade curriculum involves events that can be interpreted using the concepts of “point of view” and “frames of reference”.

(22)(F) I recommend the retention of this SE because of the importance of developing, applying, and mastering mathematical skills. There does not seem to be redundancy with (22)(C). The integration and application of mathematics skills in subjects other than mathematics is very important to the retention and mastery of these skills.

113.7. Social Studies, Grade 5

(25)(E) I would recommend retaining the original (25)(D) “identify the elements of frame of reference that influenced the participants in an event;”. “Frame of reference” is a concept that is very similar to “point of view” which is introduced in the language arts curriculum. This is not a complex concept for 5th graders and it is rather important to include the concept at this grade level since so much of the 5th grade curriculum involves events that can be viewed through several frames of reference.

(25)(F) I would suggest that the original (25)(F) be retained. I recommend the retention of this SE because of the importance of developing, applying, and mastering mathematical skills. The integration and application of mathematics skills in subjects other than mathematics is very important to the retention and mastery of these skills.

113.22. Social Studies, Grade 6

(b) The committee’s recommendation does not assist the teacher or textbook providers in determining how the content of the Celebrate Freedom Week can or should be incorporated into the content of grade 6. The inclusion in (b) simply states the provisions of the law. It is the committee’s responsibility to provide guidance that will help integrate the content in a responsible manner.

(4)(A), (4)(B), (4)(C), (4)(D) These SEs are repeated and there is a problem with format. Please format correctly and remove the repeated items.

(10)(B) I would suggest a restatement of the SE as follows: “compare and analyze levels of economic development of various societies using indicators such as individual purchasing power, life expectancy, gross domestic product (GDP), GDP per capita, and literacy.” This SE offers the opportunity for students to engage in higher level thinking. Individual purchasing power is a measure that is very concrete and provides a clearer picture of the economic power of the individual in a society.

(15)(E) As written, the SE is ambiguous. There is no direction given to the teacher or the textbook provider as to the basis for analyzing similarities and differences. Given the context it seems that the cultural makeup of the societies would provide a basis, but this is not stated in the text. Perhaps the committee could consider analyzing the similarities and differences in a monocultural society, a mixed society with one culture dominant, and a multicultural society.

113.23. Social Studies, Grade 7

(a)(5) The committee’s recommendation does not assist the teacher or textbook providers in determining how the content of the Celebrate Freedom Week can or should be incorporated into the content of grade 6. The inclusion in (a)(5) simply states the provisions of the law. It is the committee’s responsibility to provide guidance that will help integrate the content in a responsible manner.

(1)(A) I would recommend that the committee consider substituting the words “such as” for the word “including” in this particular SE. Not all Texas historians agree on the titles of or the time spans of “the major eras in Texas history”. The use of the word including would require that these particular named eras become part of the required curriculum, leaving little room for varying interpretations of history. Locking these particular eras in place is antithetical to some of the principles of historiography and ignores the importance of the ongoing work of historians.

(1)(C) This SE has bothered me since its original adoption. It reads like something from a TV quiz show. I would recommend that we list the significant events without the dates or if the committee insists on listing the dates, then list the events with their dates. In any case, do not leave the dates listed without supporting material.

(7)(B) I would suggest that the wording be changed from “examine the impact of” to “describe and compare the impact of”. The change recommended by the committee causes the SE to become somewhat ambiguous in terms of expected student behavior. “Describe and compare” provides a teacher with some guidance about the expected student behavior.

(7)(C) I would recommend the wording be changed from “examine” to “describe”. The change recommended by the committee causes the SE to become somewhat ambiguous in terms of expected student behavior. “Describe and compare” provides a teacher with some guidance about the expected student behavior.

113.24. Social Studies, Grade 8

(1)(A) I would recommend that the committee consider substituting the words “such as” for the word “including” in this particular SE. Not all U.S. historians agree on the titles of or the time spans of “the major eras in U.S. history”. The use of the word “including” would require that these particular named eras be specified as part of the curriculum, leaving little room for varying interpretations of history. Locking these particular eras in place is antithetical to some of the principles of historiography and ignores the importance of the ongoing work of historians.

(1)(C) This SE has bothered me since its original adoption. It reads like something from a TV quiz show. I would recommend that we list the significant events without the dates

or if the committee insists on listing the dates, then list the events with their dates. In any case, do not leave the dates listed without supporting material.

(4)(E) I would recommend restating the SE to read “analyze and evaluate the arguments for and against ratification”. As stated by the committee the SE is without a verb and is repetitive.

(7)(D) I would suggest that the SE be restated as follows: “identify the provisions and compare the effects of congressional compromises prior to the Civil War, including the roles of John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, and Daniel Webster.” The SE as modified by the committee, is well intentioned, but the language is confusing.

113.32. U.S. History Studies Since Reconstruction

(3) The committee’s recommendation does not assist the teacher or textbook providers in determining how the content of the Celebrate Freedom Week can or should be incorporated into the content of U.S. History Studies Since Reconstruction. The inclusion in (b) simply states the provisions of the law. It is the committee’s responsibility to provide guidance that will help integrate the content in a responsible manner.

(1)(D) This SE has bothered me since its original adoption. It reads like something from a TV quiz show. I would recommend that we list the significant events without the dates or if the committee insists on listing the dates, then list the events with their dates. In any case, do not leave the dates listed without supporting material.

(10)(B) I would suggest deleting this SE. If, however, the committee chooses to retain it, I would recommend that the wording be changed as follows: “identify significant conservative and liberal advocacy organizations and individuals and the role they play in shaping government policy.” It is not necessary to provide examples.

(10)(C) I recommend replacing the word “discuss...” with “ identify examples and explain possible causes of...”. As stated by the committee, the SE is not observable or measurable and gives teachers little guidance as to the student expectation.

(10)(D) I recommend replacing the word “discuss...” with “analyze the role of third party candidates and evaluate their impact on presidential elections.” As stated by the committee, the SE is not observable or measurable and gives teachers little guidance as to the student expectation.

(17)(A) I would suggest replacing the word “discuss” with “analyze”. As stated by the committee, the SE is not observable or measurable and gives teachers little guidance as to the student expectation.

(23)(A) Return the wording to the original, retaining the word “era”. The committee version seems to use the word “genres” inappropriately.

(23)(B) I recommend adding the example of “Hip Hop” after the Chicano Mural Movement. I would also suggest that the word “including” be replaced with “such as”. Teachers should be free to select other appropriate examples of cultural movements in art, music, and literature and to substitute them for some of the examples included in the SE.

(24)(B) Replace the work “discuss” with the words “describe and evaluate”. As stated by the committee, the TEK is not observable or measurable and gives teachers little guidance as to the student expectation.

113.33. World History Studies

(c) The committee’s recommendation does not assist the teacher or textbook providers in determining how the content of the Celebrate Freedom Week can or should be incorporated into the content of World History Studies. The inclusion in (c) simply states the provisions of the law. It is the committee’s responsibility to provide guidance that will help integrate the content in a responsible manner.

(1)(A) The committee’s recommendation is acceptable, however, I would suggest the following revision in wording, “describe the major political, economic, social, and cultural characteristics...”

(1)(H) This SE has bothered me since its original adoption. It reads like something from a TV quiz show. I would recommend that we list the significant events without the dates or if the committee insists on listing the dates, then list the events with their dates. In any case, do not leave the dates listed without supporting material.

(6)(A), (6)(B), (6)(C), (7)(A) The deletion of these TEKS/SEs results in greatly decreased attention Africa, Mesoamerica, South America, and Asia. This deletion will allow more time to be given to Western Civilization, but at the expense of the Eastern Hemisphere. The SBOE should give consideration to the tradeoffs implicit in the committee’s recommendation to delete these specific TEKS/SEs.

(15)(B), (15)(C) I would strongly recommend retaining the SEs that the committee has deleted or in lieu of that, modifying the wording of the new (15)(B) to read, “analyze the influence of physical and human geographic factors...”

(16)(B) I would suggest retaining the SE that the committee has recommended deleting. B contains meaning that has not been incorporated into other SEs. This is a very important topic that deserves to be clearly stated for teachers.

(20)(A), (20)(B), (20)(C) The committee has recommended that these TEKS/SEs be deleted. I would suggest that architecture, literature, music, and drama are an important and universal voice of all cultures and therefore should be retained.

113.34. World Geography Studies

Note: The committee's work on the geography TEKS seems to indicate an unfamiliarity with the discipline of geography and with the National Standards for Geography, *Geography for Life*, upon which the World Geography Studies TEKS are based. The National Geography Standards, sponsored by the Association of American Geographers, the National Council for Geographic Education, and the National Geographic Society, guided the original TEKS writing team as they attempted to incorporate the most important concepts and accurate analytical frameworks employed by the discipline of geography.

The World Geography Studies section of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies has been singled out for acclaim by national groups during the past 10 years based on its outstanding quality and comprehensiveness. Although this course has served as a national model, there are more suggestions for modification to World Geography Studies than to any other portion of the TEKS for Social Studies.

The original TEKS writing team used explicit and careful wording that established a pattern for providing teachers with clear guidance regarding student expectations. The current committee has made frequently suggestions for rewording the original TEKS/SEs that result in a change of meaning or even in the loss of meaning that was intended by the original writing team. At times the change or loss in meaning causes the revised SEs to fall short of providing a full, accurate, and correct meaning of a concept or relationship.

My overall recommendation for this section is to retain the original wording throughout because it represents a comprehensive understanding of the discipline, is closely aligned with AP expectations, and reflects college expectations for introductory geography classes. I have commented on a few of the SEs below to illustrate the problems associated with the committees modification of the TEKS/SEs in World Geography Studies.

(1)(A) I would argue for the retention of the words "...physical and human...". Without these words there are individuals who would narrowly interpret "geography" as meaning only physical patterns and processes.

(4)(A) The committee has restated the original SE. Although the original SE was clearly stated, the committee recommendation is acceptable if the term "wind systems" is added to the list of factors that influence characteristics and distribution of climate regions. Without the factor of "wind systems" the characteristics and distribution of climate regions is sometimes difficult to explain.

(4)(C) I would ask the committee to retain the original wording for the SE. The change in wording suggested by the committee removes the meaning from the statement. The idea is that biomes (distributions of plants and animals) result from interactions between and among climate, geology, soil, and vegetation. As revised the complexity of the interaction is removed and the revision suggests that biomes depend only on climate.

(5)(C) I would suggest retaining the original wording of the SE. The committee does not seem to understand the nature of the geographic phrase “character of a place”. Character is a summation and an interaction of political, economic, social, cultural, and physical characteristics. Character is not simply a list of characteristics.

(6)(B) The committee has restated the original SE. Although the original SE was clearly stated, the committee recommendation is acceptable if the term “access” is added to the list of factors that influence changes in settlements. Without the factor of “access” the change in settlements is sometimes difficult to explain.

(7)(B) I would suggest retaining the original wording of the SE rather than accepting the suggested modification by the committee. The modification neglects to include how physical geography affects the routes, flows and destinations of migrants.

(7)(D) I would suggest accepting the committee’s intent, but modifying the SE as follows: “analyze the possible effects of increased global connectivity on the population of various societies including consideration of pandemics, loss of local culture, and standard of living.”

(8)(B) I would recommend retaining the original wording of the SE. The committee’s recommendation restricts the SE to “consequences of extreme weather” rather than more fully incorporating a range of natural hazards. I would also suggest maintaining “such as” rather than “including” for the examples. This will give teachers the freedom to address natural hazards that occur on a regular basis, but which might not be included in a list.

(10)(C) I would recommend accepting the committee’s new SE, “compare global trade patterns...” I would also suggest that the original SE be maintained and renumbered as (10)(D) “compare the ways people satisfy their basic needs through the production of goods and services such as subsistence agriculture versus market oriented agriculture or cottage industries versus commercial industries.” This is a very important topic, basic to world geography, and it deserves an examination by high school students.

(11)(C) I recommend retaining the original wording of the SE. The elements included in the original SE are more useful to geographers in explaining the location and patterns of economic activities.

(12)(A), (12)(B), (12)(C) I would recommend retaining the original wording of the SEs. The revisions and deletions suggested by the committee result in a total change in the content focus of this TEK.

(16)(A) The committee has introduced a new statement “ how physical geography influences...”. This statement harkens back to the “environmental determinism” which distorted and hampered geographic thinking for much of the early 20th century. The physical environment impacts humans, but humans also impact the physical environment.

The modification provides children with only part of the relationship between humans and the physical environment.

(20)(B) As suggested by the committee, the SE removes from the curriculum, the consideration of environmental consequences of agriculture, mining, oil and gas production, and other primary economic activities. This is an important topic that should be retained in the curriculum. I would recommend retaining the original wording.

113.35 United States Government

(b)(4)(c) The committee's recommendation does not assist the teacher or textbook providers in determining how the content of the Celebrate Freedom Week can or should be incorporated into the content of United States Government. The inclusion in (b) simply states the provisions of the law. It is the committee's responsibility to provide guidance that will help integrate the content in a responsible manner.

(14)(B) I would recommend keeping the original wording. Even the committee has suggested new wording, it seems to miss some of the meaning of the original. This is a very important issue and teachers need clear guidance on the SE.

113.36 Psychology

The committee has provided a thorough restructuring of the psychology course, deleting substantial numbers of previous TEKS and SEs and proposing new TEKS and SEs that are more effective in describing the key concepts and understandings of the discipline of psychology. The proposed restructuring results in a course that is more reflective of the current thinking in psychology and that is more clearly aligned with college-level expectations for entry level psychology courses. The proposed restructuring shows careful thought and should be well received by teachers.

113.37 Sociology

The committee substantially restructured the sociology course, deleting TEKS and SEs related the strands of: science, technology, and society; economics; geography; government; and culture. Although these strands are eliminated, some of their elements are incorporated into new TEKS and SEs proposed for the course. The proposed restructuring results in a course that is more reflective of the discipline of sociology and that is more clearly aligned with college-level expectations for entry level sociology courses. The proposed restructuring shows careful thought and should be well received by teachers.

113.38 Special Topics in Social Studies

(d)(1) In SEs A through F the perspectives of history, political science, economics, and sociology are mentioned. The discipline of geography is excluded. Geography offers a knowledge base, significant concepts, and an analytical framework that allows the

discipline to make a valuable contribution to problem solving and decision making in the social studies. The absence of geography from the SEs may lead some teachers to believe that geographic perspectives should be excluded from Special Topics in Social Studies. Geographic perspectives should be included in the SEs.

113.39 Social Studies Research Methods

(2)(g) The committee recommends removing “qualitative and quantitative research” from (c)(1) and placing the terms in (2)(g). In doing this they neglected to include “basic philosophical foundation for qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry”. This wording should be incorporated in (2)(g) because the philosophical foundations and theoretical bases of these two approaches to inquiry are of extreme importance in guiding the inquiry into specific problems.

118.2. Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and Its Benefits

As a general recommendation for this section, I would suggest that each time free enterprise system appears, it should be followed by capitalism, free market in parentheses.

The inclusion of Personal Financial Literacy into the economics course severely limits the number of economic concepts treated and the depth in which they are examined. The course as presently structured is not a strong preparation for college level economics courses. The short term result will be that many students will avoid taking economics at the college level or will not do well if they do take such a course. The long term result will be an “educated” populace that is economically illiterate. What is the long term cost-benefit of a population that does not understand economics? I would suggest the SBOE consider shifting economics to another area of the curriculum outside the social studies or considering a ½ credit course in Personal Financial Literacy within the social studies curriculum and increasing the overall credits required for the social studies. Either of these solutions would allow a more intensive treatment of the important economic concepts that are necessary to a competent and well educated population.