

# **Approving Guidelines for Using Supplementary Written Materials to Teach the Documents of Virginia History and the United States Constitution**

## **Resolution Number 2015-14**

**January 22, 2015**

The Board of Education approves the Guidelines for Using Supplementary Written Materials to Teach the Documents of Virginia History and the United States Constitution.

The guidelines are as follows:

### **Guidelines for Using Supplementary Written Materials to Teach the Documents of Virginia History and the United States Constitution**

#### **Legislative Mandate: House Bill 197**

Legislation in the 2014 General Assembly amended § 22.1-201 of the *Code of Virginia* to require teachers to use accurate restatements of the principles contained in the study of documents of Virginia history and the United States Constitution when using supplementary written materials.

Specifically, the *Code* now states (emphasis added)

*To increase knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities thereunder and to enhance the understanding of Virginia's unique role in the history of the United States, the Declaration of American Independence, the general principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights, the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, the charters of the Virginia Company of April 10, 1606, May 23, 1609, and March 12, 1612, and the Virginia Declaration of Rights shall be thoroughly explained and taught by teachers to pupils in public elementary, middle, and high schools. Emphasis shall be given to the relationship between these documents and Virginia history, and to citizenship responsibilities inherent in the rights included in these documents. **Each teacher shall ensure that all supplementary written materials that he uses to teach these documents contain accurate restatements of the principles contained in such documents.** Written examinations as to each of such documents shall be given.*

#### **Summary of Important Issues**

State law requires that the following documents shall be taught to all pupils in the public schools of the Commonwealth: the Declaration of American Independence, the general principles of the Constitution of the United States, the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, the charters of April 10, 1606, May 23, 1609, and March 12, 1612, of the Virginia Company, and the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Emphasis shall be given to the citizenship responsibilities inherent in the rights included in these documents. Each teacher shall ensure that all supplementary written materials that he uses to teach these documents contain accurate restatements of the principles contained in such documents.

### **Primary Source Documents**

Primary source documents provide a window into the past—unfiltered access to the record of artistic, social, scientific, and political thought and achievement during the specific period under study, produced by people who lived during that period. Using primary source documents in classroom instruction engages students, develops critical thinking skills, and allows students to construct knowledge as they form reasoned conclusions, base their conclusions on evidence, and connect primary sources to the context in which they were created, synthesizing information from multiple sources. (Library of Congress) <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>

### **Supplementary Documents**

The Virginia Department of Education provides *Documents of American History* that include the text of the Constitution of Virginia, Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, Declaration of Independence, Constitution of the United States of America with Amendments and the Virginia Charters online at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/history\\_socialscience/resources/documents\\_american\\_history.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/history_socialscience/resources/documents_american_history.pdf). Each teacher shall ensure that all supplementary written materials that he/she uses to teach these documents contain accurate restatements of the principles contained in such documents.

### **Samples of Primary Source Lesson Plans and Written Materials**

Four History and Social Science Standards of Learning Institutes were held in the fall of 2012. The Institutes used primary sources to provide participants with examples of how effective history and social science instruction may be enhanced for students in each course range and how teachers can improve student achievement in content areas of greatest challenge. [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/history/professional\\_development/institutes/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/history/professional_development/institutes/index.shtml)

### **Samples of Supplementary Written Materials Available Online**

Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>

Library of Virginia

<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/>

National History Education Clearinghouse

<http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/using-primary-sources/24490>

National Archives

<http://www.archives.gov/education/>

Each teacher shall ensure that all supplementary written materials that he/she uses to teach these documents contain accurate restatements of the principles contained in such documents.

*Christian N. Braunlich*

*President*

*Minutes of January 22, 2015*