



November 12, 2018

Dear Members of the Texas State Board of Education,

We write as professors of U.S. history and related fields to respond to the wording of several of the Texas Social Studies and History standards, particularly those that relate to the issues of slavery, the Civil War, and the Civil Rights era. In 2010, the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) rewrote the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) guidelines in a highly polarizing and hotly contested process.

Disregarding the input and testimony of several historians, the SBOE adopted standards that reflected the ideological commitments of board members rather than longstanding historical consensus. During the course of these discussions, one board member advanced the misguided notion that slavery had been an “after issue” or “side issue” of the Civil War. Board members also sought to diminish the role of women and minorities in the struggle for civil rights and to portray the resistance to civil rights legislation as a strictly partisan pursuit, ignoring key legislation and practices such as the Black Codes and subsequent Jim Crow segregation that followed. Now that these unwieldy and misleading standards have been in place for several years, the SBOE has recognized that they must “streamline” the TEKS and make them more coherent and consistent.

We hope your objective involves aligning the standards with historical truths grounded in primary document research and the work of practicing historians throughout the country. To this end, we commend the curriculum committee responsible for “streamlining” the TEKS for their hard work in clarifying some of the SBOE’s more troubling formulations. However, we urge the SBOE to go even further to bring the standards in line with settled historical knowledge. We take specific issue with the Grade 5 TEKS 4D and Grade 8 TEKS 8B, which highlight “states’ rights” as a cause of the Civil War. In doing so, the TEKS standards resurrect the “Lost Cause” myth, a long-discredited version of history first promoted in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to glorify the Confederate past and reinforce white supremacist policies such as the disenfranchisement of African-Americans and Jim Crow segregation. We are pleased to see that Stonewall Jackson is no longer suggested as a role model in the Grade 8 TEKS on “effective leadership in a constitutional republic.”

The TEKS as currently written also recast Civil Rights history in light of current political divisions. High school U.S. History TEKS 9G specifically singles out the “Congressional

bloc of southern Democrats” as the key “group” opposing civil rights legislation in what could only be construed as an effort to cast the Republican Party as the heroes of the Civil Rights era. Such a characterization drastically simplifies a history of bipartisan mobilization on both sides of the debate. It further ignores the role of a Southern Democrat, Lyndon Baines Johnson, who was instrumental in pushing legislation through a Democratic-controlled Congress.

As they are currently written, the TEKS standards promote a gross misrepresentation of history and leave Texas students ill-prepared to succeed in college level history courses. Perhaps more importantly, they deny our students a basic understanding of the historical roots of the most pressing contemporary problems. The morally unconscionable institution of slavery and the systematic denial of equal rights are difficult and shameful aspects of our collective past, but to minimize them in the historical education of Texas’ children is to hamstring our collective future.

Respectfully signed,

University affiliations listed for identification purposes only; *area of study in italics*

**Robert H. Abzug**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor of History and American  
Studies  
*American History*

**Niyi Afolabi, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*African Diaspora Studies*

**Rodolfo John Alaniz**

University of Texas at Austin  
Research Affiliate  
*History of Science*

**Curby Alexander**

Texas Christian University  
Associate Professor of Professional  
Practice  
*Teacher Education*

**Mark C. Anderson, PhD**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Dean, Honors College  
*Biology*

**Jennifer Andrella, PhD Student**

Michigan State University  
*US history*

**Madison Ardizzi**

University of British Columbia  
Master of Arts Graduate Student  
*Socio-cultural Kinesiology*

**Adam Arenson**

Manhattan College, and formerly UTEP  
Associate Professor of History  
*US History*

**Katherine Bankole-Medina**

Coppin State University  
Professor  
*History*

**Erika Banneker, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*American History*

**Roger C. Barnes**

University of the Incarnate Word  
Professor of Sociology/Dept. Chair  
*U.S. Civil Rights Movement*

**Annaliza Battiston**

The University of Kent  
Master of Arts  
*Modern History*

**Betsy Beasley, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*American Studies*

**Daina Ramey Berry, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*Oliver H. Radkey Regents Professor of  
History, African and African Diaspora  
Studies*

**Michael Bindis**

Mount St. Joseph University  
Assistant Professor  
*Secondary Education*

**Dennis Bixler-Márquez**

University of Texas at El Paso  
Professor  
*Chicano Studies*

**Keisha N. Blain**

University of Pittsburgh  
Assistant Professor of History  
*US History*

**Miriam Bodian**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**John B. Boles**

Rice University  
Professor of History  
*US South*

**Julie Elizabeth Brice**

University of Waikato  
Doctoral Candidate  
*Feminist Sport Sociology*

**Benjamin Brower**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Anthony Brown**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Department of Curriculum and  
Instruction, Center for African and  
African American Studies*

**Bree'ya Brown**

University of Texas at Austin  
History M.A.  
*Environmental History*

**Jonathan C. Brown**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor of History  
*History*

**Keffrelyn Brown**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Department of Curriculum and  
Instruction, Center for Women's and  
Gender Studies, Center for African and  
African American Studies*

**Sean Brown**

George Mason University  
Adjunct Professor  
*Sociology*

**Walter L. Buenger**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History of the Southwest and Texas*

**Nicole Burrowes**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*Black Studies/History*

**Alexander X. Byrd**

Rice University  
Assoc. Professor of History  
*African American History*

**Aaron Byungjoo Bae, PhD**

Arizona State University  
Lecturer  
*Asian Pacific American Studies*

**Charlotte Canning**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor of Drama  
*US 19/20/21<sup>st</sup> Century History*

**Laura Cannon**

University of the Incarnate Word  
Assistant Professor  
*History*

**Don Carleton**

University of Texas at Austin  
Exec. Dir. Briscoe Center  
*U. S. History*

**Christopher Carmona**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Assistant Professor  
*Mexican American Studies*

**Kate Carte**

Southern Methodist University  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Timothy G. Cashman**

University of Texas at El Paso  
Professor  
*Social Studies Education, Comparative  
and Transnational Education*

**Indrani Chatterjee**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**Catherine Clinton**

University of Texas in San Antonio  
Denman Chair of American History  
*US history*

**Jay Coakley**

University of Colorado, Colorado Springs  
Professor Emeritus  
*Social Sciences*

**Judith G. Coffin**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Richard Cogley, PhD**

Southern Methodist University

**Peggy Connally**

Texas Woman's University  
Adjunct Professor  
*Government*

**Emily Conroy-Krutz**

Michigan State University  
Associate Professor  
*US History*

**Cary Cordova**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*American Studies*

**Edward Countryman**

Southern Methodist University  
University Professor  
*Early America, Revolution*

**Richard C. Crepeau**

University of Central Florida  
Professor of History Emeritus  
*20th Century U.S.*

**Brandon Jamar Crooms**

University of Texas  
PhD Student  
*Physical Education Teacher Education*

**J. Brent Crosson, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*Anthropology*

**Rebecca A. Czuchry, PhD**

Texas Lutheran University  
Professor  
*Race and Gender*

**William Alexander Darity, Jr.**

Duke University  
Samuel DuBois Cook Professor of Public  
Policy  
*Public Policy, African and African  
American Studies, and Economics*

**Simon Darnell**

University of Toronto  
Assistant Professor  
*Sport Sociology*

**Janet M. Davis, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*American Studies; US History*

**Susan Deans-Smith**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*Latin American History*

**Brian DeLay**

University of California, Berkeley  
Associate Professor of History  
*19th Century Texas, Borderlands*

**Crista DeLuzio**

Southern Methodist University  
Associate Professor of History  
*US History*

**Christopher Deutsch**

University of Missouri  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
*20th Century U.S. History*

**Michele K. Donnelly**

Kent State University  
Assistant Professor  
*Sociology of Sport and History of Sport*

**David D. Doyle, Jr.**

Southern Methodist University  
Assistant Dean, Dedman College  
*American History*

**Sherry Edmunds-Flett**

Simon Fraser University  
Doctoral Candidate  
*African-Canadian History*

**Carole Emberton**

University at Buffalo (SUNY)  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Jeffrey A. Engel**

Southern Methodist University  
Professor  
*American History*

**K.T. Ewing**

Tennessee State University  
Assistant Professor  
*History*

**Ashley Farmer**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*History & African & African Diaspora*

**Garrett Felber**

University of Mississippi  
Assistant Professor  
*US History*

**Neil Foley**

Southern Methodist University  
Professor  
*U.S. History*

**Gabrielle Foreman, PhD**

University of Delaware  
Ned B. Allen Professor  
*African American History and Culture*

**George B. Forgie**

University of Texas at Austin  
University Distinguished Teaching  
Associate Professor  
*American Civil War*

**Brian Franklin**

Southern Methodist University  
Associate Director and Lecturer  
*Early American History, Religion and Politics*

**Joel Stephen Franks**

San Jose State University  
Lecturer  
*Asian American/American Studies*

**Barbara A. Gannon**

University of Central Florida  
Associate Professor of History  
*Civil War and Military History*

**Virginia Garrard**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**Trinidad Gonzales**

South Texas College  
History Instructor  
*Chicana/o History*

**Sylvia Gonzalez-Gorman, PhD**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Assistant Professor  
*Political Science*

**Fon L. Gordon**

University of Central Florida  
Associate Professor  
*African American History*

**Michelle Yvonne Gordon, PhD**

Emory University  
*African American Studies*

**Jennifer Graber**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor of Religious Studies  
*American Religious History*

**Andrew Grainger**

University of Maryland and Massey  
University, New Zealand  
Lecturer  
*Cultural Studies*

**Laurie Green, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*History*

**Whitney Griffin**

University of Central Florida  
Postdoctoral Scholar  
*Higher Education and Athletics*

**Kali Gross**

Rutgers-New Brunswick  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of  
History African American History,  
American  
*History, Black Women's History*

**Lauren Gutterman**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*American Studies, History and Women's  
and Gender Studies*

**Rick Halperin**

Southern Methodist University  
Director, SMU Human Rights Program  
*Human Rights*

**Kenneth M. Hamilton**

Southern Methodist University  
Professor  
*American History*

**Maria Hammack**

University of Texas at Austin  
Doctoral Candidate  
*History*

**LaShawn Harris, PhD**

Michigan State University

**Louis Harrison, Jr.**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Curriculum and Instruction*

**Billy Hawkins**

University of Houston Professor  
*Health and Human Performance*

**Lauren N. Henley**

University of Texas at Austin  
Doctoral Candidate  
*History*

**Sonia Hernandez**

Texas A&M University  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Jose Maria Herrera, PhD**

University of Texas at El Paso  
Assistant Professor of Instruction  
*Social Studies Education*

**Kirsten Hextrum**

University of Oklahoma  
Assistant Professor  
*Educational Leadership & Policy Studies*

**Felipe Hinojosa**

Texas A&M University  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Michael Lee Hirsch**

Huston-Tillotson University  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
*Sociology*

**Steven Hoelscher**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Geographical History*

**Madeline Hsu**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Asian American, Migration*

**Robert Icenhauer-Ramirez, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Lecturer  
*American Civil War*

**Yasmiyn Irizarry**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*Educational Inequality*

**Katharine Jager, PhD**

The University of Houston-Downtown  
Associate Professor  
*Medieval Studies*

**Elizabeth Jemison**

Clemson University  
Assistant Professor  
*American Religious History*

**Mónica A. Jiménez**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*20th Century History*

**Susan Joel**

Springfield College  
Associate Professor  
*Sociology*

**Jessica Marie Johnson**

Johns Hopkins University  
Assistant Professor  
*History*

**Jacqueline Jones**

University of Texas at Austin E  
llen C. Temple Chair in Women's  
History/Mastin Gentry White Professor  
of Southern History  
*U. S. Southern History*

**Stephanie Jones-Rogers, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Harrington Faculty Fellow  
*American Slavery*

**Nathan Kalman-Lamb, PhD**

Duke University  
Lecturing Fellow  
*Sociology*

**Mark J. Kaswan**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Associate Professor  
*Political Science*

**Michelle Lorene Keck**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Associate Professor  
*Political Science*

**Carolee Klimchock**

University of Texas at Dallas  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
*U.S. History and Gender Studies*

**Thomas Knock**

Southern Methodist University  
Professor of History  
*20th Century US and Foreign Policy*

**Annelies Knoppers, PhD**

Utrecht University  
*Sociology*

**Daniel G. Krutka**

University of North Texas  
Assistant Professor of Social Studies  
Education  
*Social Studies Education*

**Ethan J. Kyle**

California State University, Fresno  
Professor of History  
*Nineteenth-century America*

**Leah LaGrone Ochoa**

Texas Christian University  
Graduate Student  
*Texas and Women's History*

**Sarah Lazzeroni**

Columbia University  
Research Associate, Teachers College  
*Sociology*



**Talitha LeFlouria**

University of Virginia  
Lisa Smith Discovery Associate Professor  
in African and African-American Studies  
*African American Women's History and  
Carceral Studies*

**Sharon M. Leon, PhD**

Michigan State University  
Associate Professor  
*Slavery, Digital History, American  
Religion*

**Randolph Lewis**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*American Studies*

**Tatjana Lichtenstein**

University of Texas at Austin  
*East European Jewish History/Holocaust*

**Gabe Logan**

Northern Michigan University  
Professor  
*History and Secondary Education*

**Stephanie Logan**

Springfield College  
Associate Professor/Department Chair  
*Elementary Social Studies*

**Alvin Logan, PhD**

Seattle University  
Adjunct Professor  
*Education, Curriculum and Instruction*

**Tim Lynch**

Mount St. Joseph University  
Professor of History  
*American History*

**Gregory H. Maddox**

Texas Southern University  
Professor of History  
*History*

**Minkah Makalani, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*African and African American Studies*

**Sequoia Maner**

Southwestern University  
Mellon Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow  
*Feminist Studies*

**Mary Maroon**

Mills College  
Student  
*BioPsychology*

**Alberto A. Martinez**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History of Science*

**Tracie Matysik**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Alexis McCrossen**

Southern Methodist University  
Professor  
*History*

**Deborah McDowell**

University of Virginia  
Alice Griffin Professor of English  
*African American Literature*

**PJ McGann**

University of Michigan  
L-IV  
*Sociology*

**Sam McPherson**

Michigan State University  
*Faculty Education*

**Jeffrey L. Meikle**

University of Texas at Austin  
Stiles Professor  
*American Studies*

**Olivia Mena, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
*African American Studies*

**Mary E. Mendoza**

Penn State University and Southern  
Methodist University  
Assistant Professor of History and  
Latino/a Studies and the David J Weber  
Fellow for the Study of Southwestern  
America  
*Borderlands History*

**Julia Mickenberg**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*American Studies*

**Steven Mintz**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**Jeffrey Montez de Oca**

University of Colorado, Colorado Springs  
Associate Professor  
*Sociology - Media and Popular Culture*

**Dominic G. Morais**

Trinity University  
Assistant Professor of Sport  
Management  
*Historical and Contemporary Fitness  
Industry*

**William E. Moran**

Alvernia University  
Adjunct  
*History*

**Michelle Moyd**

Indiana University – Bloomington  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Lisa Myers, EdD**

Texas A&M University-Texarkana  
BAAS Director/Instructor of Adult  
Education  
*Adult Learning and Development*

**Mark Anthony Neal**

Duke University  
James B. Duke Professor  
*African American Studies*

**Joan Neuberger**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**Fikile Nxumalo**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*Education*

**Gregory O'Malley**

University of California Santa Cruz  
Associate Professor of History  
*Early America*

**Chelsi West Ohueri**

University of Texas at Austin  
Postdoctoral Fellow  
*Population Health; Anthropology;  
Russian and East European Studies*

**Robert Olwell, PhD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*American History*

**Clayton Oppenhuizen**

Michigan State University  
Graduate Student  
*History*

**Doug Page, PhD**

Penn State Altoona  
Associate Professor of Teaching  
*World History, Early Modern Europe*

**Victoria Paraschak**

University of Windsor  
Professor  
*Indigenous Peoples and Sport*

**Nakia Parker**

University of Texas at Austin  
Ph.D. Candidate

**Anna Pegler-Gordon**

Michigan State University  
Professor  
*History*

**Signe Peterson Fourmy**

University of Texas at Austin  
PhD Candidate  
*History, the American South, and Slavery*

**Anastasia Pratt**

SUNY Empire State College  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Valerie Purry, PhD**

Jackson State University  
Office Manager/Adjunct  
*Urban and Regional Planning*

**Megan Raby**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*History of Science*

**Raul A. Ramos, PhD**

University of Houston  
Associate Professor  
*American History*

**Susan J. Rayl**

SUNY - Cortland  
Associate Professor  
*History of Sport*

**Richard J. Reddick, EdD**

University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor, Educational  
Leadership & Policy/African and African  
Diaspora Studies; Fellow in the Trice  
Professorship in Plan II Honors  
*Higher Education*

**Bryan Register**

University of Texas at Austin  
Lecturer  
*Philosophy*

**Robert J. Lake**

Robert Douglas College  
Instructor  
*Sport History*

**Peter M. Robinson, PhD**

Mount St. Joseph University  
*Professor of History*

**Ariel Ron**

Southern Methodist University  
Glenn M. Linden Assistant Professor of  
the Civil War Era  
*US History and Civil War Era*

**Thomas Edward Rorke**  
Pennsylvania State University  
Ph.D Candidate  
*History and Kinesiology*

**Caitlin Rosenthal**  
University of California, Berkeley  
Assistant Professor  
*US Economic history*

**Melvin Rouse, Jr.**  
University of Puget Sound  
Assistant Professor  
*Psychology & Neuroscience*

**Lilliana Patricia Saldaña, PhD**  
University of Texas at San Antonio  
Associate Professor  
*Mexican American Studies*

**Cinthia Salinas**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*Social Studies Education*

**Virginia Scharff**  
University of New Mexico  
Distinguished Professor of History  
Emerita  
*U.S. History*

**John R. Schleppe**  
University of Dayton  
Professor  
*Sport History*

**Megan Seaholm**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Senior Lecturer  
*US History*

**Chad Seales**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*Religious Studies*

**James Sidbury**  
Rice University  
Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the  
Humanities  
*Early American and African American*

**Dana Simmons**  
University of California, Riverside  
Associate Professor  
*History*

**Mark C. Smith, PhD**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor of American Studies  
and History  
*American Cultural History*

**Joshua Specht, PhD**  
Monash University  
*US History*

**Jeremi Suri**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*History*

**Jermaine Thibodeaux**  
University of Texas at Austin  
PhD Candidate  
*US History*

**Adam Thomas**  
Ohio State University  
President's Postdoctoral Fellow  
*History*

**Shirley Thompson**  
University of Texas at Austin  
Associate Professor  
*Department of American Studies and  
Department of African and African  
Diaspora Studies*

**Elizabeth Todd-Breland**

University of Illinois at Chicago  
Assistant Professor  
*US History*

**Alan Tully**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor of History  
*Early America*

**Lauren Turek**

Trinity University  
Assistant Professor of History  
*Modern U.S. History and U.S. Foreign Relations*

**Ann Twinam**

University of Texas at Austin  
Walter Prescott Chair, Professor  
*Latin America*

**Omar Valerio-Jimenez**

University of Texas at San Antonio  
Associate Professor  
*Borderlands, Latino, Immigration, American West*

**Cynthia Veraldo**

Mount St. Joseph University  
Assistant Professor  
*Sport Management*

**Sam Vong**

University of Texas at Austin  
Assistant Professor  
*20th Century U.S. History; Asian American History*

**Juliet E.K. Walker**

University of Texas at Austin  
Professor  
*African American Business History and Capitalism*

**Theresa Walton-Fisette**

Kent State University  
Professor  
*Cultural Studies*

**Crystal Webster**

University of Texas at San Antonio  
Assistant Professor  
*African American History*

**Benjamin Wright**

University of Texas at Dallas  
Assistant Professor of History  
*19th Century, United States*

**Jeremy Zallen**

Lafayette College  
Assistant Professor  
*U.S. History*