

October 16, 2023

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Governor, State of Minnesota  
130 State Capitol  
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

via electronic delivery

Dear Governor Tim Walz,

On September 25, 2023, the Minnesota Department of Education published their intent to adopt the proposed academic standards for social studies. This triggered a comment period closing October 25, 2023, with an anticipated public hearing on November 8, 2023.

However, before these rules are adopted, there is a serious and urgent need for their immediate revision. Therefore, we are calling on you to direct the Commissioner of Education to immediately retract the notice of intent to adopt the new standards. Additionally, the commissioner needs to convene a new stakeholder group to remove the harmful and hateful language currently included in the proposed standards.

Hate has no place in our schools, and certainly has no place in our academic standards.

As Governor, you have rightly stood against members of your own party to condemn the terrorist attacks on the sovereign State of Israel, and the chair of your own party condemned the statement issued by the Democratic Socialists of America-Twin Cities for similar rhetoric that can be found in your proposed social studies standards and benchmarks.

Your proposed standards and benchmarks for social studies includes references to "settler colonialism" and "anti-colonialism" that share unfortunate, and hopefully unintended, similarities to the language used by the Democratic Socialists in their anti-Semitic rant against Israel and the United States. This rhetoric paints a picture that these democratically elected governments of Israel and the United States are apartheid regimes to be resisted and toppled.

Also, in recent days, we have seen anti-Semitic and pro-Hamas rallies under the banner of "resistance," which is also a central theme of the new social studies standards. This same theme of "resistance" could be interpreted by our impressionable youth as an invitation to violence.

We cannot allow or tolerate academic standards that read as if they were written by the Democratic-Socialists of America. It is unconscionable to even consider the possibility that our state academic standards would not only defend but condone the type of violence we have seen in recent days against the State of Israel under the guise of "anti-colonialism" or "resistance."

For these reasons, we urgently request reconsideration of your proposed standards and benchmarks before the possibility these standards are adopted.

Sincerely,



Representative Peggy Bennett



Representative Ron Kresha



Minority Leader Lisa Demuth



Representative Paul Torkelson



Representative Pam Altendorf



Representative Patti Anderson



Representative Paul Anderson



Representative Jeff Backer



Representative Ben Bakeberg



Representative Dave Baker



Representative Matt Bliss



Representative John Burkel



Representative Brian Daniels



Representative Kurt Daudt



Representative Greg Davids



Representative Ben Davis



Representative Jeff Dotseth



Representative Elliott Engen



Representative Marj Fogelman



Representative Mary Franson



Representative Pat Garofalo



Representative Dawn Gillman



Representative Matt Grossell



Representative Bobbie Harder



Representative Josh Heintzeman



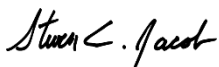
Representative Shane Hudella



Representative Walter Hudson



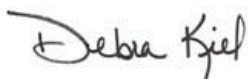
Representative Spencer Igo



Representative Steven Jacob



Representative Brian Johnson



Representative Deb Kiel



Representative Krista Knudsen



Representative Jon Koznick



Representative Joe McDonald



Representative Shane Mekeland



Representative Nathan Nelson



Representative Harry Niska



Representative Bernie Perryman



Representative Duane Quam



Representative Joe Schomacker



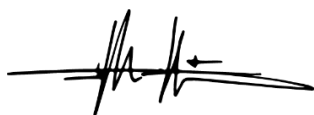
Representative Peggy Scott



Representative Chris Swedzinski



Representative Nolan West



Representative Mark Wiens



Representative Thomas Murphy



Representative Anne Neu Brindley



Representative Tim O'Driscoll



Representative Marion Rarick



Representative Kristin Robbins



Representative Isaac Schultz



Representative Roger J. Skraba



Representative Dean Urdahl



Representative Mike Wiener



Representative Jeff Witte

*Natalie Zeleznikar*

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