

AGENDA ITEM

54-114 MAY 9 2014

DATE: May 8, 2014

TO: **Members, Board Committee on Operations**
Members, Board of Trustees

FROM: **Joseph Dunn, Chief Executive Officer**

SUBJECT: **Support Position Re SB 1057 (Corbett): History/Social Studies**
Content Standards/Civics Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This agenda item seeks approval of a legislative measure impacting civics learning and engagement among K-12 students in California.

SB 1057, introduced by State Senate Majority Leader Ellen M. Corbett (D-East Bay), was recently amended to allow for the content of the history-social science standards to be updated.

Academic standards define the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire in a subject area for each grade level.

American government is included in the history-social studies standards. However, national tests of civics knowledge indicate that schools are failing to impart basic information to students about how their government works.

It has been over 15 years since the State Board of Education last adopted the history social-science content standards on October 9, 1998.

The California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning recently released draft recommendations, which include revising the state's history-social science content standards and accompanying curriculum frameworks.

BACKGROUND

SB 1057 (Corbett): History-Social Science Content Standards

As introduced, SB 1057 required the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a diversity advisory group to revise the history-social science standards by March 30, 2016, and required the State Board of Education to adopt, reject or modify

the revised standards by July 30, 2016.

On April 24, 2014, the Senate Education Committee voted 7-1 in support of SB 1057 with Committee amendments:

- The Committee concluded the history-social science standards should be revised to update content, rather than solely to address diversity.
- The Committee recommended a process that requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a group of experts in history-social science, including elementary and secondary history-social science teachers, principals, school district or county office of education administrators, university professors, scholars of all major religious, ethnic, racial and cultural groups, and individuals who represent the perspectives of all major religious, ethnic, racial and cultural groups, genders, sexual orientations, and disability statuses.
- Numerous bills have been enacted in recent years to require the consideration of additional topics to be included in the next revision of the history-social science framework. Topics include the role of Filipino farm workers, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender Americans, Braceros, financial literacy, and historical documents such as the Articles of Confederation and California Constitution. The Committee amendments include requiring consideration of these topics.
- The Committee amendments included pushing dates back one year to provide additional time for the development of the standards. The bill, as introduced, required the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to present the recommended history-social science standards by March 30, 2016, and to be adopted, rejected, or modified by July 30, 2016.

The Committee highlighted that they passed SB 897 (Steinberg) on March 26, 2014, which requires the Instructional Quality Commission to consider whether and how to incorporate the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards into the history-social science framework.

The State Bar supports SB 897 and the C3 Framework as the basis for updating the state's history-social science standards.

DISCUSSION

On February 28, 2013, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced the introduction of the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning.

The Task Force is charged with exploring and elevating the status of civic learning and engagement in the state's curriculum, instructional practices, professional development

for teachers, student testing, accountability systems, existing infrastructure, and partnership with the community and business. The Task Force plans to complete its final *Civic Learning Blueprint* by July 2014.

The Task Force recently released draft recommendations. The recommendations related to SB 1057 include: (1) Revising the state's history-social science content standards and accompanying curriculum frameworks; and (2) Establishing a timeline and process for updating the history-social science standards, and complete the history-social science framework to define desired outcomes for civic learning knowledge and skills at every grade level K-12.

Supporting SB 1057, as amended, could help to align the State Bar's civic learning and engagement efforts with the efforts of the Task Force, as outlined on page 4 of the Task Force's draft recommendations.

FISCAL / PERSONNEL IMPACT

Any costs for implementing the legislative measures will be covered by state general funds.

RULE AMENDMENTS

None.

BOARD BOOK IMPACT

None.

RECOMMENDATION

This agenda item recommends approval of support for legislation that would promote civics learning and engagement among the state's K-12 students.

PROPOSED BOARD COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:

Should the Board Committee on Operations agree with the above recommendation, the following resolution would be appropriate:

RESOLVED, that the Board Committee on Operations recommends that the Board approves support of the proposed legislation to promote civics learning and engagement among the state's K-12 students.

PROPOSED BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION:

Should the Board concur with the recommendation of the Board Committee on Operations, the following resolution would be in order:

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Board Committee on Operations, the Board hereby approves support the proposed legislation to promote civics learning and engagement among the state's K-12 students.