

State Board of Education
TEKS Social Studies
Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at 9 am

Chairwoman Lowe, Vice Chairman Allen and members, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you on Item 10 of today's agenda: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies K-5/

In September, State Representative Eddie Rodriguez, on behalf of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus, came before the Board to speak about the concerns that the Caucus had regarding some of the criticisms and recommendations made by a couple of the Social Studies Expert Reviewers concerning Cesar Chavez and Thurgood Marshall.

At that meeting 8,000 plus letters were presented to the Board as evidence that there is overwhelming support by Texans and citizens across the United States, for Cesar Chavez to be included in Texas history books, specifically, for Chavez to be included in the 5th grade social studies curriculum.

Unfortunately, today in the "Historical Figures in Social Studies TEKS Draft proposal", published in the SBOE website dated October 17th, 2009, Cesar Chavez is not included as "required to be taught" in the 5th grade but is listed only as what "**maybe be taught" to 5th graders.**

YET, there are 23 REQUIRED HISTORICAL FIGURES for Grade 5, but THERE ARE NONE....ZERO.....NIN GUN Latino historical figure required to be taught in the 5th grade.

What you are demonstrating with this document and recommendation, is that the comments of the 44 member Mexican American Legislative Caucus, representing Latinos across the state of Texas, was ignored.

Now, it is no longer just about Cesar Chavez. It is about an entire community!

Latinos make up 40% of Texas and we have made great contributions to this state and to our nation. Unfortunately, Your document does a poor job of reflecting this. Let me provide a summary of your document.

Of the required historical figures to be included:

There are 162 required historical figures grades kindergarten to 12th grade. Of the 162, there are only 16 Latino historical figures included.

There are 2 total required historical figures for Kindergarten; however, there are Zero Latino historical figures in Kindergarten

There are 4 total required historical figures for Grade 1, however, There are Zero Latino historical figures in Grade 1

There are zero required historical figures for grade 2, and There are Zero Latino historical figures in Grade 2

There are 15 total required historical figures for Grade 3, however, There are only 3 Latinos historical figures including 1 Latina

There are 19 total required historical figures for Grade 4, however, There are only 4 Latinos historical figures

There are 23 total required historical figures for Grade 5, there are on ZERO Latino historical figures for Grade 5, this mind you, after you received 8,000 letter on behalf of Cesar Chavez as a significant historical figure.

There are 22 total required historical figures for Grade 7, and there are 6 Latino historical figures for Grade 7.

There are 23 total required historical figures for Grade 8, and there is only 1 Latino historical figure for Grade 8.

There are 23 total required historical figures for World History and yet, in the world and world history, Latinos represent ZERO HISTORICAL FIGURES according to your reviewers.

There are 27 total required historical figures for US History, and yet only 2 Latinos - - - Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta.

There are 19 total required historical figures for US History, and yet there are ZERO, ZERO, ZERO...NONE, NO LATINOS IN GOVERNMENT are required historical figures?

What happened to Irma Rangel - - - the first Latina elected to the legislature in the history of Texas, Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez the first Latino elected to Congress from Texas, Mayor Raymond Telles of El Paso, the TRUE first Hispanic Mayor of Texas, Mayor Henry Cisneros the second Hispanic Mayor in Texas, and former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development under Clinton, and Dr. Jose Angel Gutierrez among others....

Are not their contributions important to recognize and empower young students, especially Latino students in search of role models who come from similar backgrounds?

And finally, there are 3 required historical figures for Economics, 2 for Psychology, and 5 for Sociology and yet there are ZERO Latinos in these categories as required historical figures.

I applaud Board Member Mary Helen Berlanga for raising the issue to the public.

There are letters from the Texas House of Representatives Mexican American Legislative Caucus and Senate Hispanic Caucus that will be presented to you later.

Thank you for award me the opportunity to move my comments on Item 10 ahead of the schedule so I can catch my plane.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, it is my intent to ask interested members of our committee to review the agency.