

CITIZEN'S REPORT – CONCLUSIONS OF A CSCOPE LESSON PLAN REVIEWER

CSCOPE: The Obamacare of Texas Public Education

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Earlier this year, I volunteered to be a reviewer of CSCOPE lesson plans. I requested to be on the review panel that addressed the 11th grade U. S. history since 1877 course. I was well qualified for such an assignment.

During 2002, I was a volunteer reviewer of the McGraw-Hill textbook for this course, *The American Republic Since 1877*. I documented some 200 concerns with the textbook. My SBOE representative Geraldine “Tincy” Miller was so impressed with my work that she requested McGraw-Hill editors to meet with me in Dallas. As a result of the meeting, about 100 changes were made to the textbook, creating a more ideologically balanced product.

Then, during 2009 through May of 2010, I was a member of another review panel, this time to create proposed U. S. history standards changes to the SBOE. I was the only conservative, and only non-educator on the panel. The eight others were educators, who varied politically from left of center to having contempt for traditional American values. I was outvoted by 8 to 1 on nearly every issue. In October of 2009, the panel presented a leftist, biased proposal to the SBOE for its consideration and adoption. In my opinion, the document was unacceptable.

So during November 2009, I prepared over 50 balancing amendments to the panel’s proposal. Dr. Don McLeroy, then chairman of the SBOE, accepted the amendments package. During the SBOE meetings in January, March, and May of 2010, most of the amendments were accepted and become part of the adopted standard.

My book, *Texas Trounces the Left’s War on History*, tells the story about how the efforts to produce a left-biased set of standards was defeated in Texas.

CSCOPE IS NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH SBOE APPROVED STANDARDS

CSCOPE critics have exposed lesson plans that reveal CSCOPE as a rogue implementation of the legislatively-banned common core philosophy in Texas.

But CSCOPE proponents publicly claim that its lesson plans are aligned with the SBOE-adopted TEKS.

The pro-CSCOPE folks are wrong.

Yes, the CSCOPE lesson plans that categorized Boston Tea Party patriots as terrorists, and Islamic 911 terrorists as freedom fighters, have quietly disappeared from the CSCOPE arsenal.

But those lessons have been replaced by more subtle and clever ways to indoctrinate Texas' students.

As a CSCOPE volunteer, I reviewed eleven U. S. history lessons. My past experience gives me a wealth of experience regarding these evaluations.

The original TEKS proposed by the 2009 review panel were left-biased and politically correct. The balancing amendments adopted by the SBOE in 2010 were conservative, and politically incorrect.

Beginning with the first lesson I reviewed, it became evident that the CSCOPE lesson plan authors focused on the politically correct portions of the TEKS, while omitting those that did not contribute to their leftist ideology.

Lets review lesson-by-lesson examples of this bias.

Unit 8, lesson 1:

This is a seven day unit covering World War II. It parallels TEKS 7 in the 2011 SBOE-approved United States history standard. This attempt by CSCOPE lesson writers to comply with the standard is exceptionally flawed. It falls far short in providing sufficient detail regarding the important aspects of WWII. It sacrifices academic facts in favor of multicultural and social issues regarding the war.

There is undue emphasis on “sidebar” events, at the expense of WWII historical facts. More class and research time is spent on the Navajo Code Talkers, the Tuskegee Airmen, and the Flying Tigers, than on the American military leaders of WWII: Generals Eisenhower, MacArthur, Marshall, Bradley, Patton, and Admiral Nimitz. Only one class period (50 minutes) of the seven period Unit 8 module is devoted to the key defining events of WWII: The Battle of Midway, U. S. military advancement through the Pacific Islands, the Bataan Death March, the Invasion of Normandy, Fighting the war on multiple fronts, Liberation of concentration camps, and the development of atomic weapons. Fifty minutes to cover all.

Rather, the approach in Unit 8 is taken to its laughable extreme in classroom time-wasting, by assigning students to write acrostic (look up that one) poems using the last names of WWII leaders and significant groups.

The CSCOPE lesson plan writers practiced selective implementation of the underlying TEKS. As an example, Japanese internment is well covered in the CSCOPE lesson, but there is no mention of the corresponding internment of Germans and Italians. Over time, leftist curriculum writers have used Japanese internment as their example of alleged American racism. They have ignored the German and Italian internments since inclusion

of those raises the issue from one of alleged racism to one of national security. The lesson plan writers also ignored inclusion of TEKS 7C, concerning the U. S. Office of War Information, the government's attempt to "manage" the release of war-related information and dispense government propaganda. Also, Unit 8 barely mentions the Holocaust, especially when compared with the amount of material about the Japanese internment.

A significant example of bias occurs in the website suggested for student research about President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Given that the Japanese internment had been referenced numerous times in the lesson plans (3 out of 7 items in a WWII "primary source" lesson dealt with Japanese internment issues), the Roosevelt biography conveniently ignores the fact that FDR himself issued Executive Order 9066, thereby beginning the internment process.

The website FDR bio even ends with the politically biased statement,
"Did you know? On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. Today the Obama Administration continues to protect and ensure Social Security will be there for future generations."

Unit 9, Lesson 1:

This is a three-day module covering post-WWII economic prosperity. The attempt by CSCOPE lesson writers to comply with the standard is exceptionally flawed. It falls far short in providing sufficient detail regarding the important aspects of the topic. Some superfluous topics are presented, others from the TEKS are ignored.

Insufficient coverage of the growth of agriculture and business (TEKS 17B). There is no mention of the increase in agriculture efficiency, and little mention of the growth of business, both contributing to the emergence of the United States as a post-WWII power.

No coverage of the economic impact of defense spending on the business cycle and education priorities (TEKS 17C). The Russians launch of Sputnik in 1957 spurred both defense spending and the need for engineers, and as a result the United States became competitive in the space race.

Trivial approach to culture considerations. Three songs each from 1945 and the 1950s? Create a song, poem, or mural? Really! More important might be to cover the societal decay in TV programming: from the family oriented "Father Knows Best" and "Leave it to Beaver", to today's sex-implying "Friends" and the homosexual-lifestyle promoting "Will and Grace". Critical thinking skills should relate to.....How much damage has this done in an increasingly permissive society?

In God we trust. Need to add a key reason: At that time America was a more religious, moral country, with higher church attendance, and a stronger belief in God.

Ignores scientific discoveries and technological innovations in agriculture, the military, and medicines, including vaccines (TEKS 27B). The lesson ignores this student expectation.

Unit 9, Lesson 2:

This is an eight-day module covering causes and effects of the Cold War.

DAY 1. Add to item 5. “Show nighttime satellite picture of North and South Korea. Ask students what this means.” Add item 6 to day 1. “Ask students to contrast economic development and prosperity between East and West Germany, and North and South Korea in the years after their division.”

DAY 3. Eliminate Option 2 cartoon...too tempting to promote the ideology of the teacher. Use Option 1 instead, and stick to the facts associated with the six events. Rather than the question “Is the Cold War over”, present the facts about how America’s economic strength overwhelmed Russia’s collectivist economy, and caused the eventual breakup of the USSR.

DAY 4/5. There is no guidance given to delineate the definitions between ideological and military conflicts. This lack of clear definition will confuse students and lead to inconclusive results in the exercise. In addition, “Member #5” under item 3 should read, “McCarthyism, the HUAC, communists in government, and the Venona Papers”.

DAY 6. Students do not have the background of knowledge to be “voting” on whether a topic is ideology or military driven. The teacher as the authority figure in the classroom should provide the correct classification.

Unit 10, Lesson 1:

This is an 8 day lesson covering significant leaders, events, issues and policies. I come away from this lesson thinking that it is longer than justified, especially remembering that EVERY military engagement of World War II had to be covered in one 50-minute period. This comparison reveals that the CSCOPE curriculum writers are far more focused on largely negative social and multicultural issues than on the traditional history of America’s military achievements.

The CSCOPE lesson plan writers practiced selective implementation of the underlying TEKS. The left’s agenda is to present the lesson as a totally positive effort, fully supported by the Democrat Party. There are two major problems of selective implementation in this lesson. First, the unintended consequences of the Great Society program (TEKS 17D), as well as the civil rights movement’s destructive expansion of welfare programs is ignored in the lesson. In reality, the Great Society program’s unintended consequences were devastating: explosion of out of-wedlock births, fatherless households, and the general destruction of the inner city black family. Second, the fact that Southern Democrats resisted the civil rights legislation is a well-protected

secret by historians. In addition, it is not mentioned in this lesson that pro-segregation governors George Wallace, Orval Faubus, and Lester Maddox were all Democrats, while Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Republican.

Unit 11, Lesson 1:

This is a five day lesson, covering foreign policy and important events.

Additional material should be presented to explain the extreme radical activities of the anti-war protestors. Possible examples could be: the traitorous activity of Jane Fonda, spitting on veterans in the San Francisco airport as they returned from Vietnam, burning draft cards, destructive activity on college campuses, running away to Canada.

Unit 11, Lesson 2:

This is a 5 day lesson covering domestic policy and important events. This lesson reveals typical extreme bias and political correctness by the CSCOPE curriculum writers. While the Chicano Mural Movement is mentioned in the TEKS, it hardly warrants being a centerpiece for cultural issues during the 1960s. Rock and roll (Buddy Holly, Elvis) had a far greater impact on the culture of the day. Further, the chart on the Bill of Rights is confusing to relate to Amendments 2 through 8. The Second Amendment is NOT about hunting, as depicted in the icon. Rather, the Second Amendment was created to allow citizens to protect themselves against tyrannical government. Finally, the five "Economics" items do not include an "unintended consequences" line item as called out in the TEKS. This omission is selective, politically correct implementation of the TEKS at its very worst. Critique follows:

DAY 1. Add focus on 1960s rock and roll as called out in the TEKS. Suggest examples of Texan Buddy Holly and Elvis.

DAY 2. Add the line item "unintended consequences" to the five items: defense spending, spending on education, great society, affirmative action, and title IX. My notes KEY for this item should reflect.....

Defense Spending: Created the "military-industrial" complex. While this contributed to U. S. security in the world, it was very expensive to taxpayers and was fraught with alleged waste.

Spending on education: Gave rise to decades of increased spending on education, without producing corresponding improvements.

Great Society: Expansion of misguided welfare programs gave rise to an explosion of out-of-wedlock births, fatherless households, inner city poverty and crime, and the destruction of the inner city black family. Further, unrealistic expectations from civil rights legislation and the great society led to the race riots and inner city destruction during the 1960s. This was perhaps the key cultural issue of the 1960s, and it is

irresponsible to ignore it in this lesson.

Affirmative action: In today's world, affirmative action allows acceptance of minority students into colleges and universities, while rejecting white students who have scored higher on entrance exams. As this policy is increasingly challenged on fairness issues, there has been significant litigation to end affirmative action.

Title IX: The expansion of women's sports at the college and high school level was often implemented in the absence of common sense. Often men's sports programs, with a broad group of participants, were eliminated in deference to a woman's sport with few participants.

DAY 3. The icons on the Amendments 2 through 8 chart are difficult to assign to the specific amendment. An egregious attempt at indoctrination is the implication that the Second Amendment is for hunters. The right to keep and bear arms allows for self protection by citizens.

DAY 4. This subject needs the guidance of the teacher. Start a classroom discussion of about America's manufacturing industry moving overseas, and what government incentives are required to bring it back.

Unit 12, Lesson 1:

This is a 9-day lesson covering the period 1970-1990. Many CSCOPE lessons ignore topics that are distasteful to the leftist curriculum writers. This lesson is no different.

President Reagan's foreign policy accomplishments are shortchanged. Under the topic Instructional Procedures/EXPLORE-EXPLAIN/Item 2e, add "Tear Down This Wall" and "end of the Cold War" to list.

No base knowledge of 5th amendment property rights is included in the lesson. Students do not study what the Fifth Amendment is intended to mean. Without that base knowledge, the "what-if" exercises, like many CSCOPE lessons, rely on emotional reactions and feelings.

Clarify contrasting periods in "conservative resurgence" lesson. Rather than contrasting the 1950s/1960s versus 1970s/1980s, a clearer analysis would be: "Compare and contrast government policies between the Johnson and Reagan administrations."

No mention of achieving the American dream (TEKS 18A).

No credit given to the free enterprise system. The exercise describing the availability of new, technology-rich products does not give credit to the free enterprise system as required in TEKS 28C.

Unit 13, Lesson 1:

This is a 4-day lesson covering the period 1990 to the present.

Patriot act lesson is one-sided. Lesson is presented from the DOJ perspective, and does not include a critique of the Act (i.e. arrest and detention of a citizen without a warrant).

Constitutional/unconstitutional discussion would be more effective with updated example. Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus and FDR's Japanese internment are old news. This lesson would be more timely if the issue discussed is the Constitutionality (equal treatment under the law) of young, healthy people being forced to pay disproportionately high health care premiums, while older, indigent people are subsidized (ACA, Obamacare).

TEKS 11C not adequately taught. TEKS 11C specifies "Evaluate efforts by Global Organizations to undermine U. S. sovereignty through use of treaties". Rather, the lesson is a bland discussion of the pros and cons of international organizations and treaties.

Unit 13, Lesson 2:

This is a 5-day lesson covering the period 1990 to the present.

Levee failure. There is excessive information presented regarding the physical characteristics of the levees that failed. This takes away from the societal results of the disaster: Failure of the local government to implement an evacuation plan; post-flooding looting and crime; permanent departure of a large proportion of the New Orleans underclass, changing the voting demographics of the city and creating significant, permanent welfare obligations in refugee cities such as Houston; and finally, presenting the opportunity to rebuild the failing New Orleans public school system from the ground up.

No discussion of the impact of illegal immigration. This requirement is clearly called out in TEKS 13B. The impact of 12-20 million illegal immigrants needs to be covered. The subject is not included on immigration chart. The impact of illegals is severe: Increased crime, burgeoning welfare costs, growth of the economic underclass.

Lists of advocacy organizations is bland. Substitute instead a few significant advocacy groups of the 21st century: The rise of the Tea Party; homosexual advocacy groups, Religious Rights groups, anti- and pro-abortion groups, etc.

Three modern women. While called out in the TEKS, this module smacks of gender and political bias, favoring first women, and second, liberal women. This is a TEKS failure, however, but welcomed nevertheless by the multicultural tendencies of the CSCOPE curriculum writers.

Unit 14, Lesson 1:

This is a 4-day lesson meant to be a review of U. S. history. Critique of this lesson follows:

Students are unprepared to perform historiography analysis of history. The 2012 Roper Survey of student U. S. history literacy reveals that students are woefully ignorant of U. S. history, as follows: Less than 20% could name James Madison as the “Father of the Constitution”. Less than half knew that George Washington was the American general at the Battle of Yorktown. Only 17% knew that the words “government of the people, by the people, and for the people” came from Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. Given this level of illiteracy, students are grossly unqualified to take the next step, that of evaluating and analyzing historical events of which they have little knowledge. Class time would be far better spent reviewing the academic facts of history.

Differing perspectives section needs update. More relevant issues such as “Peace thru Strength” versus pacifism, and Self-reliance versus government dependence are more relevant to modern issues than those suggested in the lesson.

Unit 14, Lesson 2:

This is a 5-day lesson meant to be a review of the 10 eras comprising U. S. history. Critique of this lesson follows:

The segment covering proposed constitutional amendments that failed is irrelevant. In any event, the large number of proposed amendments cannot be adequately covered in 10 minutes.

The more recent “eras” are not well thought out and should be redefined. For example, the 1970-1990 is considered a single era, but in reality 1970-1980 was a period of civil unrest accompanied by economic malaise, while 1980-mid 1990s was characterized by lower taxes and the return of economic prosperity due to the conservative resurgence in America. The recent eras are better defined as:

Civil Rights and civil unrest

The Reagan and conservative era (1980-mid-1990s)

The move towards socialism (mid-1990s to present)

Discussion of current issues should be made more specific. Current events should be selected from a menu that includes: Obamacare, Income redistribution policy, controls over government taxing and spending, immigration reform proposals. This list could be modified as time passes and other issues emerge.

CONCLUSION – LESSON PLANS ANALYSIS

This concludes the section of issues specific to each lesson plan. A significant question of each lesson analysis reads, “Does this lesson cover the TEKS indicated therein as being applicable to this lesson?”. My answer to each was “no”.

It is instructive to note that each of the other three reviewers who submitted responses for these lessons answered “yes” to this question for each of the eleven lessons. Upon questioning, facilitator Barbara Evans acknowledged that each reviewer had a lesser knowledge than I of the indicated TEKS, and also performed a less rigorous analysis of TEKS coverage of the lessons. I fear that this may be true across all 400 lessons, and casts serious suspicions regarding the validity of this whole review exercise.

ADDITIONAL CONCERN – TEACHER IS NO LONGER CLASSROOM AUTHORITY

Aside from specific issues with each lesson, I have broad issues applicable to all lessons that I reviewed.

Sacrifice of academic facts and teacher as authority, in favor of project-based learning. This approach de-emphasizes the presentation of academic facts to the students. The concept of “Whole Class Instruction” is ignored. Instead, students reach their own conclusions through the use of Project-Based Learning assignments. The lesson plan includes little or no provision for the teacher to act as classroom authority to correct any false student conclusions. In the PBL world, the teacher is only a facilitator rather than the classroom authority. The students “learn” about topics based upon the ideology of the research materials that are provided for them. Project-Based Learning is an integral element of Common Core methodology, but the lesson writers ignore that Common Core was banned in Texas public schools during the 2013 Texas legislature session (HB 462).

ADDITIONAL CONCERN – UN-VETTED, UN-REVIEWED STUDENT RESEARCH MATERIALS

Unvetted, unreviewed information sources for student research. Sources for student research are not defined. For good and valid reasons, the SBOE has traditionally conducted extensive textbook reviews. Books that go through that process are thoroughly reviewed and vetted: By citizens, parents, teachers, and taxpayers, for errors and biased material. The vetted textbooks then become source materials for student learning. Conversely, the selection process for CSCOPE research materials appears to be at the discretion of the local school district’s administrators, and subject to the ideology of those individuals. At any rate, the materials are not reviewed nor vetted by the local community. This should be a concern for all, since available sources for student research run the gamut from Dr. Larry Schweikart’s pro-America *Patriot’s History of the United States*, to former National Council for Social Studies national convention keynote speaker Howard Zinn’s hate-America screed, *Peoples’ History of the United States*.

The inclusion of Zinn is a bit extreme? But In November 2008, the self-described historian was the keynote speaker at the National Council for Social Studies convention hosted in Houston by its Texas’ Texas Council for Social Studies teachers organization.

Zinn's presentation was enthusiastically received, and teacher materials to teach his ideology were ordered by many of the convention attendees.

There is a problem with this. Howard Zinn (who died in January 2010) promoted a uniformly negative view of America. His book reveals that "Howard Zinn's narrative merely equates American history with all that is evil, cynical, and unjust in the past 500 years".

In an environment in which there is clearly no classroom authority, students' conclusions may become a muddle of unfounded emotions and opinions, rather than academic facts. An example of how the education establishment abuses the absence of vetted sources occurred in September 2002. On the first anniversary of 9/11, the teachers' union National Education Association (NEA) released some 100 lesson plans, many of which blamed America for the terrorist attack. In one lesson, teachers were even cautioned, "Do not suggest that any groups are responsible for the attacks". Such lessons have no place on the "menu" of research sources, but may appear depending on the ideology of the lesson preparer.

TEACHER AS FACILITATOR AND LIBERAL-BIAS MATERIALS LEADS TO STUDENT INDOCTRINATION

The combination of not presenting academic facts, along with providing un-vetted, un-researched, ideology-biased student research materials, is the perfect recipe for an education establishment committed to indoctrinating Texas' students with its socialist ideology.

A perfect example of this occurred in the school district where I live. On April 22, I attended an event for senior citizens in my district. One stop was a visit to the 4th grade class at an elementary school.

The students were busy with their IPADS. I sat down with a little guy who was studying energy policy and the environment.

I noticed that his source for the lesson was a liberal-biased publication, *Time Magazine for Kids*.

So I asked the child, "What do you think of oil companies?"

His knee-jerk response was, "Oil companies are bad. They extract oil from the Earth".

Further, he volunteered, "All fuel in our gas tanks should be 100% ethanol."

The TASA visioning document tells us, "Students are not just consumers of knowledge, they are creators of knowledge as well."

And from my district's visioning document, "Students are given choices regarding what they learn".

So this 9 year old little guy, who is being exposed to biased, unvetted information, is allowed to believe the information that is being fed to him.

In the project-based learning, visioning environment, teachers are simply facilitators, rather than the classroom authority and presenter of facts.

So no one will tell this child the facts: Energy costs to produce a gallon of ethanol exceed the energy available from that gallon.

No one will tell this child that due to rapidly improving technologies of locating and extracting oil and gas, the U. S. is poised to not only surpass middle east production, but to create domestic reserves for the next 100 years.

In short, this child is being indoctrinated with biased information, that is unvetted and unreviewed.

What is the potential damage to this nine year old child?

Let's fast forward this little guy's life by about 11 years.

On May 28, I attended Congressman Pete Sessions town hall meeting in Richardson.

Outside the Eiseman Center, I was approached by a group of disheveled young people, one of whom was young lady in her early twenties.

The girl's distinguishing characteristic was a prominent nose ring.

The young lady, carrying a "Stop Fracking" sign, was adamant that fossil fuel exploration is destroying the Earth's biodiversity.

The tragedy is that this young woman, due to her brainwashed, dogmatic behavior, is virtually unemployable as a professional in mainstream America.

CONCLUSION – CSCOPE IS THE OBAMACARE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION – IT CANNOT BE FIXED

CSCOPE should be discontinued. At the beginning of this article, I suggested that CSCOPE is The Obamacare of Texas Public Education. This is true. Like those behind Obamacare, CSCOPE proponents in Texas are so out of the Texas mainstream, so determined, that they will not compromise their liberal agenda. The ESCs, TASA, TASB, are dominated by administrators who have the same level of arrogance as

Department of Education head Arne Duncan, who recently revealed that in his judgment those who oppose common core (and its little brother CSCOPE) are just “angry white suburban moms”. Just as there is no hope of fixing Obamacare, neither will pro-CSCOPE educators ever compromise.