

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ON THE STATUS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND  
TEACHING OF VIRGINIA HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT**

**IN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**TO**

**THE GOVERNOR**

**AND**

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 23**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
1983**



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**RICHMOND 23216**

January 13, 1983

**TO:** The Honorable Charles S. Robb  
Members of the General Assembly

**FROM:** The Board of Education

**SUBJECT:** Interim Report on House Joint Resolution No. 60

Enclosed is a progress report on HJR-60 agreed to by the 1982 Session of the General Assembly, involving an assessment of instructional material for the teaching of Virginia History and Government in public schools in the Commonwealth.

Enclosures  
bcw

## **Progress Report on Implementation Of Recommendations Contained in House Document No. 5**

House Joint Resolution No. 60 requested that the Department of Education undertake an assessment of the current status of instructional materials and teaching of Virginia history and government in the public schools of the Commonwealth. As a result of the study (House Document No. 5), a comprehensive plan for the identification of objectives, content outlines and specifications for designing additional instructional materials for teaching about Virginia was developed. The following provides a status of the accomplishment of priority recommendations pursued by the Department of Education during the 1981-82 school year.

### **Grade 4 - Virginia History 1607 - 1850**

As a priority recommendation of House Document No. 5, the Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed a Virginia Studies Analysis Committee composed of educators, historians, geographers, and lay persons to evaluate three existing programs for use in the study of Virginia at the fourth grade level. Among the programs recommended, with minor revisions, was the Commonwealth Studies Project written by personnel in the Hanover County Schools with the assistance of a statewide planning council. Upon receipt of copyright by the Department in August 1981, bids were submitted to publishers for the printing, marketing, and distributing of that proposed program. The Department and the publisher working together made the program available to schools in the spring of 1982 in a softbound series. As of September 1, 1982, approximately 115 school divisions are using the Commonwealth Studies Program in the fourth grade. Efforts are currently under way to merge two of the softbound student texts into a single hardbound edition. The hardbound edition will be available in 1985 for the next regular state adoption in social studies education.

### **Grade 7 - Virginia: 1830 to the Present**

Two existing publications are being considered as supplementary student texts for use at grade seven. These publications titled, Virginia: The People's History and The Story of Virginia: 1830-Present and its State and Local Government, will undergo an analysis by a committee appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Funds have been allocated to finance the work of this committee which will hold its initial meeting in mid-January 1983. Based on the committee's analysis of these programs, plans will be formulated to get the program(s) printed, marketed, and available for distribution to local school divisions by September 1983.

### **Grade 11 - Virginia and United States History**

Only preliminary efforts have been initiated at this grade level. Unlike other grade levels where Virginia history and government are taught, few publications appropriate for use by students at this level exist. Staff members of the Department of Education have been working with Virginia historians in refining plans for the development of requested materials at this level. Also funding possibilities, including the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and National Endowment of the Humanities, have been pursued. However, no source of funding has been found. Efforts will continue to secure funding for the development of Virginia history and government materials for use at grade eleven during the 1982-83 school year.

### **Grade 12 - Virginia and United States Government**

The State Chamber of Commerce and the Department have undertaken a project to revise the publication titled, Virginia's State Government for use by students in the Virginia and United States government course. The revised publication will be available in September 1983. Further, a pilot-study grant has been awarded to the Charlottesville City Schools for development of student resource learning packets. Materials developed by Charlottesville and the Virginia Institute of Government will parallel chapters of the revised Chamber student text and a series of films to be developed by the Department. The first of the inquiry/interactive film series will be available to schools in September 1983 at the same time the initial student resources learning packets and the student text will be available.

The production and use of instructional materials identified for grades 4, 7, 11, and 12 will be a positive force, as has already been expressed by those educators using the fourth grade series, in strengthening the teaching of Virginia history and government in the public schools of Virginia. Toward the end of furthering a better understanding of the history and government of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Department of Education will continue efforts to implement recommendations contained in House Document No. 5 as a priority during the 1983-84 school year.