



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2024

Contact: Dan Isett
405-570-9203

Walters Announces Revisions to Social Studies Standards
New Approach Highlights American Exceptionalism
Enlists A-List Executive Review Committee

Oklahoma City, Okla – In conjunction with the celebration of 248 years of American independence this week, State Superintendent Ryan Walters announced a complete overhaul to Oklahoma’s social studies standards today. The new approach to social studies standards will ensure the social studies standards are chronologically sound, reinforced, and reiterated through a student’s primary and secondary education, will empower schools to teach from primary sources, and will inspire in students a love of country and a proper understanding of the American founding. It will also eliminate DEI, indoctrination, and return teaching back to the basics in Oklahoma.

The revised standards will incorporate the introduction of the Bible as an instructional resource that Superintendent Walters announced last week as well as the ensuring that social studies reflect accuracy and not political slanted viewpoints. A renewed emphasis on biography and the study of inspiring leaders in history will be Oklahoma standards more in line with a classical learning model.

“Oklahomans – citizens, parents, and business leaders alike – are disgusted with the lack of civic knowledge, love for our country, and historical education among our young people,” said Walters. “It is crystal clear that we need to return to more rigorous social studies standards that emphasize the unique and exceptional nature of the American republic, promote a proper understanding of the nation’s founding, and instill pride in our civic traditions and Oklahoma heritage.”

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

"I am very excited to have enlisted some of the brightest minds available to serve on our Executive Review Committee. Their unparalleled expertise will help craft new academic standards that will serve as a model for the nation and help Oklahoma students for years to come. More than 75 Oklahomans, the vast majority of whom are public school teachers, are engaged in updating our academic standards."

Executive Review Committee bios (partial list at the time of release):

Dennis Prager - Dennis Prager is an American radio talk show host and writer, known for hosting The Dennis Prager Show and co-founding PragerU in 2009. With a background in history and Middle Eastern Studies from Brooklyn College, Prager has authored several books, and has extensive experience in educational and public discourse.

Robert Pondiscio - Robert Pondiscio is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, focusing on K–12 education, school choice, and charter schooling. Previously, he was a policy analyst at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute and a teacher in the South Bronx. He is the author of several books, including *How the Other Half Learns*, and has written for *The Atlantic* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Pondiscio holds an MS in elementary education from Mercy College and a BA in English from SUNY Empire State College.

David Barton - David Barton is an American author and the founder of WallBuilders, LLC, an organization focused on America's founding principles. A lifelong resident of Aledo, Texas, Barton graduated from Aledo High School and earned a B.A. in religious education from Oral Roberts University.

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

Dr. Kevin Roberts - Kevin D. Roberts, PhD, became President of The Heritage Foundation in October 2021. Previously, he served as CEO of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, expanding its national influence. With a PhD in American History, Roberts focuses on conservative policy solutions across key issues like education, health care, and border security, aiming to counter the socialist agenda.

Everett Piper – Everett Piper served as President of Oklahoma Wesleyan University from 2002 to 2019. Piper is the author of *Not a Day Care: The Devastating Consequences of Abandoning Truth* and contributes columns to *The Washington Times*. He holds a B.A. from Spring Arbor University, an M.A. from Bowling Green State University, and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. Piper is a frequent commentator on media outlets including Fox News and *The Washington Times*.

John Dwyer - John Dwyer, author and journalist, has deep roots in Oklahoma, where his family settled shortly after statehood. He began his career in journalism, eventually founding the *Dallas-Fort Worth Heritage* newspaper. Dwyer later returned to Oklahoma to write *The Oklahomans*, recognized with the Will Rogers Medallion Award. His other works include historical narratives and novels, reflecting his commitment to rigorous historical scholarship. Dwyer and his wife, Grace, reside in Oklahoma, where they are active in community and cultural endeavors.

David Goodwin - David Goodwin was raised on an Idaho farm and has been involved in classical Christian education for over three decades. He coauthored *Raise the Song: A Classical Christian Guide to Music Education* and has written extensively for *Classical Christian Times* and *The Classical Difference Magazine*. Goodwin served as headmaster of The Ambrose School for 13 years and is currently the president of the Association of Classical Christian Schools.

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

Mark Bauerlein - Mark Bauerlein is an English professor emeritus at Emory University and senior editor of *First Things*. He earned his doctorate in English from UCLA and taught at Emory University from 1989 to 2018, with a brief tenure at the National Endowment for the Arts from 2003 to 2005. Bauerlein is known for his books including *The Dumbest Generation* and *The Dumbest Generation Grows Up*, and his writings in publications like *The Federalist* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Steve Deace - Steve Deace is an American talk show host and author, known for his program *The Steve Deace Show* on Blaze Media. With a background in journalism and a passion for public discourse, Deace has authored several books and has a strong commitment to education and community engagement.

Stacy Washington – Stacy Washington is the co-chairwoman of the Project 21 National Advisory Council of the National Center for Public Policy Research. Stacy is an Emmy Nominated TV personality and documentarian, serving as host of Missouri, Best in the Midwest. Stacy is a decorated Air Force Veteran (and the fourth generation to serve in the armed forces in her family). Stacy was an elected member of her local school district's Board of Education serving as Vice President, Board Secretary, and Director.

###

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV