

House Bill 7082 – An Act Concerning the
Inclusion of African American Studies in the
Public-School Curriculum

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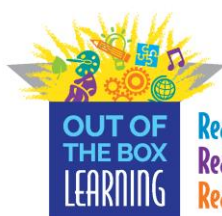
Dear Mr. Gibson,

As a recently retired teacher and a member of NAACP, I am greatly concerned that Connecticut has forfeited the teaching of history, and, more specifically, Civil Rights and African American History in the elementary school curriculum while trying to address high-stakes testing. I believe that in order to address Common Core Standards, it is necessary to include inquiry-based learning, rigorous, relevant and engaging lessons which can only be provided by infused science and social studies in the classroom.

Carl Santayana said, *“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”* This truism has never been more imperative as the United States has witnessed the rise of racial slurs, hate groups, white supremacy, Neo-Nazis, and hate crimes. If a sinister villain wished to undermine democracy and democratic principles, they would first go after public education by creating a punitive, high-stakes test which would force K – 12 schools into a remedial form of education revolving around test scores and data points. They would take social studies and civics out of the curriculum and even forfeit science for the purpose of improving test scores in reading, writing and math. This is exactly what Connecticut has perpetrated in the last twenty-five years as they bought into big data, the CMT, No Child Left Behind, and the legacy of privatization in the guise of Charter and Magnet Schools. The end result is a widened achievement gap, and deep segregation, economic and racial inequities in public education. But the greatest travesty is that we have turned our backs on the democratic principles of public education by depriving our children of learning about their past and the rich history which has built this country. We now have generations of citizens who are willing to fall into the trap of racist and hateful rhetoric, because they do not recognize the mistakes of the past.

I implore you to consider passing House Bill 7082 – An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African American Studies in the Public-School Curriculum, in order to rectify the damage which has been done to our students and the general populace by not including this most important piece of civic education.

Sincerely,



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Real Fun.

Donna Dufresne

Out of the Box Learning

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Rigorous Engaging Artful Learning