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February 7, 2023

Brian Barnes  
Senior Director  
College Board Florida Partnership  
[REDACTED]

Mr. Barnes,

We were grateful for your February 1, 2023, preview of the College Board's updated framework for AP African American Studies Course. Furthermore, we are looking forward for your official resubmission of the course for the Florida Department of Education's (FDOE) official consideration for the 2023-2024 school year.

That FDOE and the College Board have been communicating since January 2022 regarding the proposed course is remarkable. We do appreciate the regular, two-way verbal and written dialogue on this important topic.

To recap our communications to this point:

- From January 2022 to June 2022 the College Board exchanged emails with FDOE's Office of Articulation seeking to add AP African American Studies to the Credit by Exam list and the Course Code Directory.
- The Office of Articulation leadership, at that time, sent the course out for review by faculty at institutions of higher education (IHE) for potential inclusion on the Credit by Exam list.
- In May and June 2022, IHE faculty members sent feedback to the Office of Articulation indicating what postsecondary courses would be equivalent to passing the AP exam if the course were approved.
- On 7/1/2022, Office of Articulation leadership wrote an email to College Board and shared the following:

*Regarding AP African American History, can college board please communicate with us how the course complies with the following..." and linked 1003.42 Florida Statutes and State Board of Education rule 6A-1.094124 and HB 7. The*

*email goes on to say, "The preview materials appear to include content that may not be permissible. In order for the review to continue, we need information from College Board that demonstrates teaching the content would not require teachers to be out of compliance with Florida law.*

- On 7/5/2022, College Board acknowledged in an email the concerns and requested that College Board be allowed to respond in writing.
- On 7/21/2022, the Office of Articulation met with College Board and Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support staff (BSIS) so that College Board could share information about the AP African American Studies course.
- At that time, BSIS staff members reiterated what the Office of Articulation sent to College Board on July 1. BSIS staff members shared for the second time that any courses approved to be included in the Course Code Directory must comply with Florida law and State Board of Education rule. BSIS staff members reminded College Board that it was important to review State Board of Education rule 6A-1.094124, and Florida laws including s. 1003.42, F.S., and House Bill 7.
- On 7/22/2022, the College Board's Brian Barnes responded (inaccurately) in writing how the course did not conflict with Florida law.
- On 7/25/2022, BSIS staff members began official course review of AP African American Studies.
- On 8/8/2022, the College Board's Brian Barnes asked for updates on the review. The Office of Articulation informed him that the course was still in the review process.
- On 8/11/2022, BSIS staff members asked how many Florida districts and/or schools were participating in the pilot of the course in the 2022-2023 school year.
- On 8/12/2022, College Board responded that 4 Florida districts were piloting the program in 5 schools.
- On 9/23/2022, Office of Articulation issued a Memo to College Board stating the AP African American Studies course could not be added to the Course Code Directory without revisions. The memo stated College Board would have to work with FDOE to ensure that the course met the requirements in Florida Statutes and State Board of Education rules.
- On 11/16/2022, FDOE met with representatives from College Board to again discuss concerns with the AP African American Studies course. Once again, BSIS staff members informed College Board of areas of concern with the course by indicating that sections of the course may violate Florida law and State Board of Education rules. BSIS reiterated that College Board should review Florida laws including changes to statutes that occurred in House Bill 7 regarding the Principles of Individual Freedom. BSIS gave College Board the exact statutes to read. Moreover, BSIS shared specific rules including the Required

Instruction rule, 6A-1.094124, which requires that “instruction on required topics must be factual and objective and may not suppress or distort significant historical events...”

- Also, on 11/16/2022, College Board acknowledged that the course would undergo revisions; however, College Board stated that items such as “systemic marginalization” and “intersectionality” were integral elements of the course and could not be removed.
- Since College Board acknowledged that the course needed revisions, BSIS staff members requested to know what revisions would be made. College Board was not specific in their response since they indicated that the course writing team was not on the call. BSIS staff members indicated that they would have to see the final revised course prior to approving it.
- On 11/21/2022, Brian Barnes of College Board inquired about how the “12” Florida schools piloting the course would give credit to students. BSIS staff were surprised because College Board had previously stated only 5 Florida schools were piloting the course.
- On 12/7/2022, FDOE staff, including the Office of Articulation, met with College Board once again. College Board had questions about the AP African American Studies approval process again. FDOE staff strongly reiterated the process again including that all courses must meet requirements of Florida law and State Board of Education rule. Leadership reiterated what was originally shared with College Board on July 1, 2022. Florida’s position had not changed. Florida remained consistent in its review process of the course. College Board had questions about what credit students would receive in the pilot program. FDOE staff reminded College Board that the course was not approved and that students in Florida would receive credit for the corresponding course in which they were enrolled. FDOE staff indicated that schools and districts determine which courses to offer, and they enroll students in various courses. FDOE staff again, reminded College Board that House Bill 7 was important to review and reminded them that the State Board of Education rule for Required Instruction must also be adhered to. College Board said they understood and acknowledged that FDOE had shared this information previously.
- On 1/12/2023, FDOE sent a letter to the College Board indicating that the course could not be approved as written.
- By no coincidence, we were grateful to see that the College Board’s revised February 1, 2023, framework removed 19 topics, many of which FDOE cited as conflicting with Florida law, including discriminatory and historically fictional topics. The 19 topics removed included:
  - Topic 1.2 - 40 Million Ways to Be Black: Diversity of Black Experiences in African American Studies
  - Topic 1.3 - Reframing Early African History in African American Studies
  - Topic 1.5 - Population Growth and Ethnolinguistic Diversity
  - Topic 1.15 - Visions of Africa in African American Art and Culture
  - Topic 1.16 - Envisioning Africa in African American Poetry

Topic 2.3 - African Ethnicities in the U.S. South  
Topic 4.2 - Anticolonialism and African American Political Thought  
Topic 4.11 - The Fire Next Time: Evaluating the Civil Rights Movement and the Nation of Islam  
Topic 4.12 - The Fire Next Time: Achieving Our Country  
Topic 4.14 - The Social Construct of Race  
Topic 4.15 - African American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race  
Topic 4.16 - Intersectionality  
Topic 4.19 - Afrocentricity  
Topic 4.20 - Tools of Black Studies Scholars  
Topic 4.23 - Religion and Faith  
Topic 4.24, Option 2 – Incarceration, Abolition, and the New Jim Crow  
Topic 4.24, Option 3 – Reparations  
Topic 4.24, Option 4 – The Movement for Black Lives  
Topic 4.25 - Black Study and Black Struggle in the 21st Century

Again, with these requested revisions complete, we are looking forward to reviewing your complete and official resubmission of the course for FDOE's official consideration for the 2023-2024 school year.

To that end, to help FDOE staff with their comprehensive review of your resubmission, we are requesting with your resubmission that you include the additional information referenced in the February 3, 2023 NPR interview at [College Board responds to backlash over AP African American studies curriculum : NPR.](#)

Specifically, the NPR interview references "a free resource called AP Classroom, and every teacher and student in AP African American studies is going to have access to it." Since these are free resources included with the revised AP course, please include these free resources, including Mr. Coleman's highlighted resources on "intersectionality," with your submission.

Again, we are looking forward to your resubmission and your inclusion of the additionally referenced materials that College Board CEO David Coleman has indicated are included with the newly proposed AP course.

Sincerely,

The Office of Articulation