

Psyched Out: College Board vs. Florida, 2023

Thomas Jefferson Model United Nations Conference

TechMUN XXXI



High School Specialized Agency

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Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to TechMUN XXXI's Psyched Out committee! We are beyond excited to hear your debate on these two recent issues that are crucial to the future of our nation's education. This committee takes place in the past in 2023, yet focuses on issues relevant to our future. Each delegate in this committee represents a different individual playing an important role in the operation of the College Board, and each is expected to reflect on their views and the vision of education. Be sure to bring those views and ideologies into TechMUN XXXI weekend.

As your chairs, we are looking for delegates with good background knowledge, calls to action in speeches, and integration of ideas into working papers within blocs. Each delegation has a specialty — we want to see collaboration while keeping your delegation's role in the College Board in mind. Even if you don't give many moderated caucuses, we want you to be active during unmoderated caucuses and voice unique ideas then. Remember — relevancy in committee is key!

With that being said, both of us hope that we can make your experience in committee as close to real life as possible with some fun involved. Through this experience, we want you to grow as delegates and explore your role within the College Board while taking risks by raising your placard and using intelligent hooks. We want you to leave this conference as delegates who can be confident in their ideas and communicate them to the world. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to email us at psychedouttechmun2024@gmail.com, and we look forward to seeing you at TechMUN XXXI!

Vyomika Gandhi and Miranda Xiong

Co-Chairs, Psyched Out: College Board vs. Florida, 2023

Topic 1: The Role of State Education Boards in Curriculum Decisions

Background

Education boards have a very important job in deciding the curriculum and academic criteria for their states. These boards make rules about what students must learn at each grade level, such as guidelines, frameworks and benchmarks. They also look after how textbooks are made along with other teaching materials that schools use to help students study further. The board has responsibility for making sure assessments used by schools meet appropriate standards (National Education Association, 2021).

A main responsibility for state education boards is to match the curriculum with educational targets and rules of the state. This work involves defining what essential knowledge and abilities students must have so they can do well in their studies and careers. Usually, boards cooperate with teachers, professionals and other people involved to find these important skills or competencies which are then added into our school programs. Moreover, the education boards of states have a vital role in advancing equity and accessibility in education. These boards are responsible for ensuring that all students, regardless of their background or where they live, have access to high-quality learning opportunities. They contribute by setting curriculum standards that are culturally pertinent and comprehensive, as well as backing up schools and districts serving underprivileged communities with aid and supplies.

Moreover, state education boards should keep themselves updated with new advancements in education and adapt the curriculum accordingly. This may involve incorporating fresh research, technology or alterations in job market requirements. They are also expected to hear input from educators, guardians and other parties for confirming that the curriculum remains up-to-date and efficient. Lastly, state education boards have a strong

influence on the educational journey of students. They create and enforce curriculum standards which mirror the objectives of each state, encourage fairness and adaptability to changing needs. This aids in providing all students with top-notch education that readies them for triumphs in life.

Relevant Issues

A crucial problem that state education boards must consider in curriculum choices is the equilibrium between standardization and local command. Though these boards wish to establish equal standards for guaranteeing unified quality of education across the state, this method can at times restrict schools and educators from being flexible enough to address distinct requirements of their students and communities. Another important issue is including various viewpoints and voices in the curriculum. Boards of state must think about the best ways to show many cultures, histories and experiences in the curriculum so as to support fairness and inclusiveness. This means managing delicate subjects and historical stories with carefulness, including them all to create a detailed representation of our world. Also, the quick progress in technology makes it difficult for state boards to maintain current curriculum content. Boards should think about how to include new technologies and digital knowledge in the curriculum, so that students are ready for a more digital world.

Funding is a big issue too. State education boards have to decide how to use their limited money for curriculum development, teacher training and creating instructional materials. They also need to handle wider funding problems that schools and districts face. Additionally, there's always a discussion about the part of standardized tests in curriculum choices. A few people think that standardized tests give useful information about how well students are doing and help to keep carefulness, but others believe they have their own problems like encouraging a limited style of teaching where only what is tested matters and not measuring all important skills and

knowledge. In the end, boards of state education have many difficult issues when deciding on curriculum. The important parts are finding a good mix between standardization and flexibility, getting different views in the process, using new technologies, dealing with money difficulties as well as handling how much weight is given to standardized testing. These are all very crucial things for making sure decisions about curriculum can effectively meet what students need and prepare them for success in an always changing world.

Past and Current Action

In curriculum choices, past endeavors of state education boards involved the creation of standards, frameworks, and guidelines for the entire state to determine what students must study in each grade level. Usually, these standards are checked and changed regularly to make sure they stay important and match with the educational objectives set by their particular states. State boards have participated in making textbooks, teaching aids as well as assessments - all this was done to help put into practice curriculum standards. Moreover, boards have been striving to furnish schools and districts with assistance and materials that aid in the successful adoption of curriculum. The present actions taken by state education boards encompass attempts to include fresh research results, technological progressions as well as alterations in job market requirements within the scope of curriculum. Furthermore, they are also engaged in developing standards for curriculum that are culturally relevant and inclusive to foster educational fairness and reach. Moreover, boards are dealing with difficulties like finding equilibrium between uniformity and local authority, bringing in varied viewpoints, merging fresh technologies and financial problems into their choices for curriculum.

Possible Solutions

A solution for the difficulties of state education boards in making curriculum choices could be to use a more adjustable and adaptable method in developing and applying the curriculum. This involves setting up general standards that give a basic idea of what knowledge and abilities students should learn, while giving more independence to schools and educators on how these standards are achieved. This means, schools can have more freedom in deciding what is taught so it matches better with their students' needs and community situations. They might include different views or tackle specific problems by getting involved directly in this process of creating or choosing learning materials (curriculum). To help schools create and apply curriculum that is both fitting for each local context while also meeting broader learning goals, state boards can support a flexible approach. They can do this by giving guidance, resources as well as chances for professional growth. This method would help to balance the needs of students in different places with ensuring consistency across an entire state. Another way they could promote flexibility is by encouraging schools and districts to work together on sharing information about what works best (best practices) or coming up with new ideas (innovation). This method could help lessen the tension between having set standards but still allowing room for creativity and adaptation at local levels. This more flexible tactic could be backed up by state boards through offering guidelines, resources and chances for professional growth to aid in creating a curriculum that fits each place's setting but also meets wider learning aims. It helps balance student needs across various locations while maintaining uniformity throughout an entire state. Another method which might encourage flexibility is if schools or districts are encouraged to cooperate on spreading useful information such as what methods are most successful (best practices) or developing innovative concepts (innovations). This way may help alleviate the conflict between having fixed standards yet still permitting creative thinking and adjustment at

local levels. The proposed solution aligns with both viewpoints because it suggests a balance between standardization and local control over curriculum design. When it comes to creating school curriculums, there has always been discussion about needing some form of standard rules so all learners get equal opportunities for good education regardless of where they live in a country; yet simultaneously wanting flexibility from people who know their communities best - like teachers, parents etc., when deciding how best teach subjects within those specific settings; this concept ultimately promotes better learning experiences among students everywhere."

Questions to Consider

- 1) How can state education boards ensure that curriculum standards remain relevant and effective in preparing students for the future, especially in the face of rapid technological advancements and evolving workforce needs?
- 2) What strategies can state boards implement to balance the need for standardized curriculum with the desire for flexibility and local control to meet the diverse needs of students and communities?
- 3) How can state education boards incorporate diverse perspectives and voices into the curriculum to promote inclusivity and equity, while also ensuring that curriculum content is accurate, balanced, and culturally sensitive?
- 4) What steps can state boards take to address funding challenges and ensure that schools and districts have the resources necessary to develop and implement high-quality curriculum, including professional development for educators and access to instructional materials and technology?

Topic 2: The Future of Advanced Placement Courses in States with Censorship Laws

Background

Different states are dealing with legislative actions that might limit the teaching of particular topics in educational curricula, like sexual orientation or gender identity. These laws could affect Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered in these states. Such censorship laws cause worry among educators, administrators and policymakers about their influence on academic liberty, student learning and preparedness for college life.

In places where censorship laws are made, AP courses reach a serious point. The basic ideas of AP programs underline strict standards like those in college, important thinking and thorough study of subjects. But, the introduction of censorship laws questions these principles by demanding that necessary content be left out from AP courses. The effects of these censorship laws are not limited to just one state, they can also have an impact on a wider scale. High school students who take AP courses usually get their grades recognized by many colleges and universities in America for admissions, getting ahead in class or earning college credit. Therefore, if some topics are left out from AP curricula due to censorship laws in certain states it could possibly affect the worthiness and acceptance of AP courses by higher education institutions.

Additionally, the effect of censorship laws on AP courses also touches students' academic journey and future possibilities. If access to a complete education is limited, it means that learners can't take part in examining different viewpoints, studying intricate problems with critical thinking or forming skills necessary for college life and more. As states find their way through intricacies related to censorship laws and what they mean for education, people who have an interest in this field should promote keeping academic freedom intact while maintaining

the honesty of AP courses. This includes giving importance to students' educational requirements and rights. The destiny of AP courses in states that have censorship laws relies on a complex equilibrium among legal instructions, educational norms, and the principles supporting academic superiority and inclusiveness.

Relevant Issues

For the future of Advanced Placement (AP) courses in states with censorship laws, there are a few important points to consider. One key issue is the conflict between state requirements and academic honesty. Laws about censorship set limits on what can be taught, which might conflict with the strict principles that AP programs follow. This disagreement brings up basic inquiries about the purpose of education in promoting critical thought, mental investigation, and inclusivity. Also, the effect of censorship laws goes beyond just inside classroom to wider social consequences. These rules limit access to particular subjects; they slow down talk, keep unawareness alive and isolate some communities. These limitations are a barrier to the progress of diversity, equity and inclusion in education. They prevent steps towards a more accepting and illuminated society.

Moreover, the actual application of censorship laws creates pragmatic problems for instructors. They have to handle a convoluted realm that involves legal necessities, teaching fundamentals, and moral reflections. It is difficult to find equilibrium between obeying government rules and giving all-inclusive education; this can become a big task which might risk the quality of teaching methods and how well students learn from them. Additionally, the ripple effects of censorship laws also reach into higher education. Colleges and universities use AP courses as a measure for students' readiness in academics and capability to think. But, if important material is not included in AP curriculum, it might lessen the trustworthiness and

accuracy of these courses which affects students' entry into college as well as their chances for further study at an advanced level. In general, the time ahead for AP courses in states having censorship laws is full of difficulties that need careful thinking, support for academic freedom and dedication to inclusive and demanding education.

Possible Solutions

Addressing censorship laws in AP courses requires multifaceted solutions. Collaborative efforts between educational stakeholders, advocacy groups, and policymakers are essential. One approach involves legal challenges to these laws, asserting the importance of academic freedom and constitutional protections. Additionally, educators can implement creative strategies to integrate essential content into the curriculum while complying with state mandates, such as contextualizing topics within broader themes or offering supplementary materials. Public awareness campaigns can highlight the detrimental effects of censorship on education and mobilize support for change. Ultimately, fostering dialogue and advocating for legislative reforms are key steps toward preserving the integrity of AP courses.

Questions to Consider

- 1) How do censorship laws in certain states impact the integrity and rigor of Advanced Placement (AP) courses?
- 2) What are the implications of excluding essential topics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity, from AP curricula on students' academic preparation and college readiness?
- 3) How can educators navigate the challenges posed by censorship laws while upholding academic standards and fostering critical thinking?

- 4) What role do advocacy groups, policymakers, and educational institutions play in addressing censorship laws and preserving academic freedom in AP courses?
- 5) What are the potential long-term consequences of censorship laws on students' access to comprehensive education, diversity of perspectives, and societal attitudes towards inclusivity and tolerance?



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