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Assessing the Impact of Mandated Standards for Teaching on United States History Achievement Scores in Public Schools

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Erick Nason

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2011

Abstract

Assessing the Impact of Mandated Standards for Teaching on United States History

Achievement Scores in Public Schools

by

Erick W. Nason

M. A., American Military University, 2006

B. A., American Military University, 2004

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

The Teacher as Leader

Walden University

February 2011

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how a well developed and validated national standard for United States history can affect public school achievement levels. Currently, there is no mandated national standard for United States history; rather it has been left to the respective states to create their own. This study focused on the state of Virginia, which has been able to meet both the nationally mandated adequate yearly progress (AYP) level, and achieve high proficiency levels in United States history achievement. This comparative case study examined two neighboring states of similar demographics: Virginia which made both the AYP and high history achievement, and a southern U.S. state which did not meet either the AYP or acceptable history scores. Archival data included achievement levels as assessed by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test scores in U.S. history for both states, and State of the State (SOS) national assessments of state history standards. It was hypothesized that there would be a correlation between well established and vetted standards and achievement levels. Sequential analyses employing Pearson correlations and Somers' D tests of association demonstrated significant correlations between SOS standards and NAEP achievement scores. These results can contribute to positive social change by informing research based decision making related to best practice standards for U.S. history curricula that will increase student achievement levels, and provide a more common curricular foundation from which supporting resources can be developed and shared to offset reductions in education budgets.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

In a recent state proclamation, Virginia's Governor Bob McDonnell declared April to be Confederate History month, which caused a national uproar. While the proclamation was an attempt to increase tourism, it did increase discussion, debate, and concern over history. Governor McDonnell wanted the residents of Virginia, and indirectly the nation, to discuss and begin to better understand history (Kumar & Helderman, 2010). This goal may be an indication of the low quality of history understanding across the country. One of the factors contributing to this low degree of understanding may be the lack of a nationally mandated standard for teaching history. Teachers of U.S. history are faced with daunting challenges, especially in an era of academic accountability and dynamic school environments. Allotted instruction time, resources, and in some cases, the classes themselves, are being discontinued to make way for more time and resources for reading and math as the main focus of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (McMurrer, 2007).

With no nationally mandated standard for history, each state is responsible to develop and implement their standard. The lack of a common standard for all the states to follow is a challenge to both quality control and any mutual understanding of the achievement levels that must be maintained. Section 2 details the results of research conducted by national, nonprofit organizations that reviewed the state standards and curricula for U.S. history. This discussion will show that some states' curricula and standards are considered inadequate.

The goal of this research was to show how the state of Virginia could be used as a model for developing a successful national standard that could be used throughout the United States. Virginia faces the same educational challenges of other states. These challenges include having students from urban, suburban, rural regions, students with disabilities, and English language learners. Prior to the enactment of NCLB, Virginia was considered the state to use for the model for the other states to follow, producing excellent standards and was also considered one of the states for having the best history standard (Finn, Petrilli, & Vanourek, 1998). Currently, Virginia was recognized by the College Board for achieving the largest 5-year gain in achievement on advanced placement examinations, which can be contributed to the state's standards of learning (SOL) programs (Pyle, 2010).

Problem Statement

The need for a nationally mandated and vetted standard for U.S. history can be explained by the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS). The NCSS indicated that curricula standards can provide not only the principal framework from which the actual content for teaching, but also offers guidelines for how to organize content and provide a process for instruction (NCSS, 2008). In a 2008 study, the National History Center (NHC) released a collaborative statement that that there can be no establishment of any type of history assessment without the firm foundation of a standard for history (NHC, 2008). In conjunction with a standard, there cannot be an effective means of measuring teacher performance or improving the teaching of history without an established standard to measure. Accurate history assessments should not exist when there is an absence of

either history standards or a system for effectively using them in history instruction (NCSS, 2008). Additionally, an established standard would also provide quality control for the supporting textbooks, and would support teacher professional development programs.

Vinovskis (2007) highlighted the concern over students' lack of historical knowledge, stating that despite concentrated efforts to improve public education, history has not earned the same attention as reading and mathematics. Additionally, Vinovskis stated that if educators want to improve history achievement and to include it with other national priorities, then the field requires serious scientific research into history teaching, standards, and evaluation. While there is no established and mandated standard for history, the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), a nonprofit organization that provides curricular materials, professional development for teachers, and history collaboration, developed and recommended use of a standard they developed as a guideline that holds no weight for accountability.

The literature review in section 2 will show how the state of Virginia was able to increase student achievement levels in history through an effective history standard. Stern (2003) conducted an assessment of the state academic standards on behalf of the Thomas Fordham Foundation; a nonprofit organization focused on the quality of education in the primary school, and explained why it is important to have a nationally mandated standard. A nationally mandated standard would establish and define content for which public schools are responsible to determine a level of proficiency. Additionally, standards help not only with content but also in establishing teachers' training, professional

development, and the contents of history textbooks (Stern, 2003). Other national organizations, such as the Center for Education Policy, have noted that most states have developed poor quality standards for history (Rentner et al., 2005). The data collected from these institutions will be discussed in detail in section 4 of this study.

In a report on state standards, Finn, Julian, & Liam (2006) explained that solid standards matter because they are essential for standards-based reform, the dominant education policy strategy in America today. Standards have become even more important in the NCLB era, when weighty consequences befall schools that do not rise to meet those standards. With a newer focus on educational reform, it will be even more important to have standards that are effective (Finn et al., 2006, p. 8).

A recent example of how not having a mandated national standard can cause some consternation is the current debate concerning the Texas history curricula. The state began holding debates concerning what should be included in the state curricula concerning American history. The debate began in January 2010 and was voted on by the Texas Board of Education in March 2010. The debate between Texas conservative and liberals focused on different areas, including curricula content and exclusions. Some of the sensitive areas focused on religious matters, from the religious beliefs of the founding fathers, inclusion of specific content concerning Christianity, and the separation of church and state (McKinley, 2010). Other sensitive issues focused on Civil Rights, the inclusion of prominent Mexican-Americans, and whether to include or exclude Mary Kay Ash of Mary Kay Cosmetics from the history curricula.

Zimmerman (2010) proposed that the Texas Board of Education should incorporate the two sides of the issue concerning the history curricula and teach students that Americans “disagree vehemently about the making and the meaning of their nation” (p. A7). The debate concluded after 3 days, and on March 12, 2010, the Texas School Board voted and approved a social studies curricula that, to some observers, will put a conservative stamp on both history and economics textbooks, stressing the superiority of American capitalism (McKinley, 2010). Green (2010) presented concern over “culture wars” and how Texas’s new curricula will influence textbook publishing nationwide (Green, 2010).

The need for a national standard for history is not new. As recently as June 2010, the Common Core State Standard Initiative (CCSSI) was organized in order to advance nationwide education reform focusing on reading and math. Supporting the initiative were the 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which voluntarily developed a shared common core standard for English language arts (ELA) and math. The goal of these shared standards is to better prepare children to enter college after graduation of high school, to embark upon their career paths, and meet success on the global economy (Reaching Higher, 2010). This effort to establish a shared national standard, however, resulted in education reform for the two most commonly tested subjects of NCLB, which are math and reading. Based on a recent evaluation of the common core standard by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, there is no separate common core initiative for history. Rather, U.S. history is a portion of the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science,*

and Technical Subjects (Finn & Petrilli, 2010, p. 22). If the common core initiative has already included history as part of the literacy core standard, then why not develop a shared common core standard for other subjects, such as history?

The literature review in section 2 will also show how the state of Virginia, after the implementation of NCLB, was able to develop and keep relevant a set of standards for the teaching of U.S. history that proved to be beneficial to both the teachers and the schools themselves. There are two thoughts on how history is taught in public schools and what the standards should be. One group contends that there is no need for a national standard and that it should remain the responsibility of the individual states to develop their own (NCHS, 2009). The other group is striving for the development of a national standard for history that is used by all states (NCHE, 2009). The comparative study will examine for both Virginia and North Carolina the U.S. history standards, curricula, and year-end scores from 2000 to 2010, and determine if there is any type of relationship between standards and scores.

History involves more than just understanding important dates and figures in the past. There needs to be an increased awareness from the U.S. Department of Education that history helps to develop children's citizenship skills and understanding. Moreover, history education aids in establishing the national character of this country. One of the goals of public education is to not only educate children in the common curricula of math and science, but also citizenship development. Students should leave school with a clear sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They should also be prepared to challenge injustice and to promote the common good (NCSS, 2008a).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this quantitative casual-comparative study was to identify trends, and correlations between standards, curricula, and achievement levels, and to demonstrate how a national standard can improve the overall national performance of U.S. history education within schools. The study began by demonstrating the importance of learning history, especially U.S. history, and supported by the literature review in section 2. The study utilized a casual-comparative method of study by examining documents from both national level research and education institutes, compare/contrast these documents from Virginia on achievement levels and progress reports, and compare them with the state of North Carolina. These documents, data, and supporting literature from history and teaching professionals will be reviewed in section 2 and later analyzed through a graphical representation of the scores, the standard statistical correlation and Pearson correlation in section 4.

The 2006 Fordham report on state standards explained why there are problems with the different state academic standards. The report indicated that too many states still produce vague standards, instead of clear and attainable goals (Finn et al., 2006). One of the reasons why states fail at developing good standards in part may be contributed to many state standards bear the hallmark of having been created by committee. Additionally unfortunate influences of the old 1990s-era national standards developed by professional associations, such as the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, continue to create havoc (Finn et al., 2006). As noted by the 2006 Fordham's *State of the State Standards* report, which

indicated, “solid standards are the foundation upon which modern education reform rests” (p. 6), good standards matter.

The education reformers of the Thomas Fordham Foundation understand that developing a national standard will face the same perils that the respective states went through as they developed their standards. When written by a committee or education interest groups, the standards may be vague, politically correct, encyclopedic, or unclear. In some cases, the standards, if not checked for quality control, could be more detrimental than helpful. However, if developed thoroughly, the standards could finally put the entire country on the sturdy path of standards-based reform (Finn et al., 2006).

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the evaluations of the high school history curricula for eleventh and twelfth grades from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels?
2. What is the relationship between history achievement scores for eleventh and twelfth grades in Virginia and North Carolina and how do they compare with the national assessments on history curricula?

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed as a casual-comparative study intended to show the relationship between good standards and achievement scores in history. Through a comparison between Virginia, which was used as a model for having clear and concise standards by the Thomas Fordham 2006 evaluation (Finn, Petrilli, & Liam, 2006, p. 26, 36), and North Carolina which had a single local school standard that was considered a

good model, the state standard for history was considered the state's most distressing problem (Finn et al., 2006, p. 95). While voluntary national standards were assessed by the Fordham Foundation as inadequate (Finn et al., 2006), Virginia was able to develop a set of standards of learning and programs, which assisted Virginia schools in achieving both national and state achievement goals. The intent of the study was to identify if there is a relationship between well established history standards and history achievement scores. These relationships can be used as a model from which other states can employ to develop their own successful programs.

The first phase of the study was to collect national data concerning U.S. history achievement levels and the respective reports from different national organizations, including non-profit organizations that review state scores and curricula. The data included the results from annual assessments available from the Center for Education Policy (CEP). This data was analyzed and discussed in detail in section 4 to determine the correlation between those states with clearly defined history standards in comparison to their end of year test scores/achievement levels. The CEP has been conducting annual analysis of school achievement since the establishment of the NCLB Act in 2002. While the center agrees that it is difficult to determine whether or not school achievement can be based solely upon NCLB, it does agree that it is easier now than in 2002 to study and collect data concerning school achievement (Center on Education Policy, 2009).

Along with the Center for Education Policy, the National Assessment of Education Programs (NAEP), supported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has been for the past 30 years, conducting assessments of primary and secondary

schools in various subjects, including history. A national report card concerning different academic subjects is released and is known as the *Nation's Report Card*. The data from this national organization will be compared and contrasted with what the CEP states concerning curricula, standards and achievement in section 4 of this study (Lee & Weiss, 2007).

Additional source data was collected from the National Council for History Education concerning school achievement levels, which will be measured against the NCLB Act. Along with the data provided by the NAEP via the *Nation's Report Card*, data concerning achievement rates and other statistical data will be collected from the U.S. Department of Education. Data concerning the status of curricula will be collected from the Albert Shanker Institute, and will also be collected from the American Historical Association. A review of state data from Virginia's Department of Education includes school report cards that covers the state's accreditation reports for the past 6 years; AYP results based on achievement ratings for the past five years; as well as detailed overall school reports that can be based on individual schools, school divisions or the state as a whole (Virginia School Report Card, 2009d).

The second phase of this study was to compare Virginia with its neighbor North Carolina, which has similar student demographics and educational challenges. Both states' standards and results were compared and the differences discussed in detail in section four. Phase three was an analysis of the data collected from the national and state databases, and to identify trends or divergence in the data. The intent was to determine if there is a clear pattern between having standards and high achievement, and look for any

patterns. The correlation focused on the results collected from both the national and state databases, looking at achievement levels, standards assessments, and determines if there was a correlation between the NCLB Act AYP and the achievement scores in U.S. history. The data was collected sequentially, beginning with the national level before moving to the state level.

Theoretical Framework

The Department of Education for Virginia has highlighted the need for history education by addressing its importance in their history standards of learning (SOL). “The study of history and the social sciences is vital in a democratic society, all students need to know and understand the national heritage in order to become informed participants in shaping the nation's future” (Virginia SOL, 2001, p. 9). Virginia indicated within its standards of learning of history that it is equally important to have history incorporated into the state history curricula. Additionally, the Virginia SOL explained the importance of the study and understanding of history as a means to understand the complexity of today by understanding the events of the past. “History enables students to see how people in other times and places have grappled with the fundamental questions of truth, justice, and personal responsibility” (Virginia SOL, 2001, p. 9).

Only recently has Virginia performed well in both meeting AYP as required by the NCLB and meeting its history achievement scores. In an August 2008 report, Virginia’s Department of Education showed that in addition to meeting, and in some cases, exceeding all NCLB objectives, 74% of Virginia schools also met higher AYP benchmarks in reading, math and other subjects (Virginia DOE News, p. 1). These

subjects, including history, had 88% of Virginia students passing, which was an improvement over the previous 2006/2007 school year (p. 3). The report card for the 2005/2006 school years showed a passing rate of 84%, which demonstrated a steady rate of improvement (Virginia Report Card, 2008, p. 4). The idea of this research is to demonstrate this pattern, where well established standards can set the stage for success for the state.

The National Council for History Education (NCHE) Board of Trustees met on December 21, 2006, to discuss and assess history education within the schools. The board indicated that history education must become a vital and integral component of every citizen's school experience. As part of their history education, students need to develop a capability to demonstrate historical thought through their own self-evaluation of the subject materials, analyze, and make their own determination of the events. The inability of students to reach informed conclusions based on historical evidence represents just as grave a threat to the educational system as any that has been identified by the No Child Left Behind legislation (NCHE, 2006).

Definitions

The following terms were used during this study; their definitions are included here to provide clarification for the reader.

Adequate yearly progress (AYP): AYP represents the minimum level of improvement that schools and school divisions must achieve each year as determined by NCLB (Virginia DOE, Accountability Terminology, 2009e, p. 8).

Alignment: The correlation between Virginia’s SOL, what is taught in the classroom and what appears on the SOL tests. Curricula alignment ensures that students are taught the material subject to testing (Virginia DOE, Accountability Terminology, 2009e. p. 8).

Annual measurable objectives (AMO): are the minimum required percentages of students determined to be proficient in each content area (Accountability Terminology, 2009. p. 8).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): Elementary and Secondary Education Act is the primary federal law affecting K-12 education. Congress reauthorizes it every six years. The most recent authorization is also referred to as the NCLB Act, approved by Congress in 2001 and signed into law by President George W. Bush in January 2002 (Accountability Terminology, 2009. p. 8).

Good standard: As defined by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, are the foundations upon which almost everything else rests—or should rest. They should guide state assessments and accountability systems; inform teacher preparation, licensure, and professional development; and give shape to curricula, textbooks, software programs, and more (Finn & Petrilli, 2010, p.1).

Good history standard: As defined by the Thomas Fordham are foundations which are organized around a chronology of key events with an ample supply of fascinating and important individuals (Finn, Julian & Petrilli, 2006, p. 5).

Proficient achievement level: As defined by the NAEP, this level represents solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have

demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter grade (Lapp, Grigg, & Tay-Lim, 2002, p. 8).

Standards in history: as defined by the National Center for History in the Schools: Historical thinking skills that enable students to evaluate evidence, develop comparative and causal analyses, interpret the historical record, and construct sound historical arguments and perspectives on which informed decisions in contemporary life can be based (NCHS, 1996).

Standards for Learning (SOL): Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health, physical education and driver education (Accountability Terminology, 2009. p. 10).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

An assumption with this study is that the lack of a certified and vetted national standard for history for all states to follow allows different methods of teaching history that may not align with other states. This lack of national standard may be a reason for such great differences in history achievement results across the nation. It can also be assumed that some states may not develop effective standards for history based on time, resources or active participation by history professionals. With the high demands placed on the schools to meet their prescribed AYP as established by the NCLB Act, time and resources become an issue between those classes which are part of NCLB such as reading

and math, and other classes such as history and science. It is assumed that this effect, the lack of time to properly teach history, is a contributing factor to the poor results. There has been debate within the national government and the U.S. Department of Education to broaden those classes that fall under the AYP, and has included debates whether it will be science or history. In either case, reading and math that take most of the time and resources, and history in some cases had to be sacrificed for the greater good.

Some of the limitations or potential weaknesses facing this study were the national databases themselves, which may also have some potential weaknesses within them. Due to the internal struggle concerning standards and curricula reform, these databases may be biased either for or against history. While it is essential to study both sides of the issues, care will have to be maintained to provide accurate and impartial data. The challenge of teaching U.S. history is very broad and is composed of numerous factors. For the breadth of this study, the focus remained at the state level. The delimitations for this research required a narrowing of the focus on the state level in order to highlight success of Virginia meeting both national and state achievement levels to demonstrate the effectiveness of having good standards as a model for the nation to follow.

Other factors, such as teacher training and professional development, the current textbooks in use, and the omission or political correctness of both the textbooks and curricula, remain subjects for other studies but are contributing factors to the challenges of teaching history. Without an effective, mandated national standard for teaching history, teachers will not have standards to base or develop their classes on, and must rely

on unreliable sources or methods. While the focus of this study is strictly on the development of a history standard, there are second and third order affects that are influenced by the standards, which are the textbooks and teacher training or the professional development of history teachers. The bound of this research is strictly on U.S. history.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this casual-comparative study was to show the relationship between well developed and maintained standards of history, and meeting national goals as prescribed by the NCLB Act. The study has potential for positive social change by demonstrating to other schools how to increase their history achievement levels in their public schools. The study also has a far reaching and more pronounced benefit by allowing children to understand U.S. history as part of becoming good citizens. It will be equally important for them to understand the positive events as well as the mistakes made in the past. Mistakes, such as those made within the domains of economics, social, political and militarily, can be studied and learned in order to prevent them from occurring again. All are important into developing children into active citizens of the nation. Additionally, good standards are essential in the training and professional development of history teachers, who for the most part are whose degrees and certification, is not history. As defined by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, good standards establish what the content of history books that are used to instruct students, as well as establishing how teachers developed and continuing professional development.

The National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), explained that history teaches students how to evaluate evidence, conduct analyses, interpret and understand historical data, and construct their own theories and ideas on which informed decisions in life can be made (National Standards of History, 1996). This understanding that history is important to the development of children today, can also be found in state standards. The Department of Education for Virginia also highlighted this need by explaining the importance of the study of history allows the students to have a better “understanding of the relationship between past and present, students will be better equipped to deal with the problems that might arise in the future” (Virginia SOL, 2001, p. 9).

The National Assessment of Education Process (NAEP) indicated that the primary purpose for the study of history and social studies is to help development of young people to develop their own ability to make “informed and reasoned decisions” for the greater public good, especially as members of a very unique, diverse social community within a “democratic society of an interdependent world” (De Oliveira, 2008, p. 364).

Summary

While there has been a concentrated national effort in improving school academics and student achievements, there still appears to be a continuing trend in poor performance in history achievement levels in other state schools, but also in other subject areas such as reading and math. Aronson (2007) while attending a 2007 conference on multicultural history in Boston commented that even the renowned Sigmund Freud had an appreciation and understood the importance of history. Freud recognized that if the nation did not fully comprehend our past, then the nation would become a two-

dimensional people who are cut off from their true selves (Aronson, 2007). This is an important factor if the goal of public education is to develop children to be active and prepared global citizens.

The ultimate goal of the public education system is to provide the necessary tools and knowledge for school children to become active participants within society, and become good citizens. The next section includes the research and literature supporting this study. The review will show the history and background of the topic of this study, explore the national challenge of developing a recognized and vetted standard, and describe how Virginia developed and implemented their program. The goal of the review is to provide a means to compare and contrast what the history teachers in central Virginia are doing to achieve both their history achievement levels for the state, and meet their required AYP for NCLB. In this way, trends can be identified and provided as best practices that other history teacher can implement to improve their achievement and AYP levels. Section 3 will address the methodology of the casual-comparative study, and how present the scores from Virginia and North Carolina from the past 10 years to determine if a well established and vetted standard can be a contributing factor to achievement success.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In this section, the researcher reviewed research on pedagogical approaches relating to U.S. history, and provided a concise summary that defined the theory why a well developed nationally mandated standard for history will benefit all of the states. The documents in this review were collected from national databases, published literature, and press releases from national research and educational institutions within the United States. These institutions include non-profit research and evaluation organizations, as well as key departments of the U.S. government. Additional documents were reviewed from books and scholarly articles from teaching and history professionals from across the nation. Documents were also reviewed from state databases from Virginia and North Carolina.

The purpose of the study was to explore how U.S. history is taught in Virginia public schools and then to compare those approaches in North Carolina public schools. The benefits of this study includes better-educated students who may be encouraged to learn more about their past. Students who are more informed of their past hold great promise: By understanding their history, young people may avert mistakes from the past. Moreover, educated students may form better working relationships with their teachers, with institutes of higher learning, and with local or national historians. These collaborations may improve the pedagogical approach of history overall. This relationship between teachers and history professionals will be of great benefit in the

professional development to history teachers and may keep the lessons relevant and interesting for students.

The material reviewed in this section determined if the lack of a national recognized and vetted national standard for history has a direct relationship to U.S. history achievement levels in public schools. Along with the review, the intent was to identify if there was a correlation between the lack of a well developed state standard and the history achievement levels for a specific school. The review will look at both the national and then state level. The national review examined assessments of U.S. history standards and curricula. The state examination looked at North Carolina's and Virginia's end of year U.S. history scores from the past ten years. Part of this review looked to identify if there was a correlation between Virginia's well defined and organized state standard for history and their meeting or exceeding the history achievement level.

The literature review was conducted to identify the need for this comparative study, to present what is being assessed at both the national and state levels concerning U.S. history standards. The review was used to understand the history behind the development of U.S. history curricula. While the literature may, in some cases, showed that NCLB is meeting its achievement levels in reading and math, it also demonstrated how history, along with other subjects, are being relegated to electives or, in some cases, replaced it with other subjects such as government or civics. In some circumstances, history has been dropped from the school curricula in lieu of more time for reading and math.

In this section, the researcher presented and critiqued the current literatures on the teaching of U.S. history in public schools. These sources were gathered from multiple sources within Walden University library, and the departments of education for Virginia and North Carolina. The focus of the literature search was on U.S. history standards and curricula, and history education reform. The review begins with a historical overview of teaching U.S. history, addressing both education and policy reforms that are either complete or still in progress. In the review, the researcher also addressed both sides of the reform issue, compared and contrasted these views, and assessed the future of history education. Included with the review is a study in the development of U.S. history standards at both the national and state level. The intent of the literature examination was to demonstrate a need for a nationally mandated and supported standard for U.S. history. The information from the sources was compared to assess the relationship between well established, mandated standards and the attainment of education goals. Additionally, the review examined the correlation between state standards and history achievement levels for North Carolina and Virginia.

The decision to use a comparative study will be explained in more detail in section 3. A casual-comparative design is used with either pre-existing or derived groups to explore differences between or among those groups (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004). In this case, the already established groups will include national and non-profit organizations which specialize in U.S. history and standards, the National Department of Education and the respective states' departments of education. Casual-comparative studies normally use continuous dependent variables, which in this case will be the

results over the past ten years in both Virginia and North Carolina. Schenker and Rumrill (2004) explained that “Causal-comparative investigations make important contributions to the rehabilitation knowledge base” (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004, p. 121). The goal of this research was to rehabilitate the current education policy of how U.S. history is currently taught in schools, and make the social change for the better.

The choice of selecting a quantitative methodology was based on the scope and depth of the research. Neill (2007) contrasted between the two methodologies, showing the different factors which supported the selection of this quantitative study. In quantitative study, the researcher already knows in advance what they are looking for, are using numbers and statistical data, and the researcher uses tools to gather the data. In contrast, qualitative researchers may not know exactly what they are looking for, use data in the form of words, pictures or objects, and the researcher is the gathering tool (Neill, 2007). With the study looking at two states and using their data along with the data from national evaluations, it was a clear that this research would require quantitative methodology, which will be explained in more detail and compared with other research methodologies in section 3.

Currently one other researcher has performed a similar study on a national standard for history. Henry (2010) examined in her *The Wars for a National History Standard 1991-2004*, in which Henry conducted a historical narrative concerning the National History Standards Project. In the research, Henry addressed the historical route in which history reform followed, in order for history teachers to understand the

implications and impact of standards on education policies. The research was more of a broad examination instead of a focused examination like this study (Henry, 2010, p. 21)

Background

Education Reform

The challenge of both education and history reform can be traced back to August 26, 1981, when President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Education T. H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education. This special committee was tasked and directed to examine the quality of education in the United States and to make a report of their findings within 18 months. This report was released on April 26, 1983 as *A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Education Reform*. The report was looked at with skepticism and was down played. Critics went on to say that schools were doing their job well, the product was viable, and the public was receiving what they needed for their children from the school system (Hunt, 2008).

By 1987, 10% of high school students did not take any U.S. history classes. Following the release of the report, the Council for Basic Education, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, called for a more substantial academic core for all students and more varied, imaginative approaches to teaching that common curricula (Building a History Curricula, 2005, p. 1). The Bradley Commission stated in 1988 that history should once more be included into the core curricula of public education. The Bradley Commission recommended that history be the core curricula for social studies at the kindergarten level, continuing through the sixth grade. The commission understood

the importance for decisive change in the history curricula at the earliest level of education.

Saxe (2004) indicated that the critical moment for social studies arrived in 1989 at the Charlottesville Education Summit. While this was an important moment for history education, Saxe indicated the importance of history education as a means of developing a good citizen: there is still a continuing debate over the development and implementation of the standards. Supporting this view, the Director of the James F. Ackerman Center for Democratic Citizenship and Associate Professor of Social Studies Education in the School of Education at Purdue University, Phillip VanFossen in a 2005 interview with Shaughnessy stated that social studies has always focused on education for citizenship within the democratic system.

Until the 1990s, before the standards movement took hold within the states, there was no standardized approach to what local schools taught in social studies, whether it was history-centered or different teaching approaches to citizenship education. At the time, there were three approaches to teaching history/social studies: content-centered, process-centered, or a combination of both, all of which were called “social studies” (Saxe, 2004). While supporters continued to press for history-centered education, outside influences such as state accountability, and public policies defined content and specific curricula. Some of the states continued to use the history-centered approach to social studies but dropped the title “*social studies*,” others converted their curricula to reflect content-centered standards with *social studies* remaining as the title, and others retained eclectic social studies.

National History Standards

Steeves (2007), discussed how the national debate concerning both standards for teaching history in the public schools and college history curricula has become a focal issue. Steeves highlighted that the need for student's knowledge of history reinforces the need for more history in the classroom (Steeves, 2007, para. 5). Steeves supported the work of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Bradley Commission on History in Schools who advocated increasing the amount of history taught in secondary schools.

Steeves pointed out that since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, there has been an increase in discussions concerning what should be taught in schools concerning history, and that after the attacks, these questions became more relevant. Additionally, this public evaluation of what history courses should contain should attract the attention of historians, not just the public school teachers who must respond to state standards, textbook selection committees, and their students' parents. Steeves also pointed out that how effectively historians articulate the method and materials of history can have repercussions on history's perceived value to an increasingly vocal, aware, and interested public (Steeves, 2007, para. 5).

The National Center for History in the School (NCHS), based at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), was created in 1988. The mission of the NCHS was two-fold: one was to develop history teacher professional development programs and to assist history teachers in curricula (NCHS, 2009). The second goal was for NCHS to develop a set of national standards for history under the supervision of the National

Council for History Standards, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the U.S. Department of Education. Published in 1996, *National Standards for History, Basic Edition* was based on the goals established at the 1989 conference of President Bush and state governors at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The revised National History Standard has served as a template for the more than 30 states that have developed state standards for history, as well as providing lesson guides for diverse projects. The revised *National Standards for History* of 1996 was an updated version of the original 1994 *National Standards for United States History*, the same standards which were condemned by the U.S. Senate on January 18, 1995, by a vote of 99 to 1, for being biased against “American history, ideas and institutions” (Stern, 1994, p. 64). Stern (1994) addressed some of the issues stemming from the standards. Stern’s concern was how the content of the standards were viewed as biased and, in some cases, hostile toward American institutions, in the realms of politics, economics, and society. Stern also pointed out the critics was politically motivated and were pressing a conservative agenda in education. *The National Standards for United States History* was designed to be voluntary rather than mandatory.

The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) proposed a draft social studies curriculum in the fall of 2008. The NCSS stated that since they first introduced their 1994 standards, it has been considered widely successful for being used as a template for teachers, schools, districts, states, and other nations as a curricula alignment and development tool (*Curricula Standards for Social Studies*, 2008). As with the previous standard, this draft social studies curriculum was intended to be voluntary and not

mandated to the teachers. The NCSS explained that these draft social studies curricula were intended “to provide a principal framework for social studies professionals to select and organize knowledge and modes of inquiry for purpose of instruction” (p. 3). The update was intended to make the student an active participant in the learning process.

The NCSS wanted to differentiate between content standards and curricula standards. Content standards provide detailed descriptions of content and methodology considered central to the study of specific disciplines, like history or economics, based on input from experts and teachers from their respective fields. On March 19, 2009, Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Senator and former Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander (R-TN), and Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) introduced bill S.659, titled History and Civic Education Bill, to the Senate. This bill was designed to consolidate and expand federal programs to improve the teaching and learning of U.S. history (Wagoner, 2009).

The History and Civic Education Bill is based largely upon the History and Civic Achievement Act, introduced in the House by Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN) during the 110th Congress (Van Dyke, 2009). In a press release, Senator Alexander’s asserted it was time for history and civics to return to our public schools so our children can learn what is to be an American (Van Dyke, 2009, para. 3). Additionally, Senator Alexander stated that when you look at our nation's report card, American history is not doing well (Wagoner, 2009). Senator Kennedy added that this bill would enable schools to raise their standards for history education, and provide greater opportunities for both students and teachers to learn from leading scholars, and emphasizing important lessons

from the past. This legislation will help prepare both students and the nation for the best possible future (Wagoner, 2009, para. 5).

Supporting the effort of integrating history, Congressman George Miller from California (D-CA) and Congressman Howard McKeon of California (R-CA) are developing a House Proposal in which history, art, music, and other subjects will be included into the new NCLB Act, which they believe have been marginalized by the core subjects of reading and math (Manzo, 2007, p. 21). This move was applauded by Jack Jennings, President of the Center on Education Policy and former aide to House Democrats.

With the release of the 2006 “Nation’s Report Card” including the results of historical knowledge in school children, Rabb (2007) pointed out that there were slight improvements compared to the 2001 results, and still considered that the results were short of appalling. Rabb was most concerned about was the narrowing of the curricula, in favor for math and reading while the other area, such as history are losing. The previous Secretary of Education, Secretary Spelling stated that reading is the foundation for mastering content. However, in a study of college seniors who were asked who was the American General at Yorktown, the majority answered Ulysses S. Grant. In this sense, Rabb voiced his concern that as shown in the study of the college seniors, have the schools neglected history, and can these tests really prepare children for the globalized world (Rabb, 2007, para. 6).

There appears to be a trend in most public schools to take time away from other subjects like history and give it to reading and math. Dillon (2006) wrote in a *New York*

Time article that some schools reduced class time spent on other subjects and, for some low-proficiency students, eliminating subjects all together (Dillon, 2006). Dillon also pointed out that the historian David McCullough told a Senate Committee in June of 2005 that because of the law, history classes are being shortened or removed in many or most schools, in favor of math and reading (Dillon, 2006). If this trend continues, then it becomes more apparent that a strong nationally mandated standard will become necessary if time and resources are becoming an issue.

This trend in time allotment was supported by a report from the Center for Education Policy. In their December 2007 report on *Choices, Changes and Challenges, Curricula and Instruction under in the NCLB era*, the CEP reported that since 2002, school districts have increased the average minutes per week for both English language arts (ELA) and math. Because of the increase in minutes per week, the report indicated that the school districts reported that 44% reduced time in one or more subjects including social studies (McMurrer, 2007, p. 1). This reduction in subject areas and an increase in time for ELA and math at the High School level amounted to an average of 331 minutes per week for ELA, 274 minutes for math, and social studies with 248 minutes per week (p. 10).

Along with the reduction of time, 99% of the school districts surveyed for the report began to realign their curricula and state assessments to parallel NCLB. Most of the changes to the curricula were content related, to reflect the state tests for NCLB. Of the 2006/2007 school year, the school districts reported that between 73%-77% were very well aligned with NCLB core subjects of reading and math; 21%-22% was fairly well

aligned; and less than 1% were considered either poorly or not aligned at all with NCLB (McMurrer, 2007, p. 12). When it came to realigning their curricula to place more emphasis on content and skill used on the state NCLB tests, the school districts reported that they are paying more attention to the type of questions used on the state NCLB tests. The results of how much the different school districts concentrated on content and skills are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1

Extent to Which Districts Changed Their Curricula to Put More Emphasis on Content and Skills Covered on State Tests Used for NCLB

Subject Area High School Level:	To a Great Extent	Somewhat	A Little	Not at all
English Language Arts	41%	35%	12%	12%
Math	43%	35%	12%	10%
Science	31%	32%	18%	19%
Social Studies	23%	33%	21%	24%

Note. Adapted from “Choices, changes and challenges: Curricula and instruction in the NCLB era,” by J. McMurrer, p. 14. Copyright December 2007 by Center on Education Policy.

Opposition to a National History Standard

Elements, both inside and outside of the history/social studies field of interest, are opposed to a creation of a national mandated standard. Scholars and theorists have engaged in an on-going debate concerning the development of a standard, and, eventually, social studies theorists gained the support of the U.S. Bureau of Education, as well as the National Education Association, in advancing their view of social studies.

While this may have been a victory, for these theorists and educators, history curricula did not disappear (Saxe, 2004). The critics continued to point out that the stewards of history sought to maintain the traditional history curricula to “train the intellect,” while social studies practitioners relentlessly pressed their demands that every content area must pass the test of social utility as a subject area that contributed to understanding and resolving contemporary social problems (p.2).

Singer (2005) described those who favored history more than social studies have a formed anti-social studies coalitions that mirror the interlocking relationships used to avoid antitrust laws by corporations. Others coalitions appear to exist but are more difficult to demonstrate (p. 199). Singer also accuses the Thomas Fordham Institute and the Bradley Institute of being against social studies. Singer believed the Bradley Foundation fosters a deep skepticism about citizenly values and the institutions and values they prized (Singer, 2005).

Even with the establishment of both the Bradley Commission on History in the School and the creation of the National Council for History Education, Singer believed that the NCHE and the Teaching American History Grant is an effort in which both the NCHE and the Bradley Foundation perceive as a crisis in history, especially the inadequate time given to history instruction in the early grades; and the inadequate training in content provided to teachers of history. Along with the NCHE and the Bradley Foundation, Singer would also target the Thomas Fordham Foundation as a vehicle in which is simply a private, political vehicle of the foundation’s president Chester Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch.

In the early 1990s, the U.S. Department of Education awarded funds to various groups of educators and scholars to develop voluntary national standards in other subjects, which included history. Hamilton, Stecher, and Yuan (2008) in their research showed that as it turned out, the level of consensus around voluntary national standards anticipated by many standards advocates did not materialize. There was actually more disagreement about the mathematics standards than was apparent at the time and other subject areas experienced even greater disagreement. Part of the argument stemmed from whether standards should be viewed as a guide to help educators develop local curricula or whether they should be written using language that was specific enough to eliminate local discretion over curricula. Their research identified that the existence of these standards reflects a broad consensus that well educated citizens need to know more than just math and reading (Hamilton et al., 2008, p. 57). While some subjects might be more important than others, and some topics more essential within that subject, to completely exclude any of these standards from reform is inconsistent with the purpose of public education.

The Nation's Report Card, produced by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is the yard stick on which state education achievement is measured. The NAEP began assessing U.S. history across the nation first in 1986, and then again in 1988. A more rigorous assessment program was developed in order to assess the results for 1994. Approximately 50 professional historians, educators, administrators, and other interested individuals worked to achieve consensus on the general goals as well as the specific language of the framework.

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reinitiated following the new administration taking office in 2008. Recently, the new Secretary of Education, Secretary Arne Duncan and President Obama met with the state governors in February 2010, and discussed plans to move the reauthorization forward. The two congratulated the governors concerning the new Common Core Standards Initiative. The National Governors Association (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) convened a state-led process to develop the common core state standards in English Language Arts and math. Forty-eight states and three territories enrolled in for the initiative (Common Core Standards, 2009, para. 1). While a new program, it continues the same rhetoric as before that only reading and math are the core subjects. Secretary Duncan and President Obama stated that the proposed changes to the current law could include a state requirement to develop college and career-ready standards in order to receive such items, such as Title I funding (Cronin, 2010).

Jennings (2010) showed his concern about the reauthorization stagnation by indicating that President Obama and the current administration should get the process back on track. The Democrats and Republicans on the Education and Labor Committee of the House of Representatives announced they would work together this year to move an overdue renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the federal government's main law promoting school reform (Jennings, 2010, p. 1). Jennings would like to see not only a renewal, but a relief from what he considered an unfair burden placed upon the schools concerning NCLB and meeting the AYP, and the ramifications

of not meeting the AYP. Jack Jennings strongly believed that the AYP judged unfairly by the AYP and it should be removed, as indicated by President Obama.

The Center for Education Policy has some suggestions on how to reform education and curricula. The CEP recommends that the government should keep aspects of the current federal role that have contributed to progress; change aspects that could be better designed or implemented, and eliminate any requirements and programs that have not been effective. With this in mind, the CEP suggests to have a tighter control on the front end of the program with a more rigorous common standard and aligned assessment, but less prescriptive on the back end with greater opportunities for experimentation accompanied by evaluations (Kober, Jennings, & Peltason, 2010, p. 1). When it comes to standards-based reform, the CEP demonstrated that four previous U.S. presidents have used this as a basis for their education policy. The CEP also points out that over the past seven years there has been a steady increase in state test scores for NCLB. This progress was confirmed by the state-by-state evaluation conducted by the National Assessment of Education Board (NAEP) (Kober et al, 2010).

The CEP showed the challenge facing President Obama by showing in a March 2010 report that the result for the 2008-2009 school year showed that out of 94,170 public schools which reported their AYP results, 31,737 or 34% failed to meet the AYP (Dietz, 2010, p. 3). The CEP also found that the number of schools making AYP varied from state to state. The variance included 6% of Wisconsin schools not making AYP while 77% of Florida's schools did not make AYP. This vast difference may be in part to variations between the states concerning standards, tests, and performance scores. The

CEP supports President Obama's intent to replace the AYP with a better accountability program, the goal of 100% of students achieving their proficiency as unrealistic. Both Virginia and North Carolina reported 29% did not make AYP while 71% did achieve their AYP (p. 6).

National Reports

In 2001, the NAEP conducted a national U.S. history assessment in three grade levels: the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades. The major findings of the 2001 report show that the average U.S. history scores for fourth and eighth graders were higher in 2001 than in 1994, while the performance of twelfth graders remained relatively stable. Results of the 2001 U.S. history assessment showed 18% of fourth graders, 17% of eighth graders, and 11% of twelfth graders performing at or above the *Proficient* level (Lapp, Grigg, & Tay-Lim, 2002, p. x). The three achievement levels being assessed by the NAEP were the schools attaining at the basic, proficient, and advanced (p. ix). The NAEP reported that when it came to teachers using local history and social studies standards, approximately two-thirds of the fourth- and eighth grade teachers used state or local standards to a large extent in planning social studies instruction. There were no statistically significant differences in students' performance at either grade 4 or grade 8 based on the extent to which teachers reported using such standards in planning instruction (Lapp et al, 2002, p. xii).

The NAEP's next report card concerning U.S. history was released in 2006. In this report, the NAEP reported that within the public schools, the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades, and especially fourth graders know more U.S. history now than in the previous

assessments (Finn, Petrilli, & Liam, 2006). When it came to the performance of the eighth grade, the NAEP reported a continuing improvement since 1994, with scores higher at all levels of performance. The percentage of eighth graders at or above *Proficient* increased from 14% in 1994 to 17% in 2006 (p. 1).

The NAEP reported for the 2006 school year, America's 4th, 8th, and 12th grades, know more than the past assessments of U.S. history, especially the 4th grade (Lee & Weiss, 2007). The NAEP assessment of the school year focused on four themes, which included democracy, culture, technology, and world role (Lee & Weiss, 2007, pp. 1-2). Results from the 2006 NAEP assessment in U.S. history show overall improvement in student performance in comparison to previous assessment years. The 2006 report also indicated that the performance of twelfth graders, improved over the last twelve years with increases distributed across the entire range of performance. However, this is contradictory to the 2001 report which indicated that the twelfth graders had not showed any improvement.

Contrary to the Nations Report Card on History, the Fordham Foundation released their own reports in 2003 and 2006 concerning the status of state standards and achievement levels. In the 2003 Fordham Foundation report, *Effective State Standards for United States History* by Dr. Sheldon Stern found the one subject that students appear to the know the least about, is history. The Thomas Fordham Foundation indicated that the unintended consequences of the NCLB Act upon history may have been without intention, actually more detrimental for the plight of U.S. history, than assistance. Stern

(2003) had three criteria he addressed as part of this assessment: comprehensive history content, sequential development, and balance.

Previous reports showed how the states fared prior to the 2001 enactment of NCLB. The 1998 report was a combination of both United States and World history standards, the results shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

1998 Consolidated Assessment of United States and World History Standards

Assessment Grade	Number of States
A	1
B	3
C	9
D	6
F	20
No Standard	15

Note. Adapted from “State History Standards” by D. Saxe, p. ix. Copyright 1998 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation.

The report showed that the majority of the states do not have a well established or effective standard for teaching and learning U.S. history. Virginia, along with California, Texas, and Massachusetts had the best history standards. Only Virginia’s state standards met nearly all of Stern’s criteria. Virginia’s standards were assessed as clear, measurable, descriptive of what is to be taught and learned, demanding, and quite specific about history content. This analysis found Virginia’s to be the Nation’s benchmark history standards at the present time (Saxe, 1998, p. viii).

Saxe identified that history and social studies are interchangeable. In his report, Saxe (1998) mentioned that many states do not identify history as a school subject, and only a few states, such as Alabama, California, Massachusetts, and Virginia, have adopted a history-centered framework for their social studies as a whole. Virginia's state standards avoided the promotion of dogma and refrained from manipulating student attitudes. The research team of history professionals also commented that Virginia's standards are centered on specific historical content from United States and World history. Virginia wasn't the model from which other standards were assessed, but the research conducted by Saxe found Virginia's standards to be the nation's "exemplary" benchmark for history standards at the present time (Saxe, 1998, p. 11).

The consolidated 2000 report on both United States and World history standards showed in the Table 3.

Table 3.

2000 Consolidated Assessment of United States and World History Standards

Assessment Grade	Number of States
A	3
B	7
C	13
D	9
F	15
No Standard	4

Note. Adapted from “The State of State History Standards 2000” by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation.

The report showed the national average was a “D+.” The report also showed a concern that the majority of the states have not began any standards-based reform, even after seventeen years since the *Nation at Risk* report was released, and eleven years since the Charlottesville Summit (Finn & Petrilli, 2000, p. vii). The report showed that as a nation, there was a slight improvement from 1998 to 2000, with the overall national grade in 1998 was a “D”, where in 2000 it was “D+” (p. 1). Virginia still maintained the original standard it developed which scored an “A” in both 1998 and 2000 (p. 12).

Whether or not these new revised standards were working or not, was reviewed by the Thomas Fordham Foundation’s 2003 *Effective State Standards for U.S. History: 2003 Report Card*. The foundation’s president, Chester E. Finn, commented for this report that U.S. history is not doing well. While almost every state requires students to

attend at least one course in history (typically in eleventh grade), U.S. history seldom even appears in statewide testing and accountability systems. Of the 24 states that have (or intend to have) high school exit exams by 2008, only nine include social studies among the subjects tested and, of the nine, just two (Mississippi and New York) test specifically in U.S. history (Stern, 2003, p. 5).

The 2003 report indicated that Virginia which had been assessed previously as “outstanding” received a lower appraisal of “very good.” The report also indicated eight states were assessed as weak, and 23 states as ineffective while two (Iowa and Rhode Island) had no history or social studies standards (Stern, 2003, pp. 97-98). Throughout the appraisals of the 37 states, numerous examples used Virginia as a comparison. The final evaluation of the Virginia’s history standard concluded that the state had developed an outstanding set of standards for teaching U.S. history. The standards were clearly written and easy to understand, and also provided solid content from which the teachers could develop their methods of instructions. Debate continues within the State of Virginia concerning whether or not the students should learn about local Virginia history before learning U.S. history (Saxe, 1998).

The foundation still recognized Virginia’s 1995 History and Social Studies Standards of Learning (SOL) as one of the best frameworks in the nation. However, it appeared that the newly revised SOL did not meet the same expectations as the foundation found it in the past. Virginia’s standards are still considered better than most states, but they are considered not quite as comprehensive and demanding as they were in 1995 (Stern, 2003). Along with Virginia, the National Council for the Social Studies

(NCSS) revised their national standard for social studies and social studies teachers. The National Standards for Social Studies Teachers were developed initially by a task force of National Council for the Social Studies and approved by the NCSS Board of Directors in April, 1997. They were revised by a subsequent task force, and that revision was approved by the NCSS Board of Directors in September 2002 (National Standards, 2002).

The NCSS standards are intended to be used to assess and help improve professional knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions of prospective teachers seeking initial state licensure (or certification) to teach social studies in the classrooms of the United States; and the quality of college and university social studies teacher education programs that prepare these individuals. The standards were designed as a stand-alone product, which can be incorporated into different national levels of education.

The Thomas Fordham Foundation’s 2006 “State of the State Standards” report showed that while 37 states have revised or updated their standards, they are still assessed as “mediocre” (Finn, Petrilli, & Liam, 2006, p. 6). The average grade for state standards across all subjects was a disappointing “C-minus” in 2006 and remains so in 2010. The results of the 2006 assessments are shown in Table 4.

Table 4.

2006 Assessment on State History Standards

Assessment Grade	Number of States
A	8
B	13

C	4
D	12
F	21
No Standard	1

Note. Adapted from “2006 State of the State History Standards” by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation.

The report also presents that there is a correlation between good standards and the National Report Card presented by the NAEP.

The Thomas Fordham Foundation’s report concurred with the NAEP assessments of American children taking U.S. history. The foundation believes that one of the contributing reasons for good national results can be attributed to 37 states which either updated or revised their state standards (Finn et al, 2006, p. 6). However, while some states may have improved their standards, the foundation still found the majority to be mediocre at best. Solid standards matter because they are the foundation of standards-based reform, the dominant education policy strategy in America today. They have become even more important in the NCLB era, when weighty consequences befall schools that do not rise to meet the standards (at least in reading and math) (Finn et al, 2006, p. 6). The Thomas Fordham Foundation, on the other hand, demonstrated that most of the states were assessed of having a sub-standard standard for history.

One of the contributing factors that may have an effect as to whether or not a nationally mandated standard for history is approved may be the national budget. One of the programs the U.S. Department of Education uses to support the professional

development and training for history teachers is known as the Teaching American History Grant (TAH). The new administration has proposed consolidating 38 existing K-12 education programs into 11 new programs. As a result, Teaching American History grants is no longer listed as a separate line item in the budget, calling into question whether the program will continue to receive the approximately \$119 million in funding which it has in recent years. Under the Administration's budget request, the Teaching American History grants would be part of a new program called "Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education" (Teaching American History, 2010).

Crandall Shifflett, a faculty member of Virginia Tech, indicated that the Teaching American History grant allowed him to interact with many K-12 history teachers across Virginia, and he indicated that the reaction of working with these teachers on learning and improving instruction on American history has been of great benefit. Shifflett indicated that the universal reaction of teachers has been highly favorable and the TAH experience has given them a renewed knowledge and enthusiasm for history as they return to their own classrooms and apply their new knowledge and techniques (Shifflett, as cited in Teaching American History, 2010).

The Center on Education Policy reported in March of 2006, that the majority of school leaders had gains in their AYP, and national requirements are having a greater impact on the daily activities in schools across the nation. While this may be a boon for those who support the current law, the Center also indicated that 71% of the surveyed schools for 2006 indicated that they have reduced time and narrowed the curricula focus to the core subjects of math and reading (Lang & Lillie, 2006). The report also showed

that of the schools surveyed, one-third of the school districts indicated that social studies was the subject that time was removed from in order to provide more time to the core subjects. As part of the Center of Education Policy's new recommendation to the U.S. Department of Education include that then Secretary Spelling should use her position to advocate social studies, the arts, science, and other subjects besides reading and math are still a vital part of a balanced curricula (Lang & Lillie, 2006, p. 3). Understanding the continued debate and challenges occurring at the national level, the next portion will address how Virginia and North Carolina are working through this issue.

Virginia

The State of Virginia began to re-examine and develop better standards for its schools in 1994, in order for the children of Virginia to compete in the global economy of the 21st century (Thayer, 2000, p. 70). One of the major areas identified for improvement included history and social studies. Virginia was the only state in 1994 to be recognized by the American Federation of Teachers who awarded the state the highest rating in all four basic academic areas (English, math, science and history/social studies). The standards were considered so effective that 20 other states modeled their programs after Virginia's SOL (Thayer, 2000).

Virginia developed a program of tests to measure the effectiveness of the SOL. Creation and development began in 1996 and was first administered in 1998. The tests focused on the same four academic areas and was administered to students in the third, fifth and eighth grades. Continuing to develop means of assessing the student achievement levels, Virginia developed measures to ensure accountability for student

achievement. This program, known as the Standards of Accreditation (SOA), had one over-riding goal, which was to ensure the accountability in Virginia public schools (Thayer, 2000, p. 70).

The Virginia School Board decided that it would be unfair to the students if only they were held accountable. The school board decided that in order for the school to maintain full accreditation, 70% of the students must pass the applicable SOL tests. The school board also made a decision that schools could also receive an accreditation rating of “other than fully accredited.” This was in part to the 3rd grade whose main focus for the year was reading and math, and it also took into account the students who were English Language Learners. In this case, 50% was considered acceptable (Thayer, 2000, p. 71). In order for concerned parents to track how the respective schools were doing, the Virginia school board released Virginia Report Cards which along with academic and accreditation, also reported on safety issues, drop out and attendance rates.

After one year since the new SOL program was in practice, Virginia schools demonstrated marked improvements in the 27 SOL tests administered in 1999 when compared with the student achievement levels of 1998. When it came to U.S. history, while the lowest scoring of the four main academic areas, 60 schools still showed improvement in 1999. Of the 1,791 eligible schools for accreditation in 1999, 587 reached either the pass-rate standard for the four academic areas or the standards in two or three of the four academic areas, still a marked improvement over the first round of tests (Thayer, 2000, pp. 71-72). With the improvement in the schools, it is accepted that

the standards help design the curricula, and schools began to reshape their curricula and instructional programs.

Morrill (2004) discussed the creation of Virginia's SOL and how it was developed during a time of highly energized political environment dominated by partisan politics and a stronger focus on state responsibilities. Virginia Governor George Allen and the state officials responsible for the implementation of the SOL were greatly concerned about the possible interference by the national government in the development. The governor decided to approach the establishment of the state standards independently. The governor and his staff showed disdain for both the possible federal interference in the SOL development, as well as any national standard for all of the subjects, including history. In 1994, Virginia selected four local school districts to lead the development of the standards of learning. The Virginia Board of Education approved the new standards in 1995; however there were critics of these approved standards. They were concerned that where Virginia had developed standards in only a few months, it took the national board took years to develop.

Morrill (2004) reported that the "Virginia standards attracted considerable attention inside and outside the state. For example, the American Federation of Teachers rated the Virginia history and social science standards as among the strongest in the nation (p. 256). One of the leading social studies teachers for Virginia, Dan Fleming indicated that the main reason Virginia received the recognition from the American Federation of Teachers was because of the content for which the SOL supported (Fleming, as cited by Morrill, 2004, p. 256). Morrill is not a staunch fan or supporter for

the history standards, for his field of discipline is geography. Morrill does see an interaction between geography and history. Morrill's opinion is that there is an unfair political advantage for those who support history than the other disciplines (Fleming, as cited by Morrill, 2004, p. 256).

Virginia was using its new SOL when the Fordham Foundation's 1998 *State of the State Standards* report was released. While Virginia was the only state to receive an "A" for history standards, there is still concern that "by blitzing students with long lists of facts to learn, the standards will produce a curricula that's a "mile wide and an inch deep," and perhaps the patterns that should link the facts will never be explicated" (Finn et al, 1998, pp. 6-7). While this may be a concern, Lynne Cheney, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, stated that both Virginia and Texas have history standards far better than the national history standards (Cheney, as cited by Finn et al, 1998, p. 15).

Virginia's Department of Education developed a new tool to assist teachers. The new 1995 SOL was a test blueprint guide for the different subjects, to include history. The guides were designed to serve as a means for test writers to develop the test questions that support the history SOLs. The other purpose of the test guide was to assist educators, parents and the students themselves what to expect on the SOL. The guide covered the test and which subject, if any, have been excluded (Blueprint, 1997).

Determined to refine both the social studies and history examinations as part of Virginia's SOL, a committee from the board of education looked at key areas where improvements could be made. They suggested four ideas where the SOL examinations

could be improved. These suggestions included separate end of year tests for grades 4 through 8 which covered only the material presented. An essay requirement was added for the middle and high school examinations. A World history test was created as a separate assignment from the history and social studies, and developed a better way for parents to follow school performance reports and test scores from the Virginia Department of Education web site (Schroder, 1999). The committee recommended that the board postpone consideration of the use of essay questions indefinitely. While the board accepted the committee's recommendation, it did note the board's desire to revisit the issue at a future date (Pyle, 2001, para. 4). Additionally, the board President Kirk Schroder requested the committee to review the possibilities that whether the school divisions or the Department of Education have the ability and the authority to develop questions (Pyle, 2001).

Following the acceptance of the 1995 SOLs which included history and social studies, the Virginia General Assembly in 2000 directed the Board of Education to establish and implement a program of periodic review and revision of the SOLs. Having received their direction, the school board established a task force in June of 2000, composed of "Board members, legislators, community representatives, and social studies educators to direct the review of the History and Social Science Standards of Learning" (History and Social Studies SOL, 2001, p. 5). Additionally, the task force was also requested to review the 1999 History and Social Studies SOL Teacher Resource Guide.

The newly accepted 2001 SOL for History and Social Studies took the stance that the study of history and social science is vital for a democratic society. The goal is for all

students need to know and understand our national heritage in order to become informed participants in shaping our nation's future through studying history (History and Social Studies SOL, 2001, p.7). The SOL stipulated that it is composed of four focus areas; history, geography, economics and civics and that history should be the integrative core of the curricula.

The State of Virginia teaches three categories of history; U.S. History to 1877; U.S. History from 1877 to Present, and Virginia and U.S. History. The curricula framework which accompanies the SOL breaks the standards into four categories: Essential Understandings, Essential Questions, Essential Knowledge, and Essential Skills (Virginia and U.S. History, 2001, p. 2). As Virginia updated their history SOLs, the Department of Education released an updated version of the Blueprint for the 2001 History and Social Studies Standards of Learning. The updated 2001 versions now include the same subjects in 1995, with the additions of Virginia studies, civics and economics, world geography, Virginia and U.S. history.

In 2004, Virginia's Department of Education released three supporting documents for their history and social studies SOL. "The *History and Social Science Standards of Learning Enhanced Scope and Sequence* is a resource intended to help teachers align their classroom instruction with the history and social science Standards of Learning" (History and Social Science, 2004, p. i). These supporting documents were designed to assist teachers with the SOLs that were developed in 2001. There are three documents: *Virginia and U.S. History*; *U.S. History to 1877*, and *U.S. History: 1877 to Present*. The enhanced scope and sequence still follow the original scope and topics outlined in the

respective SOLs. The enhanced versions provide the teachers with lesson plans that are aligned with the essential knowledge and skills in the curricula framework.

These enhanced supporting documents are intended to allow school divisions and teachers a resource to develop sound curricular and more robust instructional programs. Additionally, the guides provide examples for the teachers to use. It is still stressed, even in these enhanced scope and sequence guides, that the study of history must emphasize the intellectual skills required for responsible citizenship (US History to 1877, 2004, p. 23).

After the enactment of NCLB, Virginia was still utilizing the 2001 SOLs augmented keep with the blueprints for test designers and the enhanced scope and sequence guides to assist the teachers. Virginia began teaching history in kindergarten and first grade, when Virginia youngsters learn stories about significant historical figures, such as George Washington and Pocahontas who are also associated with the state. In the second grade, students move onto “the heritage and contributions” of ancient peoples and the “American Indians (First Americans).” Virginia history is covered in the fourth grade, with topics through the American Revolution and the Constitution, but subsequent historical events presented more vaguely. Then, in the fifth grade, Virginia students begin their study of U.S. history.

Most of Virginia’s subject matter is generally considered generally well written, but some deficiencies are evident. For example, the standards are evasive about the slave trade, and make no mention of how slave traders initially obtained the Africans they would transfer overseas. Further, a middle school review of the 19th century did not

discuss antebellum reform movements, the Dred Scott decision, the Emancipation Proclamation, or the Gettysburg Address. A high school review does not mention McCarthyism and the Red Scare. These standards, considered an update from a top-notch 1995 state standard, are still good but they've inexplicably lost some content covered in earlier versions (Finn et al, 2006).

On February 29, 2008, Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction adopted the revised History and Social Studies SOL. The revised 2008 SOL is basically an updated version of the 2001 standard and will retain the same tested material until summer 2010. The first real field-test of the new testable material will begin in the spring of 2010. *History and Social Science Standards of Learning* and will include the new content of the revised 2008 standards. For the 2010-2011 school year, the Standards of Learning assessments will be based upon the revised 2008 Standards (Cannaday, 2008, p. 1).

Currently the new curricula frameworks for the three areas of history have been released. *Virginia and U.S. History* for the most part remained the same except for technical edits. For example, American Indians were no longer referred to as the "first Americans" as well as a bigger emphasis for citizenship development for the curricula (Virginia, 2008, pp. 1-2). The next two curricula were revised to *U.S. History to 1865* and *U.S. History from 1865 to Present*, instead of 1877 which was the mid-point for the 2001 SOLs. These other two contained mostly technical edits, and all three curricula were accepted on July 17, 2008.

North Carolina

North Carolina is working through the challenges in developing a comprehensive standard for American history, while meeting the national requirements. O'Connor, Heafner and Groce (2007) began a program advocating social studies and have become concerned in how social studies have become marginalized due to the high-stakes national requirements. Their major concern was the amount of time allotted for the teaching of social studies, and took their concerns to Washington D.C., and discussed this issue with members of Congress. They voiced their main concerns as the time allowed, and the emphasis on testing rather than subject matter (O'Connor, Heafner, & Groce, 2007).

The study they presented to the congressman and their staff highlighted the growing trend across the nation on diminishing time allowed for social studies to have more time for math and reading. They also voiced their concern over teaching the test instead of a standard. The narrow focus on high-stakes testing is "squeezing the intellectual life out of our schools as they are transformed into what are essentially giant test-prep centers. The researchers were concerned that a significant part of the curricula that was squeezed out was social studies (O'Connor et al, 2007, p. 255).

When the researchers met with their congressman in December of 2006, and again in July of 2007, the three brought talking points with them to face the skeptics on Capitol Hill, which they presented as hand outs. The three professors also explained to the congressman, especially as the reauthorization of NCLB is being debated, offers only a minor inclusion for civics, and does not include social studies or its core disciplines

(i.e., civics, history, geography, and economics) within the accountability equation, nor does the new plan offers financial support for the teaching of social studies (O'Connor et al, 2007, p. 258).

Wake County in North Carolina was one of the case study counties of the CEP's evaluation of the third year under NCLB in 2003-2004. During that school year, Wake County reacted positively to NCLB, but soon found implementing NCLB to be "extremely burdensome." Banks (2005) indicated that NCLB compliance has consumed a great deal of energy and resources, and had bureaucratized the school improvement process (Banks, as cited in the CEP Report, 2005, p. 35). Wake County did not meet the required AYP for that year, but no schools were identified as being in need for improvement. One of the challenges facing the school was that were different tests for state accountability and for NCLB. Additionally, the state school leaders were facing accusations that the state tests were too easy, and there was a movement to raise the state standards for accountability (CEP-NCLB 3, 2005, p. 101).

As North Carolina worked on improving their achievement levels and working towards meeting the AYP, state school officials stated that during the 2004-2005 school year, NCLB took time, energy, and resources away from the reforms being worked on. They felt that their school achievement levels were "more ambitious and sophisticated than the federal accountability system" (Retner, Scott, Kober, Chudowsky, Jofus & Zabala, 2006, p. 3). In order to meet the AYP, North Carolina changed their annual target goal because they were implementing a new assessment program (Retner et al, 2006). Some schools in North Carolina, like Wake County, already had internal improvement

initiatives that pre-dated NCLB. While these programs do overlap NCLB, they are not all inclusive. Officials in all three districts said they focused a good deal of attention on internal initiatives while also meeting the requirements of NCLB, and that increases in student achievement were more likely to be due to the more established district initiatives than to NCLB (Retner et al, 2006, p. 94).

Section 3: Methodology

Introduction

The research was derived from the contradictory national reviews of how U.S. history is being taught across the nation. There still is no approved national mandated standard for U.S. history, and there appears to be no indication of any forward movement within the U.S. Congress for the development of a national standard (CEP, 2006; Lee & Weiss, 2007). Additionally, the move of having history added as a core class under the NCLB Act appears to have stopped, along with the debate of reviewing and reauthorizing the NCLB Act (NCHS, 2009). The pursuit of history reform was greatly reduced when two staunch supporters passed away. A factor in the stalled debate concerning adding history to the core subjects of NCLB may be the deaths of Senators Kennedy and Byrd. Senator Kennedy who passed away in 2009, championed the cause of adding history to NCLB, and Senator Robert Byrd who passed away recently in 2010, was considered by the NCHE as a leading figure in advocating effective and comprehensive history education in our schools (NCHE, 2010). With the 2006 NAEP report indicating all is well, The Fordham Foundation's 2006 assessment contradicts these findings by indicating all is not well. With no recognized national standard for states to use as a reference, the research is intended to use Virginia as a model for the nation and other states to use as a template to improve their history standards (NAEP, 2006; Finn, Petrilli, & Liam, 2006).

The majority of the research was based upon the data collected from national databases during phase one, which was used to establish the foundation for the research.

The results were used as a means of explaining and highlighting the findings from the database and achievement score research, and show the different opinions between the participants in the U.S. history standards reform. The second phase include the data from a review of Virginia's and North Carolina's curricula, standards and achievement scores, and compare and contrast what is listed within the different national databases, then see if there are similar or diverging trends from the state level. This is designed to see that if there is a correlation between good standards and curricula, and meeting or surpassing achievement scores. Walden University approved this methodology, the IRB approval number is 10-25-10-0357448.

Research Design

Casual-comparative research was determined to be the best methodology for this educational research, based on the examination of two groups, which in this case are the states of Virginia and North Carolina. In causal-comparative or, ex-post facto, the researcher is attempting to determine the cause, or reason, for preexisting differences in groups of individuals (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001, pp. 332-333). The basic casual-comparative study begins with an effect and then searches for the cause. In this case, the effect is poor achievement levels in U.S. history, and the possible causes may be poor or ineffective standards, or course curricula. For this study, the *independent variables* were Virginia's and North Carolina's academic standards. The *dependent variables* for this study were Virginia's and North Carolina's history achievement scores. The use of the casual-comparative study was relevant due to the fact these events have already occurred,

as reported by the national assessments and annual report cards for both states, and Virginia's and North Carolina's internal reporting of achievement scores.

To support the casual-comparative study, the researcher used both a standard correlation analysis and the Pearson correlation, using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program for Windows. With the casual-comparison looking at both Virginia's and North Carolina's standards for U.S. history and achievement levels for a correlation, this analysis was considered appropriate for this study. The standard correlation analysis was appropriate, for there will be no attempt to control or manipulate the variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The variables have already been determined and presented in the national and state data. Where the standard correlation analysis examined the relationship between the variables, in this case standards and achievement levels, the Pearson correlation examined the degree and direction of the relationship (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005).

Setting and Sample

The settings for this research are two states, Virginia and North Carolina. Both states have similar geography, having rural, suburban and urban areas. Both Virginia and North Carolina are currently working to improve their standards in academic excellence. The study focused on the state level achievement scores as a whole, and did not delve down into the respective school districts. Virginia's estimated 2009 population was 7,882,590 with a population density of approximately 193 people per square mile, with an average yearly income of \$59,562 (Virginia, 2010). In comparison, North Carolina's 2009 estimated population was 9,380,884 with a population density of 165.24 people

per square mile, with an average yearly income of \$44, 760. North Carolina is 150 miles wide and 560 miles long (North Carolina, 2010).

Virginia provides U.S. history in the third, fifth, eighth grades, as part of the social studies curricula, and as a stand-alone U.S. history class in the eleventh grade. North Carolina on the other hand, only provides U.S. history in the fifth grade as part of its social studies curricula, and U.S. history is also taught in the eleventh grade. As part of the casual-comparison, a review of both states' U.S. History standard will be summarized, to include the comparisons of the learning objectives, a look at the creation and updates of both states' standards. The review and summaries of Virginia's and North Carolina's U.S. history standard will be used to support the establishment of a core national standard, to include which grade levels receive history and what should be the learning objectives within the standards.

Virginia had 1,880 schools in 2008-2009, with a total student count of approximately 1,249,819 students (State Summary, 2010, p. 1). North Carolina had 2,210 schools in the 2008/2009 school year with a total student count of 1,441, 872 students (Facts and Figures, 2009, p. 2). The sample will consist of the evaluations and scores of the eleventh grade for both states, where U.S. history is the focus and not part of a social studies program. Virginia's 2007-2008 eleventh graders totaled approximately 91,142 (State Summary, 2010, p. 2), while North Carolina's eleventh graders totaled approximately 86,270 students (Statistical Profile, 2009, p.4).

The characteristics of the sample are based on two neighboring states with similar geography and student demographics, and the sample was selected from the eleventh

grade due to both states use this grade to teach the U.S. history course separate from social studies. The intent is to compare and contrast the performance of both state's eleventh graders, compare the standards and show possible trends that could be correlated with the national challenges facing other schools across the nation. While both states incorporate U.S. history in its social studies curricula, the focus will strictly be on the stand alone U.S. history course in the eleventh grade, in order to focus on a single standard and curricula common to both states.

Instrumentation and Materials

Description of Sources

The first part of the data collection consisted of data that was collected and evaluated from national sources covering U.S. history achievement levels since the enactment of the NCLB Act; evaluations of state standards for U.S. history; and the resulting AYP scores for both Virginia and North Carolina. The state data was collected from the respective state's Department of Education, which included student demographics, U.S. history achievement scores since the enactment of the NCLB Act, and whether or not they meet their AYP scores.

U.S. Department of Education

The Department of Education for the United States, in conjunction with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), conducted annual report cards for the past 30 years. For the purpose of this study, the National Report Cards on history for the years 2001 and 2006 was used, the only years a focused report on history was released. The data presented in both reports are shown as tables and graphs. The National

Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) U.S. history assessment evaluates students' understanding of the development of America's democratic institutions and ideals. Students demonstrated their knowledge of democracy, culture, technological and economic change, and America's changing world role. A nationally representative sample of 29,000 students at fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades was assessed in 2006. The 2006 report compares student performance to similar assessments conducted in 1994 and 2001 (NAEP, 2006, p. 1). NAEP U.S. history results are reported on a 0–500 scale, overall and for each of the four themes. In addition, results are reported at five percentiles (10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th) to show the scores of lower-, middle-, and higher-performing students (NAEP, 2006, p. 4). The focus of this study concentrated on the twelfth grade history assessments. The report discussed findings based on a statistical significance at the .05 level with appropriate adjustments for multiple comparisons (NAEP, 2006, p. 5).

The schools and students participating in the 2001 and 2006 NAEP U.S. history assessments are chosen to be a nationally representative sample. This sample was chosen using a multistage design that involved sampling students from the sampled schools, which include public schools and nonpublic schools (i.e., private schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and Department of Defense schools). Each school that participated in the assessment, and each student assessed, represents a portion of the population of interest. Results were weighted to make appropriate inferences between the student samples and the respective populations from which they were drawn. Sampling weights account for the disproportionate representation of the selected sample, for the

oversampling of students who attend schools with high concentrations of minority students, and for the lower sampling rates of students who attend very small nonpublic schools (NAEP, 2006, p. 30).

The Thomas Fordham Foundation

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute is a Washington, D.C.-based, non-profit think tank dedicated to advancing educational excellence in America's K-12 schools. The goal of the institute is to promote policies that strengthen accountability and expand education options for parents and families (Thomas Fordham Institute, 2009). The Thomas Fordham Institute's "State of the State Standard" evaluations use three variables that these assessments took into account, which are a comprehensive historical content, sequential development and balance (Stern, 2003). For the purpose of this study, the currently released state of the state standard evaluations for the years 2000, 2003, and 2006 will be used, the information presented as tables. The next proposed evaluation of U.S. history is planned for early 2011 (Finn & Petrilli, 2010).

The criteria used in the 2000 report evaluations were based on 5 categories and fifteen total criteria's. The categories included: standards clarity, organization, soundness, content, and absence of manipulations. A 4-point rating scale was available for the criteria, including "3" for a criterion that fully met elementary, middle and high school; a "2" for a criterion meeting 2 out of the 3; a "1" for criterion which met at only 1 level; and a "0" for criterion that was impossible to tell (Saxe, 1998, p. 3; Finn & Petrilli, 2000, 137). A maximum score for each criterion was a 3, for a total raw score of 45. When combined with a frequency score, which indicated how often, a state met or partially met

each of the fifteen criteria (Saxe, 1998, p. 4). The final score, potentially up to sixty points, was then assigned a letter grade. “A” was considered exemplary; “B” was notable; “C” was useful; “D” was marginally useful; and an “F” was useless (Saxe, 1998, p. 3). The same letter grades will be used in the 2003 and 2006 reports.

The Thomas Fordham Foundation’s 2003 report evaluated the history curricula across the nation based on the following three criteria: *Comprehensive Historical Content*, *Sequential Development*, and *Balance*. Each state’s standards for U.S. history (or social studies standards containing U.S. history) were graded by the number of points received out of a maximum possible score of 10 for each of the three individual criteria and a maximum possible total score of 30: for example, 27 out of 30 = a score of 90 percent; 21 out of 30 = a score of 70 percent, etc. (Stern, 2003, p. 11). Under comprehensive historical content, the evaluations numerically ranged a “10” for rich and historically comprehensive; a “5” the standards are historically selective; and a “0” for inadequate. Under sequential development, a “10” for standards were in a cumulative and coherent sequence; a “5” for a standard which was partially cumulative and structured sequence; and a “0” for a standard that did not possess a cumulative or structured sequence. Finally, under the balance criteria, a “10” for a standard which is fair, balanced, and contextualized; a “5” for a standard partially balanced and evenhanded, a “2” if they lacked any historical specifics to make a judgment; and “0” if there is a political or ideological agenda identified (Stern, 2003, p. 11).

For the purpose of this study, only the final score in both the NAEP’s and the Thomas Fordham Foundation reports was used to determine a national relationship, and

specifically a focus on Virginia and North Carolina. The results of these assessments was used as the independent variable as part of the common correlation and reliability analysis study. These results were compared to the state achievement scores which served as the basis for the dependent variable.

Virginia Department of Education

The study focused on Virginia's Department of Education (DOE) and their standards for learning and achievement in grades K-12 in history/social science. These standards provide a curricula framework, and also provided specific knowledge and skills students must possess to meet the standards for these subjects. Virginia also maintains a database containing the scores and report cards that will be used as part of this study (Virginia Department of Education, 2009).

The focus of the study was on the school years between 2000 and 2010. The data presented in table form will be the overall state report card that is available from Virginia's DOE website. The end-of-course spring test results, shown as a table, will focus strictly on the percentage passing the high school Virginia and U.S. history examination (Virginia DOE, 2005). The 2007 to 2010 state report card, also addresses the end of year test results for high school Virginia and U.S. history, with the inclusion of the percentages of those students who placed in advanced, proficient, and those who failed in table form (Virginia DOE, 2010, p. 16). These final percentage scores from 2000 to 2010 will be used as the dependent variables in the study.

North Carolina Department of Education

North Carolina's *Standard Course of Study* was a recent total revision of the state curricula which in 1985 reflected the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively in an industrial age. The standard also included efforts to develop mature thinkers and problem solvers (Lee, 2009). The set of academic standards is designed to be common to all across the state, and based on a developed philosophy of teaching and learning that is consistent with today's best practices in education and standards.

The data from North Carolina was derived from two sources: the state testing results is published in what they title the "Green Book" which will cover 2000 to 2008, and the *Preliminary 2007-08 to 2009-10 End-of-Grade General Test Multiple-Choice Test Results*. The Green Books while are published annually, continue to present data from 1998 to the published school year. The data presented as both graphs and in tables is the percentage of number of students tested compared with the mean score of the results (North Carolina, 2009, p. 319). The preliminary report also covers the school years from 1996 to 2010, for the purpose of this study, the focus will remain on the percentage of total number of students tested compared to the average scale score for 2000 to 2010 (North Carolina, 2010, p. 16). The data from these final percentages will be used for the dependent variables.

Data Analysis Procedures

Phase one of the study was the collection from the national sources concerning assessments of Virginia's and North Carolina's standards and curricula for U.S. history. The data was compared and contrasted, with the focus on Virginia's and North Carolina's

eleventh grade U.S. history students. In some cases, the national evaluations may be of the twelfth grade instead of the eleventh grade, depending on which level the assessments are done for a specific school year. The second set of data came from the state departments of education sources for Virginia and North Carolina during phase two. The intent was to examine the past ten years, beginning with the year just prior the enactment of NCLB, and continue through to the 2009-2010 school year. The challenge facing the researcher was to maintain credibility with the data to present factual information that is not swayed or biased, to keep the research valid. As the data was correlated, care was maintained in order to spot any discrepancies or potential reliability issues.

The data will first be presented in a historical graph, one showing the data from the NAEP and the Thomas Fordham Foundation concerning the national assessments, and a second set of historical graphs will representation of the assessments of both Virginia's and North Carolina's achievement scores from the past ten years. The next analysis consisted of the Pearson Correlation analysis of Virginia and North Carolina in separate analyses. The Y value consisted of the percentage value, 0 to 100, and the X value will be the scores for the specific achievement for the school year. The graphs will first show Virginia's results, followed by North Carolina's.

To support the Pearson Correlation examination, the asymmetric Somer's D correlation was computed by the SPSS program to determine the degree and direction of the relationship while the Pearson correlation will examine if there is a positive or negative correlation. The relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's outcomes was used to demonstrate the causation between standards and scores. This served as a

means to establish a need for a core national standard that can assist all states to successful achievement levels in U.S. history. As the data was interpreted, care was taken to observe how the data collates and to see if there were any sampling errors. The data collected from both the national and state databases is available on request for review.

Protective Measures for the Participants

The data collected from the national and state statistical data have already been evaluated, validated, and published through their respective national organizations. The data from both the national and state databases do not use any names, but only the results from evaluations and scores. Any case studies or narratives from the national evaluations have already ensured the protection of their participants. The researcher's role was to be the collector of the information, to interpret the results and provide the findings. The researcher evaluated and tabulated the results of the statistical examination of Virginia's and North Carolina's scores, the researcher's role were that of an impartial and neutral historian. The researcher is not a teacher in either Virginia or North Carolina, and has no direct involvement with either state's public education systems, other than as a guest speaker on the American Revolution in some of Central Virginia's schools.

Summary

The data collected from the national and state statistical data established the base line in the next section that was compared to the scores from both Virginia and North Carolina. Section 4 examined the findings from the national research institutes concerning both Virginia's and North Carolina's curricula and standards for history for the past ten years. Then an examination of the actual test and achievement scores was

analyzed from the past ten years. These results were compared to determine if there was a correlation between good curricula and standards, and good scores. These findings will be presented along with recommendations in section 5 which could be used to set the conditions for social change, by showing how history can be incorporated like reading and math into a common core standard which can be used across the nation. Like reading and math, history can be a major component in the development of good citizens and a well educated populace.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

This section presents two sets of comparisons, beginning with a descriptive analysis of the national evaluations by the U.S. Department of Education on U.S. history, and evaluations conducted by the Thomas Fordham Foundation of U.S. history curricula used by Virginia and North Carolina. The second sets of comparisons are a descriptive analysis of the end-of year U.S. history results from Virginia and North Carolina over a ten year period. Following the descriptive analysis, there will be a comparative analysis looking for the correlation between the national assessment of the state U.S. history curricula, and the results for the end of year U.S. history examinations of the eleventh grade in Virginia and North Carolina.

With the discussion concerning the differing national assessments that was presented in the literature review in Section 2, the results of the descriptive analysis also show a differing result between the U.S. Department of Education and the Thomas Fordham Foundation assessments. The descriptive analysis between Virginia's and North Carolina's U.S. history end of year results showed a difference between the two states. Virginia has a more current and updated standards for U.S. history than North Carolina, which has been using the same standards and is only now looking at updating the curriculum and standard. The purpose of this quantitative casual-comparison was to determine the level of correlation between good standards and results. The results showed after the comparative analysis, that there is a positive correlation between good standards and good end of year scores.

The goal of this research was to examine the following two questions, and to determine to accept or reject the following hypothesis:

1. What is the relationship between the evaluations of the high school grade eleven and twelve history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels?

Null Hypothesis

There will be no significant correlation between the national evaluations of high school grade eleven and twelve history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels.

Alternative Hypothesis

There will be a significant correlation between the national evaluations of high school grade eleven and twelve history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels.

2. What is the relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven and twelve history achievement scores and how do they compare with the national assessments on history curricula?

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven and twelve history achievement scores and how they compared with the national assessments on history curricula.

Alternative Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven and twelve history achievement scores and how they compared with the national assessments on history curricula.

The independent variables were Virginia's and North Carolina's academic standards. The dependent variables for this study were Virginia's and North Carolina's history achievement scores. The research questions were designed to identify and show the correlation between good standards and achieving good achievement scores. As part of the research, the extent of the correlation between standards and achievement scores were also examined. The majority of the data strictly focused on Virginia and North Carolina, both at the national or at the state level.

Research Tools

The focus of this study was to examine both the national level assessments on how the schools were doing U.S. history and the curricula, and the end of year U.S history scores for the eleventh grade, focusing on Virginia and North Carolina who were the subjects of the casual comparison. The first part of the study was to examine results from a national evaluation by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and the Thomas Fordham Foundation. The data from the NAEP were from the National Report Cards on U.S. history, responsible for conducting assessments on student achievement in various subjects, including U.S. history as a project for the National Center for Student Statistics (NCES), supporting the U.S. Department of Education (NCES, 2001). The other national source of data came from evaluations of states' U.S.

history curricula by the Thomas Fordham Foundation. The Fordham Foundation has been examining state curricula of various subjects, including U.S. history before and during the enactment of NCLB. There have been several new assessments which have linked the positive reports shown by the National Assessment of Education Process and good standards (Finn et al, 2006, p. 6). This study was designed to determine if that correlation remains true with the review of Virginia and North Carolina.

The specific state data was compiled from reports provided by both Virginia's and North Carolina's Departments of Education. Virginia's standards of learning (SOL) accountability program included providing information concerning the progress of Virginia's schools raising student achievement to the public. Virginia's online report card for schools was used in this research, focusing on the end of year scores for U.S. history (Virginia Department of Education, 2010). Like Virginia, North Carolina also provides public information from their online website on school report cards on student achievement and was intended to facilitate discussions between parents and school leaders concerning the education process (Atkinson & Harrison, 2010).

Data Analysis

Descriptive Analysis

National Assessments

The following descriptive analysis conducted by the NAEP and the Thomas Fordham Foundation were calculated by the respective organizations and published on their respective web sites. The researcher's observations were based upon their published findings of the analysis by the NAEP, and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, as well as

their published reports. The NAEP has been authorized by the Congress to collect, analyze, and report reliable and valid information about what students know and perform in the core subjects in both public and nonpublic schools. The data presented in the table below show the results of U.S. history in grade twelve for 2001 and 2006. Basic proficiency indicated students had a partial mastery of the material. Proficient indicated students had solid performance in the subject, and advanced signified superior performance (Lapp et al, 2002, p. 8):

Table 5.

National Assessments of U.S. History Achievement for Grade 12

	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
2001	57%	32%	10%	1%
2006	—	47%	13%	1%

Note: Adapted from “The Nation’s Report Card, U.S. History 2001,” by M. Lapp, W. Grigg, and B. Tay-Lim, p. 21. Copyright 2002 by the U.S. Department of Education; and “The Nation’s Report Card, U.S. History 2006,” by J. Lee and A. Weiss, p. 9. Copyright 2007 by the U.S. Department of Education.

The sample size used by the NAEP for the 2001 assessment was 11,477 students, while the 2006 assessment sample was 11,300 students. The 2006 report did not list below basic, focusing on the top three. Along with a percentage, the NAEP utilized an achievement level 0-500 cut point scale to assess proficiency. The cut point score identified the boundaries between basic, proficient and advanced based on content (Lapp et al, 2002, p. 9). The results of these scores are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. NAEP Cut Point Scale for Grade 12 U.S. History

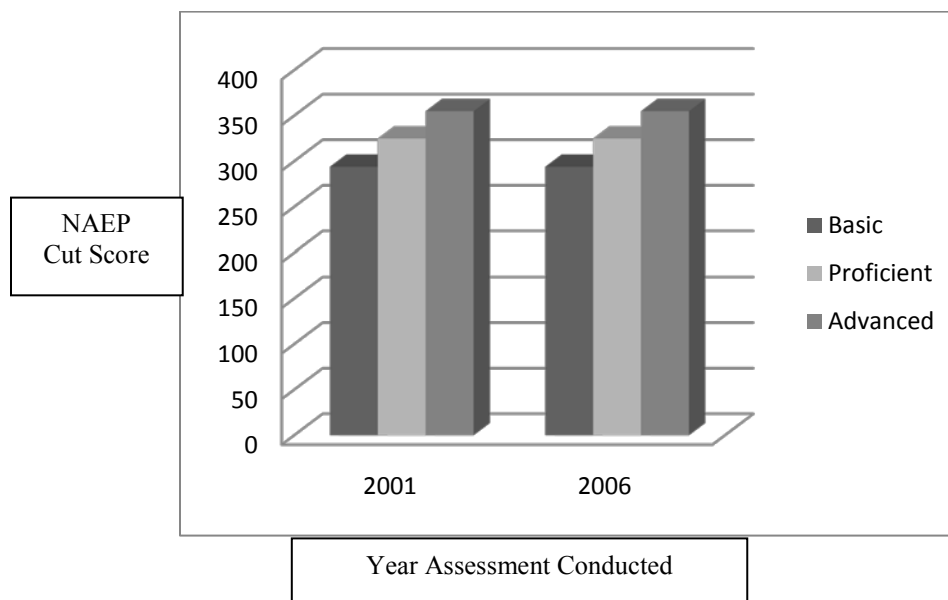


Figure 1. Graph of the National Assessment of Education Process' cut point score evaluations of twelfth grade result in U.S. history, nationally conducted in 2001 and 2006, and showing the overall assessment of students achieving basic, proficient, or advance. Adapted from "The Nation's Report Card, U.S. History 2006," by J. Lee and A. Weiss, p. 27. Copyright 2007 by the U.S. Department of Education.

While the national percentage for grade twelve achievements showed some improvement, the national NAEP cut score showed there was no improvement in proficiency for either 2001 or 2006.

The NAEP indicated that the 2001 national assessment showed for grade twelve there was no significant statistical improvement since 1994. The 2006 report indicated that the average score was higher than the previous assessments, most of the gains occurring in the past five years. There were a higher percentage of grade twelve students achieving basic level, and there was an improvement in the proficient level. (NAEP, 2006, p. 9).

The Thomas Fordham Foundation believes effective history standards should provide both the teacher and the student with the skills required to understand content, master historical thinking, and develop a sense of history. The Thomas Fordham foundation also believes that history should reflect the issues and the events that make up the whole American experience, both the good and the bad (Stern, 2003). The Thomas Fordham Foundation conducted an analysis of the state curricula in 2000, 2003, and 2006, using the letter grade and numeric assessment, shown in Table 6 below. The results from the three different assessments showed Virginia earning an “A” or 4.0 in 2000, and “B” or 3.16 for 2003 and 2006. North Carolina received a “D” or 1.16 in 2000, and “F” or under .50 for 2003 and 2006 (see Figure 2). The descriptive results of the assessment between Virginia’s and North Carolina’s are shown in the following table and figure:

Table 6.

Fordham Foundation’s Numeric Value for the Letter Grade Assessments on Curricula

A+: 3.83-4.0 B+: 3.17-3.49 C+: 2.17-2.49 D+: 1.17-1.49 F: <.50

A: 3.50-3.82 B: 2.83-3.16 C: 1.83-2.16 D: 0.83-1.16

A-: 3.18-3.49 B-: 2.50-2.82 C-: 1.50-1.82 D-: 0.50-0.82

Note: Adapted from “The State of State History Standards 2000” by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation.

Figure 2. Fordham Evaluations of U.S. History Curricula

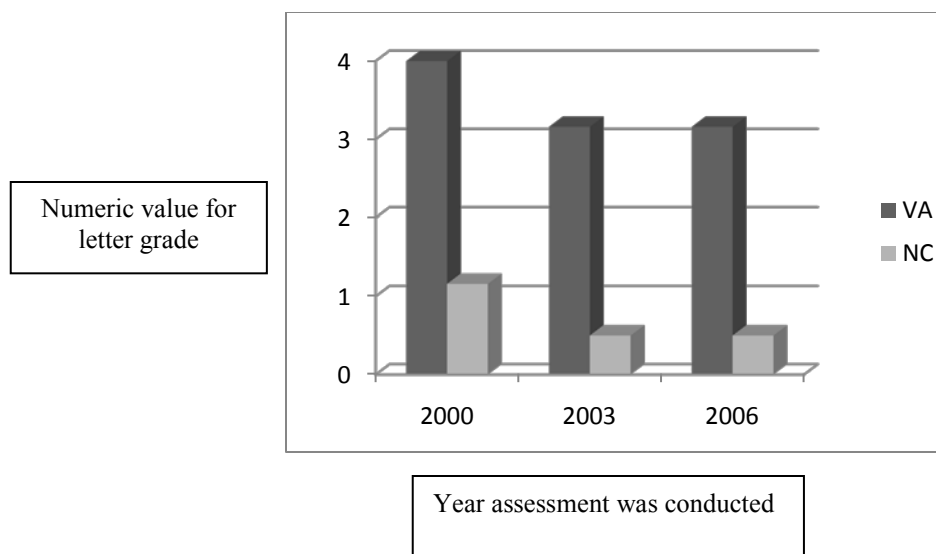


Figure 2. Graph of the Thomas Fordham Foundation’s analysis of Virginia (VA) and North Carolina (NC) U.S. history curricula assessments conducted for 2000, 2003, and 2006. Adapted from “The State of State History Standards 2000,” by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; “Effective State Standards for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card,” by S. Stern, p.64, 81. Copyright 2003 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; and “2006 State of the State Standards,” by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation.

The Thomas Fordham Foundation’s assessment of Virginia’s 2000 report was the same for the previous evaluation in 1998. The report stated Virginia’s standards for U.S. history were clearly written and provided solid content. Additionally, standard-setters from the other states should review Virginia’s standards (Saxe, 1998, p. 39). The 2003 report reviewed Virginia’s 2001 SOL for U.S. history. The foundation indicated that while having some important additions, the standards lacked some historical content, especially in political history. Still considered a good standard, they appeared to be uneven and not as demanding or comprehensive as earlier standards (Stern, 2003, p. 81). The 2006 assessment repeated the same assessment from 2003, while the standards are

still good; they have lost some content from the previous evaluations (Finn et al, 2006, p. 113).

The foundation's 2000 assessment of North Carolina concluded the standards are a reflection of the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) standards which the foundation believed, are not history-based or content-specific. North Carolina's standards were assessed not having the ability to advance history and were missing key requirements (Finn & Petrilli, 2000, p. 94). The 2003 assessment showed North Carolina's standards still reflect the NCSS ideals, a hit-or-miss collection of performance objectives (Stern, 2003, p. 65). In 2006, the assessment concluded that North Carolina's standards omitted the key events of American history from the colonial period, and a poor rendering of the other events in American history. The foundation believed this is not U.S. history education in any sense (Finn et al, 2006, p. 95).

When addressing the relationship between the evaluations of the high school grade eleven and twelve history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels, the data show a difference of evaluations. The NAEP indicates that recently the twelfth is improving, however this may be in part nationally where students do meet or exceed their achievement scores not based on the curriculum, but rather having good teachers or learning about the subject on their own. The Fordham Foundation's assessments show where Virginia has a decent curriculum for U.S. history, where North Carolina does not. To see if there is a significant difference, the next section will focus on the states and the results.

State Assessments

The next set of descriptive analysis focused on the results on U.S. history end of year examinations in Virginia and North Carolina. The analysis of the results were conducted by both Virginia and North Carolina, and published on their respective state department of education web sites. The researcher's observations are based on these published findings. The following data represent end of year results for eleventh grade U.S. history, and covers the school years beginning in 2000 and reports through 2010. Virginia students can achieve either a passing, proficient, or advanced score in U.S. history, or fail the class. The results from Virginia's scores from the past 10 years are shown in Table 7 and Figure 3:

Table 7.

Virginia's End of Year Percentage Results for U.S. History from 2000 to 2010

	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
Pass	45%	70%	76%	87%	90%	92%	93%	94%	95%	95%
Proficient	39%	57%	60%	54%	55%	52%	53%	54%	56%	54%
Advanced	06%	13%	15%	33%	34%	39%	40%	40%	39%	41%
Failed	55%	30%	24%	13%	10%	08%	07%	06%	05%	05%

Note: The numbers above the diagonal represent the respective school year (e.g., 00-01 represents the 2000/2001 school year). The vertical columns represent the reported percentage of students who failed, passed, and achieved proficient or advanced scores. Adapted from "Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010."

Figure 3. Virginia's End-of-Year Percentage Results for U.S. History from 2000 to 2010

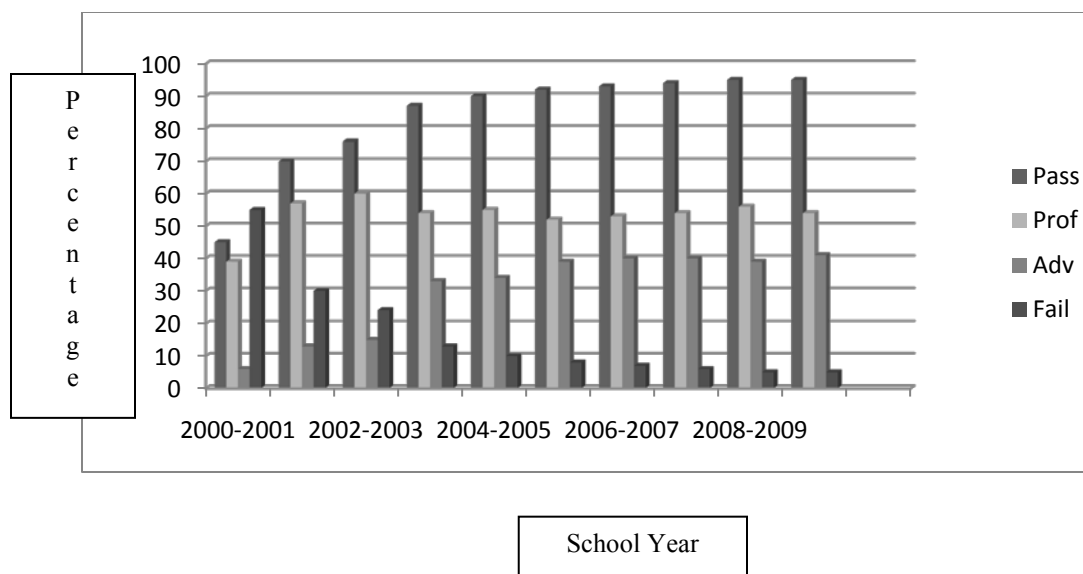


Figure 3. Graph of the percentage of Virginia's eleventh grade U.S. history students who achieved either a passing, proficient, advanced score, or failed the class between 2000 and 2010. Adapted from "Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010."

North Carolina provides a different set of proficiency levels, which are Level I, Level II, and Proficient. Level I students do not have sufficient mastery of the subject, similar to Virginia's "fail." Level II students demonstrate an inconsistent mastery of the subject, similar to Virginia's "pass." Level III students are considered proficient in the subject (NCDPI, 2007, p. 3). North Carolina did not administer an end of year U.S. history examination for the 2003/2004, and the 2004/2005 school years. Additionally, only North Carolina's proficiency percentage was reported for the 2009-2010 school year. North Carolina's results are reflected in Table 8 and Figure 4 below:

Table 8.

North Carolina's Percentage of End of Year Results for U.S. History from 2000 to 2010

	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
(I) Fail	14.4%	14.7%	12.5%	None	None	11.9%	9.8%	8.8%	6.6%	None
(II) Pass	35.1%	35.2%	32.3%	None	None	31.3%	25.1%	24.3%	21.7%	None
(III) Prof	50.5%	50.1%	54.9%	None	None	56.8%	65.1%	66.9%	71.7%	75.7%

Note: The numbers above the diagonal represent the respective school year, 00-01 representing the 2000-2001 school year for example. The vertical columns represent the reported percentage of students who failed, passed, or achieved proficient scores. Adapted from "Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results," pp. 11-12.

Figure 4. North Carolina's Percentage of End of Year Results for U.S. History from 2000 to 2010

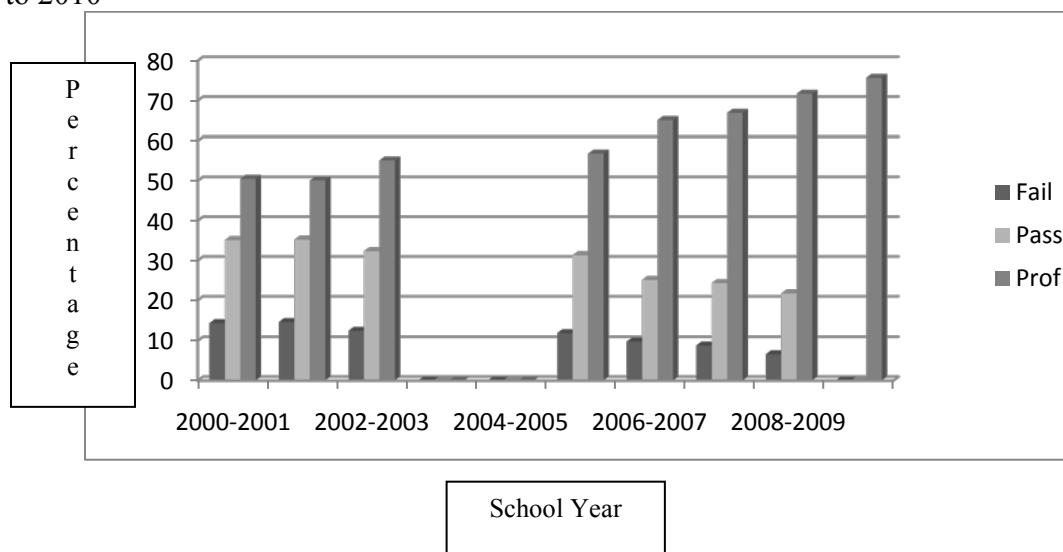


Figure 4. Graph of the percentage of North Carolina eleventh grade U.S. history students who achieved either a passing, proficient, or failed the class between 2000 and 2010. Adapted from "Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results," pp. 11-12.

To examine the results, a descriptive analysis was conducted to compare how the students from Virginia and North Carolina compared with one another by achievement levels, beginning with the percentage of students who failed the class (see Figure 5), the percentage of students who achieved a passing score (see Figure 6), and the number of students achieving proficient (see Figure 7). The difference between the states that could not be evaluated was the number of students achieving advanced, North Carolina not listing any student in that specific achievement score. The following figure represents the comparisons between Virginia and North Carolina results for those students who failed U.S. history:

Figure 5. Comparison between Virginia and North Carolina Fail Percentage for U.S. History

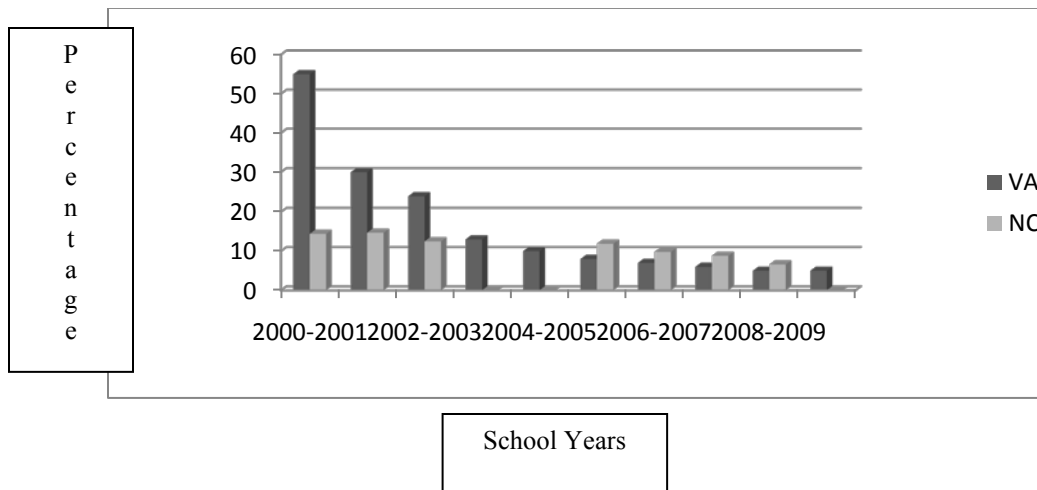


Figure 5. Graph showing the comparison between Virginia (VA) and North Carolina (NC) percentage of eleventh grade students who failed U.S. History between 2000 and 2010. Adapted from “Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010; and “Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results,” pp. 11-12.

Virginia began 2000 with a high percentage of students who failed U.S. history, which over time decreased steadily to the 2009-2010 school year. North Carolina's failure rate while lower than Virginia's, did remain relatively constant other than the two years where there was no final examination for U.S. history, and is demonstrating a slow decline in numbers. The next comparison will address the percentage of eleventh grade students who achieved a passing score:

Figure 6. Comparison between Virginia and North Carolina Pass Percentage for U.S. History

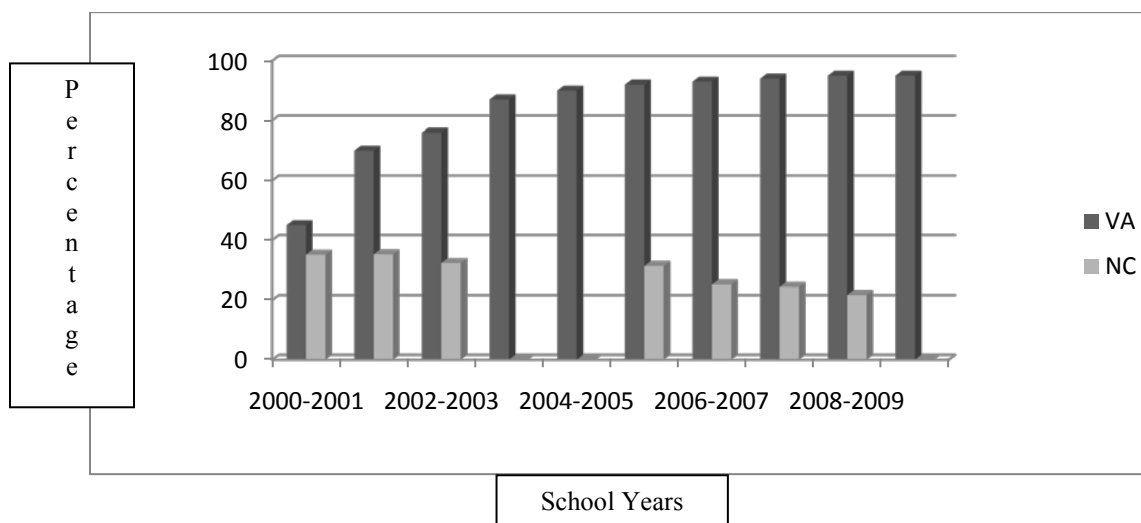


Figure 6. Graph of the comparison between Virginia (VA) and North Carolina (NC) pass percentages of eleventh grade students for U.S. history between the school years of 2000 and 2010. Adapted from “Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010; and “Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results,” pp. 11-12.

Virginia began with a lower percentage of students who passed, then began a steady climb and constant at a high percentage of students achieving a passing score for U.S. history. North Carolina demonstrated a slow but steady decline in the percentage of

students passing U.S. history. The final comparison will examine the percentage of Virginia's and North Carolina's eleventh grade students who achieved a proficient score:

Figure 7. Comparison between Virginia and North Carolina Proficient Percentage for U.S. History

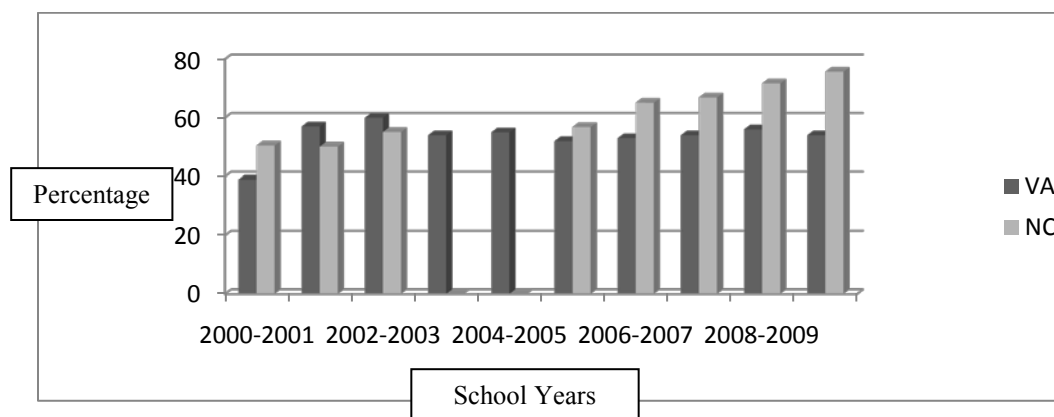


Figure 7. Graph showing the comparison between Virginia (VA) and North Carolina (NC) Proficient Percentages for the eleventh grade in U.S. History. Adapted from “Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010; and “Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results,” pp. 11-12.

Of the three comparisons, North Carolina started at a higher percentage than Virginia, with a short decline, began a steady and consistent increase in the number of students achieving proficient. Virginia began with a slight increase, and then appears to have remained constant across the school years in the number of students achieving proficient in U.S. history. The examination and determination of the correlation between standards and achievement scores will be examined in the comparative data analysis.

The first research questioned focused on whether there was a relationship between the evaluations of the high school grade eleven history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history

achievement levels. Based on the descriptive analysis of the national evaluations and the results from Virginia and North Carolina, there were differing results when comparing the NAEP assessments on results, the Thomas Fordham Assessments on curricula, and the results from Virginia and North Carolina.

Virginia supported the hypothesis of the research question, that there was a relationship between both national assessments, and the state results. Additionally, the alternate hypothesis can also be supported for there was a significant correlation between the national assessments and the results from Virginia. The degree of the correlation will be examined in the next section of the data analysis. The null hypothesis was not accepted for Virginia.

North Carolina's results did support both the research question hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis, but only in the percentage of students who either failed or achieved a passing score. It differed in the percentage of students achieving a proficient score, performing well which followed the NAEP assessment, but contrary to the Fordham Foundation's assessment. In this case, the null hypothesis would be supported, but only for the proficient achievement score.

Comparative Data Analysis

To determine the correlation between the Thomas Fordham Foundation's assessment on curricula for both Virginia and North Carolina, and the achievement scores, the researcher utilized both the Pearson Correlation and Somer's D Correlation through SPSS for Windows. The researcher used the published data from the Thomas Fordham Foundation and the respective state data from Virginia and North Carolina, and

entered the data into SPSS, reporting the following results. The dependent variables presented were the percentage of students who received fail, pass, proficient, and advanced for the past ten years from both states, and the independent variable is the Thomas Fordham assessment on curriculum. There was no correlation of North Carolina's advanced scores due to none being published. The first set of correlations examined Virginia's scores using the Pearson Correlation (see Table 9) and the Somer's D (see Table 10), followed by the Pearson Correlation of North Carolina scores (see Table 11) followed by the Somer's D (see Table 12). The SPSS results are shown in the tables below:

Table 9.

Pearson Correlation of Virginia's Scores

		% failed	% passed	% proficient	% advanced	Fordham assessment on curricula
% failed	Pearson Correlation	1	-1.000**	-.621	-.941**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.055	.000	.001	
	N	10	10	10	10	10
% passed	Pearson Correlation	-1.000**	1	.621	.941**	-.863**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.055	.000	.001	
	N	10	10	10	10	10
% prof.	Pearson Correlation	-.621**	-.621**	1	.320	-.174
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	.055	.367	.630	
	N	10	10	10	10	10
% adv.	Pearson Correlation	-.941**	.941**	.320	1	-.967**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.367	.000	
	N	10	10	10	10	10
Fordham assessment of curricula	Pearson Correlation	.863**	-.863**	-.174	-.967	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	10	10	10	10	10

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Proficient (prof) and advanced (adv). Correlations adapted from "Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010, and "The State of State History Standards 2000," by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; "Effective State Standards for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card," by S. Stern, p.64, 81. Copyright 2003 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; and "2006 State of the State Standards," by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, using SPSS for Windows.

The Pearson correlation showed a significant correlation with students who did not meet or failed the class, those students who passed the class, and those students who achieved an advanced score. Therefore, with the Fordham Foundation's assessment on the curricula as an A (3.82) for the 2000-2003 school years, and a B (3.16) for the 2004-2010 school years, then having a good curriculum does have an impact on achievement results for the most part. An interesting result showed there was no significant correlation for those students achieving proficient, as well as showing a significant correlation for those who failed the class. To determine the extent of the correlation, the same set of data was computed for Somer's D. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 10.

Somer's D Correlation of Virginia's Scores

Directional Measures				
Value	Asymp. (a)	Std. Error (b)	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Symmetric	.646	.087	3.623	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	-.477	.128	3.623	.000
% who failed (dependent)	1.000	.000	3.623	.000
Symmetric	-.646	.087	-3.623	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	-.477	.128	-3.623	.000
% who passed (dependent)	-1.000	.000	-3.623	.000
Symmetric	.222	.364	.604	.546
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	.167	.275	.604	.546
% who earned proficient (dependent)	.333	.544	.604	.546
Symmetric	.656	.085	-3.623	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	-.488	.126	-3.623	.000
% who earned advanced (dependent)	-1.000	.000	-3.623	.000

Note. a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Adapted from "Virginia Department of Education State Online Report Cards, customized achievement reports, 2000-2010, and "The State of State History Standards 2000," by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; "Effective State Standards for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card," by S. Stern, p.64, 81. Copyright 2003 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; and "2006 State of the State Standards," by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, using SPSS for Windows using SPSS for Windows.

The previous Pearson Correlation did not show a significant correlation for those students who achieved proficient, however it was found to be a significantly positive correlation when looking at the scores with Somer's D. This would support the hypothesis that a good curricula can lead to good results. Additionally, Somer's D did not find any significant correlation, either positive or negative, between the curricula

assessment and those students who failed the class. This may indicate there are other reasons contributing to the students not achieving a pass, proficient, or advanced score. This will be addressed later in recommendations for further study in Section 5.

The next evaluation looked at North Carolina's results. The dependent variables included fail, pass, and proficient achievement scores. North Carolina did not report any advanced scores within the 2000 through the 2010 school years. The independent variable is the Thomas Fordham Foundation's assessment on the curricula, and the dependent variables the percentage of North Carolina's students achieving a passing or proficient score, and those who failed the class. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 11.

Pearson Correlation of North Carolina's Scores

		% who fail	% who passed	% who were proficient	Fordham assessment on curricula
% who fail	Pearson correlation	1	.987**	-.944**	.822*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.023	
	N	7	7	7	7
% passed	Pearson correlation	.987**	1	-.998**	.835*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.019
	N	7	7	7	7
% proficient	Pearson correlation	-.944**	-.998**	1	-.817*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.013
	N	7	7	8	8
Fordham assessment on curricula	Pearson correlation	.822*	.835*	-.817*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.019	.013	
	N	7	7	8	8

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Adapted from "Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results," pp. 11-12, and "The State of State History Standards 2000," by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; "Effective State Standards for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card," by S. Stern, p.64, 81. Copyright 2003 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; and "2006 State of the State Standards," by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, using SPSS for Windows.

The examination demonstrated there is a significant correlation between those students who failed, passed, or achieved proficient scores, and the Fordham assessment

which did not show a good U.S. history curriculum. While this may be true for those students who received fail or pass, it was rather unique for those assessed as proficient. This may be a case where students can achieve good scores due to good teachers and not necessarily due to the curriculum. This will also be discussed in the suggestions for further study in Section 5. To determine how significant these scores were, the same data was evaluated through Somer's D. The independent variables were the Fordham Foundation's evaluation of the curriculum, assessing a D (1.16) for 2000-2003 school years, and an F (.49) for the 2004-2010 school years. The results are shown in Table 12.

Table 12.

Somer's D Correlation of North Carolina's Scores

Directional Measures

Value	Asymp. (a)	Std. Error (b)	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Symmetric	.727	.040	9.165	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	.571	.062	9.165	.000
% who failed (dependent)	1.000	.000	9.165	.000
Symmetric	.727	.040	9.165	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	.571	.062	9.165	.000
% who passed (dependent)	1.000	.000	9.165	.000
Symmetric	-.698	.064	-5.477	.000
Fordham assessment of curricula (dependent)	-.536	.098	-5.477	.000
% who earned proficient (dependent)	-1.000	.000	-5.477	.000

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Adapted from "Preliminary North Carolina State Testing Results," pp. 11-12, and "The State of State History Standards 2000," by C. Finn and M. Petrilli p. x. Copyright 2000 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; "Effective State Standards for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card," by S. Stern, p.64, 81. Copyright 2003 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation; and "2006 State of the State Standards," by C. Finn, L. Julian, and M. Petrilli, p. 17. Copyright 2006 by the Thomas Fordham Foundation, using SPSS for Windows.

The Somer's D evaluation of the scores did not show any significant correlation either positive or negative between the Thomas Fordham assessments, and the state results.

The second research question focused on the relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven history achievement scores and how do they compare with the national assessments on history curricula. The Pearson Correlation supported both the research question hypothesis as well as the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant correlation between curricula and achievement scores in end of year examinations. This was true for Virginia, which was assessed with a good curriculum for U.S. history and the corresponding results of the end of year examinations. The same can be said of North Carolina, rather that there is a correlation between a weak curriculum and the achievement scores. The results would indicate that the null hypothesis for the majority of the evaluations would not be accepted, except for the proficient scores.

The Pearson Correlation of just the proficient scores, and the Somer's D evaluations of the fail, pass, and proficient scores for North Carolina, would accept the null hypothesis. The Pearson Correlation did not show a significant correlation, and all three Somer's D evaluations also did not show any significant correlation between the Fordham assessments and the North Carolina results. This would be another recommendation for further studies which will be addressed in Section 5.

Summary

The relationship between the two national organizations, the NAEP and the Thomas Fordham Foundation were different. The NAEP showed an improvement, where the Fordham Foundation showed Virginia's curriculum as a good one, and North

Carolina as not having a good curriculum. The relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven and twelve history achievement scores was demonstrated graphically and through the Pearson correlation and Somer's D correlation. The results for Virginia showed a positive correlation between a good curriculum and achievement scores, and North Carolina also showed a positive correlation between a poor curriculum and achievement scores. While Virginia overall did do well in the number of students achieving scores of pass, proficient, and advanced which met what the NAEP indicated as a national whole, North Carolina did not. While North Carolina did maintain the proficient achievement score, supporting the NAEP's assessment, the passing rate is declining instead of improving.

Section 5: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

The purpose of this quantitative, casual-comparison study was to demonstrate that through good standards, students would be more likely to meet their achievement goal for U.S. history. The study compared national assessments of Virginia's and North Carolina's U.S. history curricula, and compared the results for the end of year scores for U.S. history from 2000 to 2010. The focus of this study examined the U.S. history results of eleventh graders in both Virginia and North Carolina. This section will present the findings of the casual comparison, discuss the implications for social change, provide recommendations on how the results can be auctioned, recommendations for further study, and conclude this study.

Research Overview

The intent of this study was to identify the need for a nationally mandated standard for U.S. history. The goal of the research was to demonstrate the correlation through a casual comparison between Virginia and North Carolina that good standards lead to good achievement scores. The research looked at data presented from national evaluations by the U.S. Department of Education on the overall U.S. history achievement for the nation, and by the Thomas Fordham Foundation which evaluated both Virginia's and North Carolina's U.S. history curricula. Some of the issues surrounding the research concerned U.S. history taught as a separate course, or included with social studies. With the nation's governors already working towards a common core state standards initiative, the research was intended to show that the building blocks are already in place that could include U.S. history into the same common core state standard initiative.

The first part of the comparison examined the overall national assessment on U.S. history by the U.S. Department of Education and the examination of the Thomas Fordham Foundation concerning state curricula. While the focus of the comparison was the eleventh grade, the U.S. Department of Education reported on the twelfth grade. The NAEP assessment showed minimal to no improvement through 2001 until there was a slight improvement in 2006. While the NAEP showed by their assessments that the nation as a whole was doing slightly better, the assessments of the curricula being used by the states were not so impressive. Both Virginia and North Carolina showed a lower of the assessment on the U.S. history curricula, Virginia only decreased from an “A” to a “B”, where North Carolina’s assessment went from a “D” to an “F”, including two years where there was no U.S. history end of year test administered.

The second phase of the comparison looked at Virginia’s and North Carolina’s U.S. history end of year scores. Virginia’s results showed the shift from 2000 to 2004 when the 2001 SOL for U.S history was implemented, Virginia’s failure rate began a steady decline and the number of students achieving passing, proficient and advanced scores began a steady incline. When the updated SOL for U.S. history was implemented in 2004, all the rates stabilized with the failure rate remaining low and the other rates remaining high. North Carolina maintained the same standard which showed both the failure and passing rate decline, and the proficient rate increase. The key to the study was the examination of the correlations between the national assessment of the curricula and the scores.

Interpretation of the Findings

One of the challenges facing the creation of a national curriculum for U.S. history can be seen in the differing assessments between the NAEP and the Thomas Fordham Foundation. When examining the relationship between the evaluations of the high school grade eleven and twelve history curricula from the National Assessment of Education Progress and the Thomas Fordham Foundation, and history achievement levels was demonstrated in section 4. The NAEP showed that nationally, twelfth graders are improving in their knowledge of U.S. history, while the Fordham Foundation found most of the curricula across the nation to be lacking in substance. This was supported by the evaluation of Virginia's and North Carolina's scores from the past ten years.

Virginia did support both assessments from the NAEP and the Fordham foundation, showing a correlation between a good U.S. history curriculum and achievement scores for the most part. Contrary, North Carolina did show a correlation due to a poor assessment of the U.S. history curriculum, and a declining passing rate. The challenging aspect of this research was North Carolina's achievement score of proficient. Possible reasons for this shift in scores may be in part due to the methods that teachers use in presenting the materials rather than based upon the curriculum. This may be a potential area to investigate in a further study to determine how teachers can still provide great education and students can still do well in achievement scores in the absence of a good curriculum. This is a problem across the nation were the majority of states have been assessed with ineffective curricula for U.S. history.

The relationship between Virginia's and North Carolina's grade eleven and twelve history achievement scores and how do they compare with the national assessments on history curricula was also shown in section 4. Both correlations for Virginia and North Carolina indicated they were significant between the curricula and the achievement scores. Where Virginia demonstrated good curricula may lead to good scores, North Carolina demonstrated that poor curricula may lead to poor achievement scores. Both states demonstrated why good standards and curricula are important, and how it can lead to standards-based reform. This was discussed in detail in the literature review in section 2, and supported here in section 4. Where North Carolina has been using the same set of standards for the past ten years, Virginia has initiated reviews and made improvements to the state standards of learning. There is currently a draft of new standards being proposed through Virginia's Department of Education that may be accepted in the near future.

With a national review and discussion concerning education reform, and the common core state standard initiative, the results from this research could be used to show how the nation could benefit from Virginia's example and perhaps use some of Virginia's initiative to be used as a model for a national common core standard for history, along with reading and math. In order for a national or common core standard for all of the states, then legislation needs to modify or remove the legislation of the NCLB Act to allow for this change. Along with possibly adding science, including history with reading and math, will establish the common core subjects that will bring the nation as a whole to better achievement scores and more proficient students. This was the ultimate

goal of NCLB, as well as developing the graduating high school students into productive citizens able to compete with the world.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change were identified in section 1, and supported by the results from the data analysis in section 4. Having U.S. history established in a mandated national standard will continue to be a challenge. The Thomas Fordham Foundation recognized that good education can still occur even when there are standards considered bad being used. The key for education to be successful with the absence of good standards is to rely heavily on the teachers, as well as the schools and districts getting it right. In some cases, bad standards may not at all be at fault, and in other cases, good standards can be just as liable for poor performance (Finn et al, 2006). Additionally, the Foundation identified that the development of a national standard will face the same hurdles that the state standards endured.

The concern is the proposed national standard was written by a committee, or turned over to K-12 special interest groups, and then there will be national repeat of the debate which occurred in Texas as they debated their state standard. The standards then run a chance of being nonspecific, or encyclopedic with no real depth of content. When done correctly, in cooperation with history professionals and history teachers, then the standards could place the whole nation on the path to standards-based reform. The foundation indicated that if great standards can be developed in cities or states, then why not in Washington D.C. (Finn et al, 2006). Professor Gary Nash, the Director for the National Council for History in the School agreed for the most part there is a need for a

national mandated standard, but the political environment of today may make it difficult (Nash, personal communication, October 7, 2010).

Unless there is an effort made to begin the process, there will be nothing accomplished and the states will retain their standards which were reviewed and showed to be lacking in the earlier sections of this research. In order for this social change to be effective, differences either based on political or the friction point between traditional U.S. history education and history integration into social studies must be put aside. The students must be the ultimate goal and objective for this change. Another challenge facing the development and implementation of a national standard was highlighted in Chapman's (2007) report that the wording of the law itself may prevent the development. While history is mentioned as part of civics, the core subjects remain reading, math, and science. The law indicates that there will be no development of a national curriculum, but a discipline-based curriculum which appears to have a disdain for social studies or history (Chapman, 2007, p. 25). This may already be changing with the common core initiative which is an establishment of a national curriculum. If the common core initiative is a means of implementing a move to change the legislation, then history should be part of that initiative.

This will require a deep commitment by the history professionals, those who may consider themselves traditionalists and those who support a history-based social studies curriculum, to change the culture of how history is taught. The means for achieving both social and culture change for teaching history should follow how the common core initiative was able to consolidate and move towards a consolidated goal for reading and

math. As shown in the literature review in section 2, students are not performing well in history. The goal for this social and cultural change should be improving student performance in history nationally. One of the goals of NCLB is to better prepare graduating students to be able to compete with the globe.

In Germany for example, history along with the rest of the country's curriculum, is a nationally mandated standard. History is taught the same whether in the state of Bavaria or Hessen. This was reinforced in 2003 when the nation did not perform well in an international comparison (Germany, 2003). The author witnessed this first hand while stationed in Germany, observing the national standard for education. England also has a national curriculum for all primary and secondary schools, including Wales (Satkowski, 2008). If the desired end state of the graduating students is to be able to compete globally with their international peers, then would it not be a safe presumption that the United States should adapt the similar practice and culture of a national or federal curriculum standard for all core classes?

Recommendations for Action

With the data provided from this study, along with other assessments from other national, educational, and state organizations, it is recommended that the next step is to form a committee of history education professionals. A good template to use would be how all of the states came together to begin the common core state standard initiative for reading and math. This process could serve also as a means for the establishment of a history common core standard for the nation. It is recommended that leading professionals from the traditional and the history-central social studies reformers work

together to develop a consensus of learning objectives, not influenced from special interest groups, political, or commercial ventures, and focus on the content free of interpretations and biases. It would require with the development of a consensus on what will be the core content or standard, a viable means of assessing learning which the students will be assessed to determine if they are meeting the established standard.

In order for a common core initiative to be implemented, it is recommended that legislation be enacted to allow a national standard to be developed and executed. In the same sense of professionalism versus special interests, legislation should be bi-partisan looking to the greater good of the education of students and not political agendas. Legislation needs to be reinitiated where Senators Byrd and Kennedy left off, and institute not only an education reform for history, but reformation of the NCLB Act legislation which will allow the common core standard to be adopted by all of the states.

In order to assist in the implementation of this suggested change, the U.S. Department of Education along with the National Center for History in the School and the National Council for Social Studies will be informed of the results of this study by executive summary. Details will be provided about the concern and the results of the study via electronic media, such as e-mail, and through regular correspondence as well. Additional stake holders, such as the Thomas Fordham Foundation, the Center for Education Policy, American Historical Association, and the National Council for History Education will also be provided with the executive summary of this research. It is desired that the findings from this study can initiate dialog between all of the stake holders and those with an interest to improve history education and performance.

Recommendation for Further Study

This study examined only the eleventh grade results due to it being common in both states. This study could potentially examine other states, grouping states by U.S. history studied in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades. The study could also focus on a larger sample by addressing the results an additional 10 years, perhaps identifying other correlations such as whether the NCLB Act is having an effect on U.S. history results by examining scores ten years prior to the enactment to the current school year. One of the contributing factors that may be associated with NCLB may be time allotted for teaching. The Center on Education Policy concluded that since 2002, time has been increased for the core subjects of NCLB, reading and math, by taking it from other subjects like history. Additionally, 76% of high schools have modified the curriculum to reflect teaching the test rather than content (CEP, 2007, pp. 1-2).

The study could even expand to review how a national standard would affect the learning of U.S. history in the elementary and in the middle or junior high school. In some states, the elementary school is where students are first exposed to history. If the experience has a trend to make it a negative experience, then the trend could be a lack of desire in learning more history in the middle or high school level. Further study could even look at the negative side, what the affect would be if history was removed from the curricula or graduation requirements. As stated in the literature review, history is part of the whole student development process into effective citizens. The study could examine if good citizenship hinged on learning from history and if there are any consequences from not learning history in that development. Perhaps the study could examine George

Santayana's belief that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it (Santayana, 1905, p. 248).

Standards are also the basis from which teachers receive their training and their professional development. Further study could identify trends if having a national standard would have any impact on the certification of U.S. history teachers, or the training for teachers who may instruct U.S. history who do not have a degree in history. This appears to be the case in many instances, therefore what type of impact of having a national standard would have on teacher professional development in learning new ways of engaging their students and making history exciting. In the same sense, further study could look at the impact of having a national standard for history would have on the textbook industry in ensuring the students receive the best books possible to learn about history, and to prevent what occurred and is still occurring in states like Texas.

As identified during the data analysis, there were no indications of correlations between performance and the standards. As supported by the Fordham Foundation, there can be success stories of students meeting their achievement goals in the absence of a well developed curriculum. Further study can examine how this may be the case, and be used as a case study for other states that may not have a well developed standard, and study the techniques used by the teachers and the school administration to still meet or exceed the achievement levels. This may be also a contingency study, in case the initiative to develop and implement a national standard for history is not accepted.

The author is a strong supporter for a national mandated standard for history. Having spent 20 years on active duty in the Army, everything was based on a standard.

This is the same experience which is driving the desire to see and implement a national standard for history education. Each state following the same standard, meeting the same expectations and achievement goals, students and teachers can go from one state to another and still understand what is expected to meet achievement goals. The author also accepts that as a historian, all the facts must be reviewed in order to prevent biases from influencing decisions. With this study, the author collected and reviewed published data that was accessible through public websites on the internet. The author had no means of influencing the subjects, and report the findings provided by the SPSS program. The results of this study continues to reinforce not only the desire to see a national standard for history, but the support of further studies on how this can support the development of teachers and textbooks to support the classes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the need to develop a national mandated standard for history is not something new created in the time of NCLB. Rather there have been several attempts to create a national standard, and to change legislation for the inclusion of history as a core subject. This study is intended to show the need is still there, all it will require is a consensus between the states, history professionals and the U.S. legislation to come together in bi-partisanship and finish what has already been started. The process needs to move away from the identification there is a need, and proceed to implementing the change. The foundation and building blocks are already emplaced, between suggested national standards for history and social studies which could be combined, the best of both consolidated into one. The common core state standard may be a means, just

requiring history to be integrated with reading and math. The ultimate goal is the better education of the students, to prepare them to be active citizens and having learned through history the mistakes of the past to hopefully prevent them from returning in the future. To be effective citizens, students need to know how the nation was built, and the lessons learned that came from that process.

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Curricula Vitae

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Education:

Walden University
Ed.D. Doctorate of Education, Teacher as Leader
February 2007 to Present

American Military University
MA in Military Studies-The American Revolution, with Honors
2005

American Military University
BA in World Military History, with Honors
2002

Employment:

Joint Personnel Recovery Agency-Personnel Recovery Education and Training Center,
Fredericksburg, Virginia

- 2005 to Present
- Instructor and Course Manager
 - Nonconventional Assisted Recovery Plans and Operations Course
 - Personnel Recovery Plans and Operations Course
 - Reintegration Team Responsibilities
 - Reintegration Debriefing Course
 - Personnel Recovery for the Intelligence Professional
 - Personnel Recovery for Commanders and their Staff
 - Personnel Recovery Senior Leader Seminar
- Staff Assistance Visits
- Military Readiness Exercises

United States Army

- 1985 to 2005
- US Army Ranger
- US Army Special Forces
- John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

Professional Development:

Certified Instructional Designer/Developer, Langevin Learning Services, 2009

Certified Instructor/Facilitator Course, Langevin Learning Services, 2006

Military Instructor Certification Course, USAJFKSWC, 1995

Research Experience:

Editor and contributor, Continental Line, Inc., Newsletter, 2009 to Present

Editor, historian and contributor, 2nd South Carolina Regiment Newsletter, 2006-2009

Published Author, *From Desert Storm to Iraqi Freedom: One Soldier's Story*, published through Author House, 2006

Professional Memberships:

American Historical Association, 2006 to Present

Society of Military History, 2006 to Present

Company of Military Historians, 2006-2009

Special Forces Association, 1997 to Present

Volunteer Service:

President, 2nd South Carolina Regiment of the Continental Line, American Revolution Living History and Reenacting, 2009 to Present

2nd South Carolina Regiment of the Continental Line, American Revolution Living History and Reenacting, 1987 to Present

President, Bowling Green Lions Club, Bowling Green, Virginia, 2006 to Present

Local school presentations on the American Revolution, 2008 to Present

Seminars:

Francis Marion Symposium, FE DuBose Campus of Central Carolina Technical College, 2006