



*Education empowerment through advocacy and community.*

June 4, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

According to reporting this weekend [from the Post and Courier](#), the South Carolina Department of Education has not made it possible for South Carolina school districts to offer AP African American Studies, an elective college credit course, for credit next school year.

In February 2023, [the Washington Post reported](#), “a spokesperson for the Education Department wrote in a statement that, although it was up to local school districts to decide whether to participate in the pilot of the AP course, going forward Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver ‘is fully committed to ensuring South Carolina students are taught accurate history while rejecting divisive political theories that are clearly prohibited by state law and have no place in our schools.’” This statement seemed to signal that Superintendent Weaver might be reserving the option to block the course, echoing the rhetoric of Florida officials who had done the same during the previous month.

Also last year, Weaver promoted a regulation granting the State Board of Education unprecedented power to ban books in ways that will likely support viewpoint discrimination. That regulation, [due to errors in the legislative process](#), will go into effect automatically before next school year unless a supermajority in the legislature votes to stop its progress.

The College Board had already made significant changes to the curriculum, which [had the effect of aligning it more with the demands of states like Florida](#), which challenged it under similar anti-“CRT” policies as those currently being considered in the South Carolina legislature’s special session.

While the SC Department of Education has declined to make a formal statement on the future of the course, many districts, heading into summer, have already decided not to offer it next year. The result is that many students have already lost out on an opportunity to engage with African American issues, an especially vital pursuit given our state’s complex racial history. Districts have been left with incomplete information in the course registration process, and parents and students have been denied the opportunity to decide for themselves whether to take part.

We urge you to call on the SC Department of Education to ask that a course number be added for AP African American Studies so that the course can be offered for credit again.

At the very least, South Carolina students, parents, and educators deserve to know the Department’s plans, to allow for course planning and registration to proceed smoothly. And if the Department has decided not to allow the course to be taught for college credit, the people of South Carolina deserve an explanation for why.