



Paul Noursi – Co-chair  
Nancy Wein – Co-chair

Participating Organizations

American Muslims for Palestine

Appalachian Peace Education Center

Arab American Association of Central Virginia

Community for Justice in Palestine & Israel of the Alliance of Baptists

Defenders for Freedom, Justice, and Equality

Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church - USA

Jewish Voice for Peace

National Arab American Women's Association

New Dominion PAC

Northern Virginians for Peace & Justice

Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace

Plowshares Peace & Justice Center

Richmonders for Peace in Israel and Palestine

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East, Northern Virginia Chapter

United Methodists for Kairos Response

US Campaign for Palestinian Rights

Washington Interfaith Alliance for Middle East Peace

January 25, 2019

Luess Sampson-Lizotte  
VP, Product Development, Humanities and Science  
Learning Services/Pearson

Dear Ms. Sampson-Lizotte,

We are the co-chairs of the Education Committee of the Virginia Coalition for Human Rights, and we thank you for your assistance last year in explaining Pearson's internal process for vetting suggested revisions from outside groups.

We write to share with you our concerns about your textbook **Virginia and United States History**.

In general, we have found the content related to Israel and Palestine and Iraq to be misleading. For example, the text states that Israel withdrew from Gaza and much of the West Bank. In reality, although Israel withdrew its settlements from Gaza, it has maintained strict control of the Gaza perimeter, severely restricting the flow of goods in Gaza, the movement of people out of Gaza, and crippling economic life. At the same time, Israel has increased its settlement construction in the West Bank, appropriating more and more privately owned Palestinian land in the process. Please see our comment sheet for other examples.

Significant SOL-related problems include the absence of discussion of indirect cause-and-effect relationships and the absence of the opportunity to use multiple sources to construct arguments.

We have attached a review by Virginia-based academicians—many of whom are Middle East experts—that describes our concerns found in [Topic 19/Lesson 4](#) and [Topic 20/Lessons 2-3](#). Our reviewers found several problematic statements. For each, we have noted the passage and have provided a possible rewording of that passage, along with the rationales for each and supporting citations.

In addition to our review, we have attached a summary of the rating sheet for this text completed by a Virginia Department of Education Textbook review committee in December of 2017. We focus on Section I: VUS.1.d and VUS.1.f and on Section II: #7.

We thank you in advance for your response to this letter. We sincerely hope that you will consider our concerns and consult a wider variety of expert views than is indicated by this text. It is important that Virginia's teachers and students have balanced, accurate materials in their classrooms.

Kathy Drinkard  
Co-chair, Education Committee

Jeanne Trabulsi  
Co-chair, Education Committee

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