



NATIONAL COALITION FOR HISTORY

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Mr. John McDonough
Interim Superintendent
Boston Public Schools
26 Court St.
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Mr. McDonough,

The National Coalition for History (NCH) is a consortium of over 50 organizations that advocates on federal legislative and regulatory issues. The coalition is made up of diverse groups representing historians, archivists, researchers, teachers, students, political scientists, museum professionals and other stakeholders. Several of NCH's members are national groups with missions centered solely on K-12 history education.

As you might imagine our member organizations, as well as historians across the country, were extremely concerned when information circulated on the Internet last week alleging that Boston Public Schools was eliminating its History and Social Studies Department, or deemphasizing it within English Language Arts, as part of a broader reorganization of the school system. K-12 humanities programs, such as history and social studies, are under siege nationally and are often seen by administrators as easy targets for budget cuts. That is why these rumors were of particular concern to the national historical community especially given Boston's unique place in our nation's history.

NCH appreciates your efforts to clarify the situation. We trust that you will stand by your commitment that, "History and Social Studies remain a vital part of our organization both centrally and in our schools." We also commend you on your assurance that History and Social Studies teachers will continue to teach History and Social Studies. In too many cases around the country, history education is in the hands of teachers with insufficient background in the subject.

We hope that your new cross-disciplinary approach in the humanities is successful in providing students with the critical thinking skills they need to prosper in life and as citizens.

Sincerely,

Lee White
Executive Director