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Victory Deferred? Implementing LGBTQ+ Curriculum Laws

Passing laws and implementing them, especially in education, are distinctly different processes, especially when the law mandates changes that many people vehemently oppose. States whose laws were due to go into effect for the 2020–1 school year are just starting the process of navigating this reform. California, the pioneer, engaged in a years-long process to bring the FAIR Act's promise to fruition.

According to the legislation signed by Governor Brown, the FAIR Education Act should have gone into effect on January 1, 2012. At that time, though, it remained embroiled in uncertainty as the battle to repeal raged; it was good law, but it existed only on paper. By that summer, however, the FAIR Act was a reality with which California schools and the state education department had to contend. The political struggle was difficult and costly, but straightforward and short compared to the copious steps and considerations involved in bringing LGBTQ+ history into social science classes throughout the state. Where the political battle centered primarily on whether or not to pass—and then whether or not to repeal—the FAIR Act, implementing it led to far more questions and concerns. Despite limited progress and restrained optimism, meaningful change at the classroom level is slow in the making. The FAIR Act was, then, in microcosm, a tale of political mobilization and, for more than five years after it was enacted, educational stagnation.

In 2013, GSA's Carolyn Laub wrote an article, posted on the organization's website, advocating for implementation. She asserted, "Bullying starts with what young people are taught, so if they're taught to value some groups of people more than others, that shows up in their behavior towards their peers. With the enactment of California's FAIR Education Act, students can learn that these marginalized groups have actually made incredible contributions to this country's history."¹ Laub, and others who fought for and continued to support

the FAIR Act and its implementation, looked at the landscape and saw that more than a year after it was meant to go into effect little had changed; in fact, many Californians remained unaware of the law and its mandate. Laub elucidated several obstacles to implementation, including lack of teacher training and district-level support;² both would impede any attempt at curricular change, never mind one with as much potential controversy. She also cited evidence and research proving that curriculum reform changes students' attitudes and leads to better school environments; these findings were echoed in several similar studies conducted by GLSEN, Human Rights Campaign, and other organizations.³

Significant obstacles to implementation existed within the bill itself and in the many stumbling blocks to curriculum change, in general, and amending California's standards, specifically. Introducing new information requires resources for both students and teachers and, in some cases, professional development. On a more intangible level, instructors, administrators, districts, and school boards need to buy into and support these changes. As San Francisco educator Lyndsey Schlax asserted, most administrators and teachers are unaware of, and therefore cannot teach or understand the necessity of teaching, this history.⁴

History illustrates that adding new, underrepresented groups to the curriculum is an even more arduous task.⁵ In fact, there are clear parallels between the struggle to include LGBTQ+ history and efforts to better represent women and the civil rights movement in classes and resources. As second wave feminism gained traction in the 1970s, Janice Law Trecker's 1971 report "Women in U.S. History High-school Textbooks" spotlighted the inherent exclusivity in curriculum design; she stated, "Women are omitted both from topics discussed and by the topics chosen for discussion."⁶ Subsequent attempts to integrate women in learning materials were undermined by the emphasis on standards that began in the 1980s and perpetuated throughout the No Child Left Behind and Common Core eras. Additionally, scholars assert, the historical narrative conveyed in most classrooms centers institutions and systems in which men are more prominent.⁷ Civil rights, meanwhile, faced significant resistance to inclusion in the mid-twentieth century that continues, in many places, in the present. Mississippi did not mandate that students learn about the civil rights movement until 2011.⁸ Moreover, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, "as of 2011–2012, only 19 states specifically require[d] teaching *Brown v. Board of Education*, while 18 states require[d] coverage of MLK; 12, Rosa Parks; 11, the March on Washington; and six, Jim Crow segregation policies."⁹ *Teaching the Movement*, the organization's report on this topic, reveals that twelve states'

standards fail to include “recommended content,” including identifying the movement’s leaders, events, causes, and tactics.¹⁰ These challenges are akin to those facing efforts to include LGBTQ+ history. It was all but inevitable, therefore, that the drive to incorporate LGBTQ+ figures and themes into the curriculum would encounter several stumbling blocks.

The Long Road to a FAIR Curriculum

First, and of major significance, the FAIR Act is an unfunded mandate.¹¹ The law did not provide for appropriations to create the materials students and teachers would need, nor did it provide for professional development or training.¹² Hence, though the state required reforms under the act, the cost of those changes, and the materials necessary to introduce them in classrooms, fell to the districts. Moreover, California’s precarious fiscal situation at the time the bill was debated and passed delayed the adoption of new state-funded resources, namely, textbooks. According to the Assembly Committee on Education’s analysis of the bill, “due to the suspension of instructional materials adoptions, the state will not consider the adoption of any new instructional materials until the 2015–2016 school year, and this bill does not require the adoption of new instructional materials prior to this date.”¹³ One reason EQCA and GSA mobilized to pass the FAIR Act in 2010 was to meet the 2012 textbook revision deadline;¹⁴ the organizations spearheading this legislation understood the role that resources would play in this edict becoming a reality. The absence of funding provisions in the statute, coupled with the state’s fiscal struggles, hindered the bill’s progression from legal mandate to classroom reality.¹⁵ In fact, a June 2013 editorial published by the Legal Aid Society of Orange County, California, asserted that the budget crisis enabled some districts to delay implementing the FAIR Act because they were not yet “technically obligated to make changes until the new textbook adoption takes place in 2015.”¹⁶ For districts reticent to implement the act, the lack of funding, and its various implications, offered a justifiable excuse. The act represented a hard-fought political victory without any real means of making it an educational reality.

The Assembly and Senate focused on textbooks in their discussion of instructional materials; it was widely acknowledged when the bill became law that classrooms would not have access to this valuable resource at the time it was set to go into effect. Textbooks, however, are not the only resource available to teachers and students.¹⁷ Though revised textbooks were the ultimate goal, scholars,

educators, and politicians who supported the law and the implementation process recognized that, until textbooks could be procured, alternate sources remained a viable option. Organizations that supported the FAIR Act concurred and began work to hasten implementation despite the lack of funding. In particular, ONE Archives mobilized to create a comprehensive curriculum that could be disseminated to schools throughout the state. According to Jamie Scot, the project and development manager at the ONE Archives Foundation until 2015, the authors meshed US history and LGBT history to create a curriculum that entwined the two and brought LGBT history into classrooms organically, rather than as a subject separate from the rest of the nation's history.¹⁸ There were, then, options for teachers and schools that wished to comply with the FAIR Act sooner, rather than later. California, though, is diverse, and while this diversity distinguishes the state, it also means that localities and school districts differ in demographic makeup.¹⁹ Materials were created and distributed, but many districts, due to opposition or apathy, continued to ignore the FAIR Act while the lack of required resources allowed them to do so.

While funding and stagnation at the highest levels posed huge hurdles, smaller issues, too, adversely affected implementation; scholars' opinions varied on these factors' impact. Rachel Reinhard, the director of UC Berkeley's History-Social Science Project, posited that bad timing was partly to blame, as the FAIR Act and the Common Core Standards were enacted and meant to go into effect at approximately the same time—prioritizing the Common Core put the FAIR Act on the backburner.²⁰ Sonoma State professor Don Romesburg, who played a key role in the implementation process, pointed to the “educational hodge podge”—the failure to agree on what topics should be taught and how to bring it into classrooms as a major flaw.²¹

Jamie Scot of the ONE Archives cited the lack of resources and teacher training as the most important misstep. She contended that, although there was little to no demand for teacher training in LGBT history prior to the FAIR Act, as teachers became aware of and excited about the act and the potential changes to the curriculum, the clamor grew; while the FAIR Act opened doors, teachers worried that they didn't have the knowledge or background to comfortably bring those issues into class or facilitate the conversation that might emerge.²² A major component of the ONE Archives curriculum, therefore, was teacher training and professional development.²³ Reinhard concurred, asserting that many teachers were unaware of the law's existence, others knew of it but didn't know what to do about it, and many teachers didn't have the necessary content knowledge. Moreover, she claimed, allowing local districts to make decisions,

a supposed benefit of the law, only exacerbated the statewide disparity.²⁴ All agreed that the decentralized nature of implementation in its early stages—as Jamie Scot declared, “It’s like the Wild Wild West out here”²⁵—greatly impeded progress. Years ago, textbook publishers and teachers only began including and teaching the civil rights movement when forced to do so by outside parties.²⁶ Scholars observing the situation in California believed the situation there was largely the same.

Beyond the availability of resources and professional development, educators and administrators are motivated to change their practices to remain aligned with state and national standards. After all, in the era of testing, the Common Core, and an expanded governmental role in education, classroom learning is propelled from on high. California educational standards derive from a state-sanctioned Framework that, according to the Department of Education, “provide[s] guidance for implementing the standards adopted by the State Board of Education.”²⁷ Amending the Framework is a complicated process that involves multiple committees, comments, revisions, and the contributions of an ever growing and changing number of scholars.

Several attempts at revision, before and since the passage of the FAIR Act, stalled or failed for a variety of reasons. The Framework in place prior to the one approved in July 2016 was last updated in 2005, years before the FAIR Act, and failed to mention LGBTQ+ individuals or history.²⁸ According to Don Romesburg, more recent attempts at revision did not get off the ground, as in 2009, or failed to meet updated mandates and legislation, as in 2013.²⁹ The 2013 revision, which should have aligned the Framework with the FAIR Act, prescribed the bare minimum: lessons on Harvey Milk in fourth grade and incorporating Milk, the Lavender Scare, and same-sex marriage into the eleventh grade curriculum. In this case, Romesburg asserted, the Department of Education “didn’t pay attention to their own law”;³⁰ the revisions were tabled due to budgetary constraints. Most districts are not San Francisco, Los Angeles, or even Sacramento, where a task force assembled materials and encouraged lessons on Harvey Milk in 2011.³¹ When government departments fail to support or enforce laws, there is little incentive—especially with something that provokes such strong reactions—for others to follow them.

Acknowledging the key role of standards in education and the importance of the Framework in amending California state standards, the Committee on LGBT History of the American Historical Association—some of the most renowned LGBT historians in the country—collaborated on a white paper entitled “Making the Framework FAIR” in 2014, suggesting age-appropriate revisions for grades

two, four, five, eight, and eleven that mesh with the social studies curriculum at each level and promote greater, more organic inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals, families, and historical events. The report contended,

Students can only truly understand families, communities, social practices, and politics, for example, by understanding how they shaped and were shaped by same-sex relations and gender diversity—and how this changed over time. To make the history and social studies Framework truly transformative and representative of the published scholarship on LGBT history and the history of gender and sexuality over the past forty years, the California State Board of Education's Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) can afford to do no less.³²

The vagueness of the FAIR Act, which allows schools and districts to decide how best to implement the law in their climate and environment, also leaves educators and administrators with little experience with LGBTQ+ history and, possibly, controversial or potentially sensitive matters, with no instruction or guidance on how to implement the law and revise curricula. Amending the Framework, therefore, was vital to implementation; it both obligated teachers to incorporate this material and provided benchmarks for student learning. The scholars who wrote “Making the Framework FAIR” thus created a document that makes LGBTQ+ history a part of family life, California history, and US history, similar to the ONE Archives curriculum. The goal of the FAIR Act was to make curriculum—and thereby school and society—more inclusive. Teaching LGBTQ+ history as “other” defeats that essential purpose.

Amending educational standards is a protracted bureaucratic process no matter the situation, but absolutely essential to real change at the classroom level. It is also the only certain way to make LGBTQ+-inclusive curriculum a reality. In the case of the FAIR Act, especially in light of California's fiscal restrictions, this was especially true. As Don Romesburg stated, “this moves, as bureaucracies do, at a glacial space. What we thought was going to be a long run has become an ultramarathon.”³³ While the Framework languished the FAIR Act did, as well. In the summer of 2015, with funding reinstated, the Committee on LGBT History and the authors of “Making the Framework FAIR” prepared to once again work with the Board of Education's Instructional Quality Commission to amend the Framework to reflect the curricular changes mandated by the FAIR Act. Romesburg was hopeful that many of the committee's recommendations would be incorporated in the new Framework, stating, “It feels like they are headed not to a full inclusion of everything in ‘Making the Framework FAIR,’ and we never expected that. But maybe a third of it is going to make it in and that's huge.”³⁴

Romesburg was careful to point out that the Framework is not synonymous with the standards; major change to the former, though, can and should eventually lead to revision of the latter.³⁵ In a draft published in November 2015, the amended Framework included LGBTQ+ individuals' contributions to the Harlem Renaissance, the evolution of anti-gay state policies, the rise of lesbian and gay political movements, recognition of trans people in liberation struggles, marriage equality, and the AIDS epidemic in eleventh grade US history classes, exceeding the authors' expectations. The Framework at that time was open to a final round of public comment; it was approved in July 2016 to go into effect for the 2017–18 school year, more than five years after the original implementation date.³⁶ The approved Framework, which eradicated schools' and districts' claims that they are not technically obligated to incorporate LGBT history, was the enforcement tool advocates needed and the leverage they sought since the struggle to implement began. According to San Diego's ACLU chapter, "the new Framework will facilitate schools' LGBT-inclusive curricula and help create learning environments where students can thrive."³⁷ The approved Framework, a more belabored political victory in the struggle to include LGBTQ+ history in K–12 education than passing the law that necessitated it, made the FAIR Act's mandate real for schools across the state. Now not only did the legislation exist, teachers would be held accountable for implementing it.

Official approval of the Framework was a significant step in bringing the FAIR Act to fruition, but it did not indicate imminent change. Many California teachers did not have the knowledge, resources, or personal historical or educational background necessary to teach this curriculum; remedying this was a necessary next step for LGBTQ+-inclusive historical education to happen in a meaningful way. According to Don Romesburg, the Framework's approval led to "two major strands of activity": first, a textbook review and approval process and second, Framework rollout events, which would also provide professional development for California's teachers.³⁸

Textbooks have been and continue to be inconsistent in their coverage of LGBTQ+ history. A variety of factors influence textbook authors' and publishers' decisions about the information they include and omit, among these the book's publication date and intended audience.³⁹ Textbook companies also publish regional editions to better appeal to different markets. California, one of the biggest markets, therefore holds sway over content. Implementation of the FAIR Act thus led to textbook revisions, review, and a months-long approval process that determined which books were and were not authorized for use in California classrooms in kindergarten through eighth grade.⁴⁰ As Don Romesburg described

it, “there was a dramatic series of meetings” at which committees reviewed all of the textbooks submitted for approval where the “FAIR Education coalition went through line by line of every single textbook that was being proposed.”⁴¹ After several rounds of public comment and revision, additional suggestions to achieve compliance with the new Framework, and review by the Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education, the California Department of Education approved ten textbooks—four elementary, six middle school level—on November 9, 2017.⁴² “Of those that were approved,” Romesburg stated, “all of them—by the time they were finally approved by the state in November of ’17, all of them had somewhere around 75 to 80% of the LGBTQ+ content that is in the new Framework,” an accomplishment he considered “hugely successful.”⁴³ Textbooks, long considered an essential resource in social studies classes and a barometer of the topics teachers include, were also a significant consideration in implementing the FAIR Act. Hence, as exemplified in California, where the laws and educational frameworks change, the resources from which students learn do, as well.

The roll-out events, coordinated by the University of California’s History-Social Science Project and the California Department of Education, happened in two phases; each featured ten events over the course of eighteen months in different parts of the state.⁴⁴ The first round, in 2017 and 2018, intended to educate teachers on the new Framework and the learning goals therein, as well as express the state’s support for the FAIR Act and push teachers to put it into practice. Though Romesburg reported that he mostly encountered enthusiastic receptions, he also said, “There are still some very conservative parts of the state.” Overall, as of 2018, he claimed, “Most teachers know what the law is, but almost no one has an implementation plan.”⁴⁵ Romesburg, who facilitated the FAIR Act portion of the majority of roll-out events, stated that he told participants, “If you can do three or five things to integrate this into what you’re already doing, you’ll not only be light years ahead of where anyone else [is] ... You will also be making a tremendous and memorable impact that students will remember for the rest of their lives whether they’re straight or LGBTQ.”⁴⁶ Greater awareness of the FAIR Act was a positive step, but the lag in classroom-level execution reflected long experienced curricular struggles. The difference, in this case, and a cause for limited optimism, was the weight of the state’s Department of Education behind the mandate to teach LGBTQ+ history and the changes to which that support contributed.

Romesburg estimated that between twenty and forty teachers attended each roll-out event. At the conclusion of the first round, the History-Social Science

Project knew it was imperative to reach more teachers and received feedback that teachers who attended wanted more specific information on integrating LGBTQ+ history in their classes. The second round of events was born from these two needs. The sessions, offered in 2019 and 2020, went into greater depth on topics like Two-Spirit people, settler colonialism, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Lavender Scare, with Romesburg challenging teachers to think about how they might incorporate the material and resources into lessons they already taught. Many, he reported, responded that they saw the connections and intended to integrate their curricula. Romesburg is hopeful that this enthusiasm, and LGBTQ history, found its way into classrooms. There is anecdotal evidence that suggests it has, he stated, but no quantifiable data. He is concerned, moreover, that the lack of funding and attention paid to history education will ultimately impede this progress.⁴⁷

For now, according to Romesburg, the UC Berkeley and UC Davis History-Social Science Projects and Our Family Coalition, the latter of which ultimately devoted more resources to this endeavor than its leaders ever imagined, create and disseminate most of the FAIR-aligned curriculum.⁴⁸ The History-Social Science Project at UC Berkeley offers lessons at multiple grade levels including elementary school resources on Charley Parkhurst and the California Gold Rush and same-sex marriage in early America, materials on Ancient Greece and Baron von Steuben for middle schools, and an award-winning lesson on the Lavender Scare for eleventh grade.⁴⁹ Our Family Coalition established the Teaching LGBTQ History website, a hub for K–12 resources that convey California LGBTQ+ history and information on the FAIR Act.⁵⁰ Romesburg asserted, “The inclusion of LGBT content can have a transformative effect, but that’s belittled by the fact that history is considered so unimportant. [We will have to see] what the true impact can be, given the position of history education.”⁵¹

Curricular change happens, but it is often a slow and grueling process. The larger world, in fact, moves at a much faster pace. In 2015, Don Romesburg stated,

If you imagine the school life of a child, a child could have begun kindergarten and moved into middle school before what is mandated into law actually became the effective policy or road map of the state ... Think about an eighth grade gender non-normative kid ... They hear that the FAIR Act passed. “Oh, Hooray!” Now they will be—if indeed they make it through—they’ll be graduating from high school before they ever see it.⁵²

In the case of California, scholars say, real change did and continues to require grassroots activism and lobbying on the part of organizations like EQCA, Our Family Coalition, and GSAN as well as teachers, students, and parents advocating for reforms in what and how they learn.⁵³

Students who learned of the law when it was passed, especially LGBTQ+ students, were “agitated” not to know more about it and eager for it to be implemented,⁵⁴ yet they had little control over what they learned. The examples of teachers throughout the state seeking additional professional development and/or introducing this material to their classes, even on a limited basis, and groups of educators uniting to plan lessons and units that incorporate LGBTQ+ issues and individuals continue to grow, but change in individual classrooms is not consensus around a law or statewide reform that one can specifically link to particular legislation.⁵⁵ The existence of the FAIR Act and the new Framework are significant steps, but grassroots work that compels people to act, a hallmark of the push to incorporate LGBTQ+ history in California and elsewhere—like that which led to the passage of the law and defeat of the referendum—will make these goals a reality.

The Road Extends

For eight years, advocates and educators in California grappled with myriad obstacles in their efforts to establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to see the FAIR Act implemented. For states and regions with newer mandates, their process is just beginning. Colorado’s law includes provisions establishing a commission to review and make recommendations to revise state standards; that commission must include a member who identifies as LGBTQ+. The law also allocated funds to develop inclusive resources.⁵⁶ These are early steps on the path to inclusivity. In other states and counties, efforts are more advanced.

In Illinois, organizations that support the law and its implementation published “Inclusive Curriculum Implementation Guidance,” meant to serve as a “quick start guide to support educators as they begin implementing the Inclusive Curriculum Law” in 2020. The guide lists resources for teaching LGBTQ+ history and charts indicating the ways in which doing so aligns with existing Illinois state standards.⁵⁷ The Legacy Project, one of the organizations that promoted and supports the law, followed with an inclusive curriculum law lesson plan search portal to facilitate teacher access to LGBTQ+ history and social studies lessons that meet their needs.⁵⁸ Additionally, Illinois Safe Schools

Alliance offered professional development sessions entitled “Deepening Our History: Implementing the Illinois Inclusive Curriculum Law” beginning in March 2021.⁵⁹ Like Colorado, then, actions taken by the law’s advocates in Illinois indicate an awareness of the connection between standards and implementation and the need for quality resources.

In New Jersey, which passed its law at the beginning of 2019, organizations and individuals that supported the bill began planning for its implementation as it moved through the state legislature. Garden State Equality (GSE), which spearheaded this effort, conditionally secured \$185,000 in grants from the Braitmayer Foundation and PSEG Foundation and brought together a coalition including teachers, administrators, parents, advocates, and the Department of Education to consider how best to implement the law and develop the curriculum necessary to do so.⁶⁰ Prior to the 2020–1 school year when the law was set to go into effect, GSE launched a pilot in which a diverse group of twelve schools around the state received access to the curriculum it produced for fifth, sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades; a curriculum coach; and additional professional development through an LGBTQ inclusive curriculum conference.⁶¹ Ashley Chiappiano, GSE’s former Safe Schools and Community Education Manager, said, “It’s a full robust curriculum plus the research [to ascertain] what are some of the lessons learned for their particular school work and what they can focus on, and if there are challenges or triumphs in a particular area.”⁶² Schools that applied but were not accepted to the pilot received the curriculum minus the additional supports, and, ultimately, the intention is for all New Jersey schools to have free access to the lessons, thereby removing one obstacle to integration. Though the pilot was interrupted by school closures due to Covid-19, Garden State Equality continued to develop curriculum and work to build awareness of the law and the tools to implement it.⁶³

Despite the availability of these resources, individual boards of education are free to choose how they implement the law. Chiappiano voiced concerns about the choices they might make, asserting, “What we’re a little bit fearful of is that schools will choose resources that may be great with LGBT identity but not so great with trans identity ... If you’re choosing a curriculum that is not talking about the full [LGBTQ+ experience], then it’s not truly an inclusive curriculum.” She also discussed the need to change state standards to align with the law and the reticence among parents who inquired about opting out;⁶⁴ in January 2020 Family Policy Alliance of New Jersey claimed to have over seven thousand signatures opposing LGBTQ+-inclusive instruction.⁶⁵ Overall, though, Chiappiano optimistically declared, “We’re hoping we’re in a positive spot, and

the ball is rolling. We feel like we just need to keep it going. We're going to keep it moving.”⁶⁶

Massachusetts does not have an LGBTQ+ curriculum law, but it did revise its Framework in 2018. The updated Massachusetts State Framework offers teachers the option to discuss the Lavender Scare in units on the Cold War and Bayard Rustin in discussions on civil rights. It also lists LGBTQ+ history as a possibility for classroom study of social and political movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, directing teachers to use primary and secondary sources to teach topics like “the impact of world wars on the demand for gay rights, the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969, the Gay Pride Movement, and ... the role of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* (2004),”⁶⁷ among others. To further this goal, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education posted a lesson entitled “Defending Democracy at Home: Advancing Constitutional Rights, *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) Same-Sex Marriage” on its website and provides educators with a form to access additional materials.⁶⁸

New York State standards currently list “gay rights and the LGBT movement” as one of nine options for teachers to introduce in a unit on twentieth-century civil rights movements.⁶⁹ The New York City Department of Education, however, began taking steps to make city classrooms more LGBTQ+-inclusive. Building on its “Hidden Voices” curriculum, which highlighted individuals who contributed to New York City history, the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning developed a second edition focused on LGBTQ+ figures from the colonial era to the present about whom students can now learn. The guide, which offers information and primary sources on Thomasine Hall, Ma Rainey, Barbara Gittings, and Miguel Braschi, among others, aims to provide educators with the necessary information to bring previously untaught history into their classes.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the American Social History Project at City University of New York worked with scholars and educators to convert “Hidden Voices” into a series of lessons that all teachers can use with students at all grade levels.⁷¹ This work, like the states that set precedents for it, identifies a gap in the curriculum and attempts to fill it. All of these efforts, like California’s, take official mandates and build upon them. Doing so, these advocates and educators hope, makes them as meaningful in the classroom as they are in the legislature.

* * *

LGBTQ+ curriculum laws and the efforts to put them into practice lay the groundwork for reform that has the potential to make history classes more

inclusive, as well as educate students on a topic prevalent in political and social spheres. California can, with the FAIR Act, establish model schools, resources, and curricula. Despite the protracted process to see the act's mandate come to fruition, teachers and schools throughout the state have started to understand what it entails and consider the curricular changes it necessitates; the state, meanwhile, is working to ensure that resources and materials match the FAIR Act's requirements. Other states have taken note, and through their laws and policies they are working to turn legislative edicts and framework revisions into realities at a faster pace; counties and cities are starting to advocate and create resources for LGBTQ+-inclusive history where state mandates do not yet exist. Obstacles and questions persist. Curricular reform requires funds that are in perpetually short supply and entrenched ideas do not change overnight. These laws, and the weight behind them, however, suggest that institutional support for LGBTQ+ history exists in ways that it did not a decade ago.