



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* SCHOLARS

THE CIVICS COURSE ACT

The Civics Course Act mandates a year-long high school civics course, including requirements to study the primary documents of the American founding and bans on action civics and the components of Critical Race Theory.¹

MODEL LEGISLATIVE TEXT

Section A

Beginning in the 20XX-20XX school year, all public schools or charter schools located within this state shall require students to complete a regular year-long course of instruction in civics in grades nine, ten, eleven, or twelve.

1. This course shall instruct students in, at a minimum, study of and devotion to,
 - a. the intellectual sources of the United States' founding documents;
 - b. the political and military narrative of the causes and progress of the American Revolution;
 - c. the United States' founding documents and their original intent;
 - d. the Constitution of the United States, with emphasis on the Bill of Rights, and the Constitution of [state name];
 - e. the basic principles of the United States' republican form of government;
 - f. the historical development of the United States' republican form of government;
 - g. the structure, function, and processes of government institutions at the federal, state, and local levels; and
 - h. civic virtues exemplified in the lives of famous Americans.
2. Each school district shall craft its own curriculum for this year-long course of instruction in civics.

Section B

1. This year-long course of instruction in civics may not require, make part of such course, or award course grading or credit to, student work for, affiliation with, practicums in, or service learning in association with, any organization engaged in lobbying for legislation at the state or federal level, or in social or public policy advocacy.
2. This year-long course of instruction in civics may not require, make part of such course, or award course grading or credit to, lobbying for legislation at the state or federal level, or any practicum, or like activity, involving social or public policy advocacy.
3. This year-long course of instruction in civics may not compel any teacher to discuss current events or widely debated and currently controversial issues of public policy or social affairs.

¹Consequences for noncompliance with this law should be determined by each state.

4. Teachers who choose to discuss current events or widely debated and currently controversial issues of public policy or social affairs shall, to the best of their ability, strive to explore such issues from diverse and contending perspectives.
5. No private funding shall be accepted by state agencies or school districts for curriculum development, purchase or choice of curricular materials, teacher training, professional development, or continuing teacher education pertaining to this year-long course of instruction in civics.

Section C

1. No teacher shall be compelled by a policy of any state agency, school district, or school administration to affirm a belief in the so-called systemic nature of racism, or like ideas, or in the so-called multiplicity or fluidity of gender identities, or like ideas, against his or her sincerely held religious or philosophical convictions.
2. No state agency, school district, or school shall teach, instruct, or train any administrator, teacher, staff member, or employee to adopt or believe in racist or bigoted concepts or defamatory history of America's founding.
3. No teacher, administrator, or other employee in any state agency, school district, open-enrollment charter school, or school administration shall approve for use, make use of, or carry out, standards, curricula, lesson plans, textbooks, instructional materials, or instructional practices that serve to inculcate racist or bigoted concepts or defamatory history of America's founding.

Section D

The State Board of Education shall require no list of documents, no supplemental readings, no textbooks, no teacher training, no list of instructional resources, and no curriculum for this year-long course of instruction in civics.

Section E

The State Board of Education shall report on or before September 1 of each year to the Chairmen of the Education Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the specific civics curriculum content and teacher training used by each school district to implement this legislation.

Section F

1. No public school or charter school may permit content-based censorship in this course based on religious or cultural references in writing, a document, or a record pertaining to this course of instruction.
2. No public school or charter school may permit a student to be prevented in this course from, or punished in any way, including a reduction in grade, for, using a religious or cultural reference from writing, a document, or a record pertaining to this course of instruction.

Section G

If any provision of this chapter, or the application of any provision to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this chapter and the application of its provisions to any other person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Intellectual sources of the United States' founding documents" means historical sources including documents that illustrate the Greek, Hebrew, and Roman exemplars of liberty and republican government; the Christian synthesis of Greek, Hebrew, and Roman thought that emphasized the equal dignity of all individual humans in the eyes of God; the medieval English inheritance of common law, jury, local self-government, liberty, and representative government; the early modern English inheritance of liberty, republicanism, militia, accountable government, mixed government, parliamentary

sovereignty, freedom of the press, and the English Bill of Rights and Toleration Act; the colonial American inheritance of liberty, self-government, and local government; and the Enlightenment theories of Locke, Montesquieu, Smith, and their contemporaries that universalized the European traditions of liberty.

2. “Political and military narrative of the causes and progress of the American Revolution” means events including the French and Indian War; colonial American debates about and resistance to increased British regulation and taxation; the Boston Massacre (including the roles of John Adams and Crispus Attucks); the Boston Tea Party; the military occupation of Boston; the Intolerable Acts; the preparation of the colonists for armed conflict; Patrick Henry’s ‘Liberty or Death’ speech; the proceedings of the First and Second Continental Congresses; the Battles of Lexington and Concord; the capture of Fort Ticonderoga and the Noble Train of Artillery; the Siege of Boston and the Battle of Bunker Hill; the drafting, signing, and publication of the Declaration of Independence; the loss of New York City; the victories at Trenton and Princeton; the victory at Saratoga; the training and reorganization of the army at Valley Forge; Benjamin Franklin’s diplomacy and the French alliance; the Battle of Monmouth; Benedict Arnold’s attempted treason; successful American resistance to British efforts to crush the Revolution in the South; the Yorktown campaign; the disbanding of the Continental Army; the Treaty of Peace; and Washington’s resignation.
3. “United States’ founding documents” means texts including the Mayflower Compact, Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the Pennsylvania Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, the Northwest Ordinance, the United States Constitution, the Federalist Papers (including but not limited to Essays 10 and 51), George Washington’s Farewell Address, excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, the first Lincoln-Douglas debate, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the writings of the Founding Fathers of the United States.
4. “Basic principles of the United States’ republican form of government” means institutions and principles including balance of power, consent of the governed, the Electoral College, federalism, individual liberties, popular sovereignty, representative government, rule of law, and separation of powers.
5. “Historical development of the United States’ republican form of government” means events including the federalist and antifederalist debates, the rise of Jacksonian democracy, the causes and the constitutional consequences of the Civil War, the thirteen, fourteenth, and fifteenth Amendments, the rise of the New Deal administrative state, and supreme court cases including *Marbury v. Madison*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, *Pembina Consolidated Silver Mining Co. v. Pennsylvania*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and *Brown v. Board of Education*.
6. “Civic virtues” means virtues including ambition, charity, cheerfulness, courage, curiosity, endurance, faith, forbearance, gratitude, hardiness, industry, initiative, patience, pluck, prudence, responsibility, self-control, self-reliance, temperance, thrift, and tolerance.
7. “Famous Americans” means individuals including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Abigail Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Ely Parker, Thomas Edison, Andrew Carnegie, Walter Reed, Theodore Roosevelt, Charles Curtis, Will Rogers, Jim Thorpe, Jackie Robinson, George Marshall, Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Feynman, and Neil Armstrong.
8. “Racist or bigoted concepts” means any one or more of the following concepts:
 - a. one race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex;
 - b. an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, privileged, biased, oppressed or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously;

- c. an individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of the individual's race;
 - d. members of one race cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race;
 - e. an individual's moral standing or worth is necessarily determined by his or her race or sex;
 - f. an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex;
 - g. any individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his or her race or sex;
 - h. meritocracy or traits such as a hard work ethic are racist or sexist, or were created by a members of a particular race to oppress members of another race;
 - i. fault, blame, or bias should be assigned to a race or sex, or to members of a race or sex because of their race or sex.
9. "Defamatory history of America's founding" means one or more of the following concepts:
- a. that the advent of slavery in the territory that is now the United States constituted the true founding of the United States; or
 - b. that, with respect to their relationship to American values, slavery and racism are anything other than deviations from, betrayals of, or failures to live up to, the authentic founding principles of the United States, which include liberty and equality.
 - c. The United States is fundamentally racist or sexist.