

By: Bonnen, et al.

H.B. No. 4509

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to instruction on informed American patriotism in public schools.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 4.001(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The objectives of public education are:

OBJECTIVE 1: Parents will be full partners with educators in the education of their children.

OBJECTIVE 2: Students will be encouraged and challenged to meet their full educational potential.

OBJECTIVE 3: Through enhanced dropout prevention efforts, all students will remain in school until they obtain a high school diploma.

OBJECTIVE 4: A well-balanced and appropriate curriculum will be provided to all students. Through that curriculum, students will be prepared to succeed in a variety of postsecondary activities, including employment and enrollment in institutions of higher education.

OBJECTIVE 5: Educators shall cultivate in ~~[will prepare]~~ students an informed American patriotism and lead students in a close study of the founding documents of the United States and Texas. The purpose of this objective is to:

(1) increase students' knowledge of the deepest and

1 noblest purposes of the United States and Texas;

2 (2) enhance students' intellectual independence so
3 that students may become [~~be~~] thoughtful, informed, active citizens
4 who have an appreciation for the fundamental democratic principles
5 and basic values of our state and national heritage; and

6 (3) guide students toward understanding [~~who can~~
7 ~~understand~~] and productively functioning [~~function~~] in a free
8 enterprise society.

9 OBJECTIVE 6: Qualified and highly effective personnel will be
10 recruited, developed, and retained.

11 OBJECTIVE 7: The state's students will demonstrate exemplary
12 performance in comparison to national and international standards.

13 OBJECTIVE 8: School campuses will maintain a safe and
14 disciplined environment conducive to student learning.

15 OBJECTIVE 9: Educators will keep abreast of the development
16 of creative and innovative techniques in instruction and
17 administration using those techniques as appropriate to improve
18 student learning.

19 OBJECTIVE 10: Technology will be implemented and used to
20 increase the effectiveness of student learning, instructional
21 management, staff development, and administration.

22 OBJECTIVE 11: The State Board of Education, the agency, and
23 the commissioner shall assist school districts and charter schools
24 in providing career and technology education to students.

25 SECTION 2. Section 5.001, Education Code, is amended by
26 adding Subdivision (10) to read as follows:

27 (10) "Informed American patriotism" means a reasoned

1 appreciation, gained through the study of historical primary
2 sources, of why America has been, is now, and continues to be the
3 destination of choice for those around the world who yearn to live
4 in freedom. Informed American patriotism is only a conditional
5 pledge of devotion that will be maintained only so long as America
6 adheres to a republican form of government. If we abandon a
7 representative democracy, our pledge of allegiance will be
8 withdrawn as is stated in the Pledge of Allegiance, which swears
9 devotion to a "republic."

10 SECTION 3. Section 28.002, Education Code, is amended by
11 amending Subsection (h) and adding Subsections (h-1) and (h-2) to
12 read as follows:

13 (h) The State Board of Education and each school district
14 shall require ~~[foster]~~ the ~~[continuation of the tradition of]~~
15 teaching of informed American patriotism, [United States and] Texas
16 history, and the free enterprise system [in regular subject matter
17 and in reading courses and] in the adoption of instructional
18 materials for kindergarten through grade 12, including the founding
19 documents of the United States. A primary purpose of the public
20 school curriculum is to prepare thoughtful, informed ~~[active]~~
21 citizens who understand the importance of patriotism and can
22 function productively in a free enterprise society with
23 appreciation for the fundamental ~~[basic]~~ democratic principles
24 ~~[values]~~ of our state and national heritage.

25 (h-1) In adopting the essential knowledge and skills for the
26 foundation curriculum under Subsection (a)(1), the State Board of
27 Education shall, as appropriate, adopt essential knowledge and

1 skills that develop each student's civic knowledge, including an
2 understanding of:

3 (1) the fundamental moral, political, and
4 intellectual foundations of the American experiment in
5 self-government;

6 (2) the history, qualities, traditions, and features
7 of civic engagement in the United States;

8 (3) the structure, function, and processes of
9 government institutions at the federal, state, and local levels;
10 and

11 (4) the founding documents of the United States,
12 including:

13 (A) the entirety of the Declaration of
14 Independence;

15 (B) the entirety of the United States
16 Constitution;

17 (C) the Federalist Papers, including the
18 entirety of Essays 10 and 51;

19 (D) excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's
20 Democracy in America;

21 (E) the transcript of the first Lincoln-Douglas
22 debate;

23 (F) the writings of the founding fathers of the
24 United States;

25 (G) the entirety of Frederick Douglass's
26 speeches "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro" and "What the
27 Black Man Wants"; and

1 (H) the entirety of Martin Luther King Jr.'s
2 speech "I Have a Dream."

3 (h-2) In providing instruction regarding the founding
4 documents of the United States as described by Subsection (h-1)(4),
5 a school district or open-enrollment charter school shall use those
6 documents as part of the instructional materials for the
7 instruction.

8 SECTION 4. This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022
9 school year.

10 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
11 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
12 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
13 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
14 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.