

By: Miles

S.B. No. 174

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the inclusion of American principles, including social injustice and civil rights concepts, in the public school curriculum and instructional materials and in training materials and resources for use by school districts.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Sections 21.460 and 21.461 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.460. TRAINING MATERIALS AND RESOURCES REGARDING SITUATIONS INVOLVING SOCIAL INJUSTICE AND CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUES. The agency shall advise school districts regarding training materials and resources for a school district to use in assisting educators to:

(1) recognize and respond to situations that involve an alleged social injustice or violation of civil rights; and

(2) as appropriate, consult persons with substantial, demonstrated experience in addressing those situations.

Sec. 21.461. BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING STUDENT FREE SPEECH. The agency shall provide to school districts information relating to best practices for promoting the ability of all students to engage in free speech guaranteed by the constitution of the United States or this state regarding a policy issue, including engaging in speech through a public forum, a nonvoting position on a school district board of trustees, or a civic engagement program.

1 SECTION 2. Section 28.002, Education Code, is amended by
2 adding Subsection (h-1) to read as follows:

3 (h-1) To accomplish the primary purpose stated in
4 Subsection (h):

5 (1) the State Board of Education and each school
6 district shall ensure that:

7 (A) the public school curriculum emphasizes:

8 (i) understanding the principles
9 underlying the United States Constitution, including the freedom of
10 speech, the rights to assemble and to petition the government for a
11 redress of grievances, and other principles contained in the Bill
12 of Rights;

13 (ii) empowering students to protect
14 themselves and others from injustices and to rectify those
15 injustices; and

16 (iii) understanding the benefits of
17 diversity and the history of the civil rights movement; and

18 (B) each historical event addressed in the public
19 school curriculum meets a reasonable standard of historical
20 significance, in relation to the limited amount of available
21 instructional time; and

22 (2) a course of instruction may include the use of a
23 public forum, youth dialogue, workshop, or other appropriate method
24 of instruction.

25 SECTION 3. Section 31.023(a), Education Code, is amended to
26 read as follows:

27 (a) For each subject and grade level, the State Board of

1 Education shall adopt a list of instructional materials. The list
2 includes each instructional material submitted for the subject and
3 grade level that meets applicable physical specifications adopted
4 by the State Board of Education, that [~~and~~] contains material that
5 is consistent with the purpose and guidelines of Sections 28.002(h)
6 and (h-1), and that covers [~~covering~~] at least half of the elements
7 of the essential knowledge and skills of the subject and grade level
8 in the student version of the instructional material, as well as in
9 the teacher version of the instructional material, as determined by
10 the State Board of Education under Section 28.002 and adopted under
11 Section 31.024.

12 SECTION 4. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this
13 section, this Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

14 (b) The changes in law made by this Act to Section
15 31.023(a), Education Code, apply to instructional materials
16 adopted by the State Board of Education on or after September 1,
17 2022.

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