



101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2019 and 2020

HB5851

Introduced 11/10/2020, by Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

See Index

Creates the Inclusive American History Act. Establishes the Inclusive American History Commission to (i) address the deficiencies and inadequacies in both perspective and content in traditional history course material and instruction and (ii) develop multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive standards that a school may use as a guide in replacing or developing its curricula for history education. Sets forth the membership of the Commission. Contains provisions concerning meetings, duties, and reporting. Repeals these provisions on December 31, 2022. Amends the Courses of Study Article of the School Code. Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, requires schools to suspend all instruction in history education, with exceptions. Not later than June 30, 2022, requires the State Superintendent of Education to provide to schools instructional guidelines and standards based on the recommendations of the Commission so that schools may develop alternative curricula to replace traditional course material and instruction to ensure that students obtain a multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive understanding about history. Provides that beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, schools shall resume instruction in history, which shall require the use of age-appropriate discussion, textbooks, and other course material that reframe the study of history by presenting to students an examination of history through the inclusion of diverse perspectives, contrary interpretations, and the viewpoints of various groups of people whose voices have traditionally been excluded from the conventional teaching of history. Effective immediately.

LRB101 22172 NHT 73498 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT
MAY APPLY

STATE MANDATES
ACT MAY REQUIRE
REIMBURSEMENT

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Inclusive American History Act.

6 Section 5. Statement of findings; Inclusive American
7 History Commission creation and purpose.

8 (a) In an effort to create a well-informed, tolerant, and
9 equitable society, students in grades kindergarten through 12
10 in this State should receive an unbiased, objective, and
11 thorough education in history. Traditional course material and
12 instruction have failed to provide to students a comprehensive
13 education in history because the historical narrative has
14 always been presented and interpreted from the perspective of
15 one rather than from the perspective of many. To the detriment
16 of our society, this limited narrative in history instruction
17 and course material rarely teaches our students about the
18 contributions made by or the marginalization of women, Black
19 people, indigenous people, Latinx people, and people of color,
20 faith-based minorities, ethnic minorities, immigrants, members
21 of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community,
22 persons with disabilities, and many others. Traditional
23 teaching materials so often fail to provide for any study about

1 slavery, racism, and civil rights that teachers must often
2 purchase their own supplementary materials in order to teach
3 their students about these subjects. The objective in the
4 reframing of history education in this State is not to exclude,
5 prohibit, or deny the narrative, perspective, or
6 accomplishments of any cultural group or people, but rather to
7 recognize and include the narrative, perspective, and
8 accomplishments of all. The reframing of history education must
9 present to students a fair and accurate historical narrative
10 that acknowledges both the triumphs and the failures of a
11 society. Therefore, the teaching of history to students in this
12 State must be reformed and reframed in order to provide our
13 students with a multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive
14 understanding of history. Rather than requiring each school to
15 be responsible for the research, study, and investigation
16 necessary to develop alternative or revised instructional
17 standards for the teaching of history, instructional
18 guidelines and standards should be provided to schools
19 statewide so that each school may develop the alternative
20 curricula it needs to replace traditional course material and
21 instruction.

22 (b) The Inclusive American History Commission is created to
23 (i) address the deficiencies and inadequacies in both
24 perspective and content in traditional course material and
25 instruction and (ii) develop multiperspective, inclusive, and
26 comprehensive standards that a school may use as a guide in

1 replacing or developing its curricula for history education.

2 Section 10. Membership. The Governor shall appoint all of
3 the following members to the Commission:

4 (1) Two members who are history scholars.

5 (2) Two members who represent publishers of history
6 textbooks.

7 (3) Two full-time teachers of a public elementary
8 school in this State.

9 (4) Two full-time teachers who teach history courses at
10 a public secondary school in this State.

11 (5) Two full-time faculty members who teach history
12 courses at a public institution of higher education in this
13 State.

14 (6) Two students who are enrolled in a public secondary
15 school in this State.

16 (7) Four parents who have children enrolled in a public
17 elementary or secondary school in this State.

18 (8) Additional persons who are members of
19 not-for-profit organizations that represent women, Black
20 people, indigenous people, Latinx people, and people of
21 color, ethnic minorities, faith-based minorities,
22 immigrants, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
23 community, and persons with disabilities.

24 (9) One member representing regional offices of
25 education, recommended by a statewide organization that

1 represents regional superintendents of schools.

2 (10) One member representing school boards,
3 recommended by a statewide organization that represents
4 school boards.

5 (11) One member representing school principals,
6 recommended by a statewide organization that represents
7 school principals.

8 (12) One member representing school administrators,
9 recommended by a statewide organization that represents
10 school administrators.

11 (13) One member representing teachers, recommended by
12 a statewide organization that represents teachers.

13 (14) One member representing teachers, recommended by
14 a different statewide organization that represents
15 teachers.

16 (15) One member representing teachers, recommended by
17 an organization representing teachers of a school
18 district.

19 (16) One member representing a school district
20 organized under Article 34 of the School Code.

21 (17) One member representing large unit school
22 districts.

23 (18) One member representing suburban Chicago school
24 districts.

25 (19) One member representing south suburban Chicago
26 school districts.

1 (20) Two members representing school districts located
2 in the central region of this State.

3 (21) Two members representing school districts located
4 in the southern region of this State.

5 Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the
6 original appointments.

7 Section 15. Meetings; chairperson; support; expenses.

8 (a) The Commission shall meet initially at the call of the
9 Governor within 30 days after the effective date of this Act,
10 shall select one member as chairperson at its initial meeting,
11 and shall thereafter meet at least monthly or more often as the
12 chairperson of the Commission deems necessary at the times and
13 places in this State that the chairperson designates.

14 (b) The State Board of Education shall provide
15 administrative and other support to the Commission.

16 (c) Members of the Commission shall serve without
17 compensation but shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and
18 necessary expenses from funds appropriated to the State Board
19 of Education for that purpose, including travel, subject to the
20 rules of the appropriate travel control board.

21 Section 20. Duties. The duties of the Commission shall
22 include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

23 (1) To evaluate history textbooks and other course
24 material for breadth and accuracy of content.

1 (2) To research, study, and determine the content and
2 material to present to students in the teaching of history.

3 (3) To propose revisions to course standards and
4 instructional guidelines so that students may receive a
5 multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive instruction
6 in history.

7 (4) To provide opportunities for the public,
8 educators, students, parents, and other interested parties
9 to comment on proposed changes in history course standards
10 and instruction.

11 (5) To develop guidelines for age-appropriate
12 instructional standards, textbooks, and other course
13 material an elementary or secondary school may use in
14 replacing or developing its curricula for history
15 education.

16 Section 25. Reporting.

17 (a) The Commission shall file a report on its findings,
18 research, proposals, and guidelines with the Governor, the
19 General Assembly, and the State Board of Education on or before
20 December 31, 2021. Upon filing its report, the Commission is
21 dissolved.

22 (b) The State Board of Education shall make available to
23 the State Superintendent of Education the report filed by the
24 Commission under subsection (a). The State Superintendent
25 shall incorporate the recommendations made by the Commission

1 into the instructional guidelines and standards provided to
2 schools for the development of alternative curricula under
3 Section 27-23.15 of the School Code.

4 Section 50. Repealer. This Act is repealed on December 31,
5 2022.

6 Section 90. The School Code is amended by changing Sections
7 27-3.5, 27-20.4, 27-20.5, 27-21, and 27-22 and by adding
8 Section 27-23.15 as follows:

9 (105 ILCS 5/27-3.5)

10 Sec. 27-3.5. Congressional Medal of Honor film. Subject to
11 Section 27-23.15, each ~~Each~~ school district shall require that
12 all students in grade 7 and all high school students enrolled
13 in a course concerning history of the United States or a
14 combination of history of the United States and American
15 government view a Congressional Medal of Honor film made by the
16 Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. This requirement does
17 not apply if the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation
18 charges the school district a fee for a film.

19 (Source: P.A. 96-99, eff. 7-27-09.)

20 (105 ILCS 5/27-20.4) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.4)

21 Sec. 27-20.4. Black History study. Subject to Section
22 27-23.15, every ~~Every~~ public elementary school and high school

1 shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying
2 the events of Black History, including the history of the
3 African slave trade, slavery in America, and the vestiges of
4 slavery in this country. These events shall include not only
5 the contributions made by individual African-Americans in
6 government and in the arts, humanities and sciences to the
7 economic, cultural and political development of the United
8 States and Africa, but also the socio-economic struggle which
9 African-Americans experienced collectively in striving to
10 achieve fair and equal treatment under the laws of this nation.
11 The studying of this material shall constitute an affirmation
12 by students of their commitment to respect the dignity of all
13 races and peoples and to forever eschew every form of
14 discrimination in their lives and careers.

15 Subject to Section 27-23.15, the ~~The~~ State Superintendent
16 of Education may prepare and make available to all school
17 boards instructional materials, including those established by
18 the Amistad Commission, which may be used as guidelines for
19 development of a unit of instruction under this Section;
20 provided, however, that each school board shall itself
21 determine the minimum amount of instruction time which shall
22 qualify as a unit of instruction satisfying the requirements of
23 this Section.

24 A school may meet the requirements of this Section through
25 an online program or course.

26 (Source: P.A. 100-634, eff. 1-1-19.)

1 (105 ILCS 5/27-20.5) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.5)

2 Sec. 27-20.5. Study of the History of Women. Every public
3 elementary school and high school shall include in its
4 curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of the
5 history of women in America, subject to Section 27-23.15. These
6 events shall include not only the contributions made by
7 individual women in government, the arts, sciences, education,
8 and in the economic, cultural, and political development of
9 Illinois and of the United States, but shall also include a
10 study of women's struggles to gain the right to vote and to be
11 treated equally as they strive to earn and occupy positions of
12 merit in our society.

13 Subject to Section 27-23.15, the ~~The~~ State Superintendent
14 of Education may prepare and make available to all school
15 boards instructional materials that may be used as guidelines
16 for development of a unit of instruction under this Section.
17 Each school board shall determine the minimum amount of
18 instructional time that shall qualify as a unit of instruction
19 satisfying the requirements of this Section.

20 (Source: P.A. 86-1256.)

21 (105 ILCS 5/27-21) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-21)

22 Sec. 27-21. History of United States. History of the United
23 States shall be taught in all public schools and in all other
24 educational institutions in this State supported or

1 maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds, subject to
2 Section 27-23.15. The teaching of history shall have as one of
3 its objectives the imparting to pupils of a comprehensive idea
4 of our democratic form of government and the principles for
5 which our government stands as regards other nations, including
6 the studying of the place of our government in world-wide
7 movements and the leaders thereof, with particular stress upon
8 the basic principles and ideals of our representative form of
9 government. The teaching of history shall include a study of
10 the role and contributions of African Americans and other
11 ethnic groups, including, but not restricted to, Polish,
12 Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish, Bohemian, Russian,
13 Albanian, Italian, Czech, Slovak, French, Scots, Hispanics,
14 Asian Americans, etc., in the history of this country and this
15 State. ~~To reinforce the study of the role and contributions of~~
16 ~~Hispanics, such curriculum shall include the study of the~~
17 ~~events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation~~
18 ~~of Mexican American U.S. citizens during the Great Depression.~~
19 ~~In public schools only, the teaching of history shall include a~~
20 ~~study of the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual,~~
21 ~~and transgender people in the history of this country and this~~
22 ~~State. The teaching of history also shall include a study of~~
23 ~~the role of labor unions and their interaction with government~~
24 ~~in achieving the goals of a mixed free enterprise system.~~
25 Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the teaching of
26 history must also include instruction on the history of

1 Illinois, subject to Section 27-23.15. Subject to Section
2 27-23.15, no ~~no~~ pupils shall be graduated from the eighth grade
3 of any public school unless he or she has received such
4 instruction in the history of the United States and gives
5 evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof, which may
6 be administered remotely.

7 (Source: P.A. 101-227, eff. 7-1-20; 101-341, eff. 1-1-20;
8 101-643, eff. 6-18-20.)

9 (105 ILCS 5/27-22) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-22)

10 Sec. 27-22. Required high school courses.

11 (a) (Blank).

12 (b) (Blank).

13 (c) (Blank).

14 (d) (Blank).

15 (e) As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma,
16 each pupil entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other
17 course requirements, successfully complete all of the
18 following courses:

19 (1) Four years of language arts.

20 (2) Two years of writing intensive courses, one of
21 which must be English and the other of which may be English
22 or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive
23 courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other
24 graduation requirements.

25 (3) Three years of mathematics, one of which must be

1 Algebra I, one of which must include geometry content, and
2 one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science
3 course. A mathematics course that includes geometry
4 content may be offered as an integrated, applied,
5 interdisciplinary, or career and technical education
6 course that prepares a student for a career readiness path.

7 (4) Two years of science.

8 (5) Two years of social studies, of which at least one
9 year must be history of the United States or a combination
10 of history of the United States and American government,
11 subject to Section 27-23.15, and, beginning with pupils
12 entering the 9th grade in the 2016-2017 school year and
13 each school year thereafter, at least one semester must be
14 civics, which shall help young people acquire and learn to
15 use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare
16 them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout
17 their lives. Civics course content shall focus on
18 government institutions, the discussion of current and
19 controversial issues, service learning, and simulations of
20 the democratic process. School districts may utilize
21 private funding available for the purposes of offering
22 civics education.

23 (6) One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C)
24 foreign language, which shall be deemed to include American
25 Sign Language, or (D) vocational education.

26 (f) The State Board of Education shall develop and inform

1 school districts of standards for writing-intensive
2 coursework.

3 (f-5) If a school district offers an Advanced Placement
4 computer science course to high school students, then the
5 school board must designate that course as equivalent to a high
6 school mathematics course and must denote on the student's
7 transcript that the Advanced Placement computer science course
8 qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative course for
9 students in accordance with subdivision (3) of subsection (e)
10 of this Section.

11 (g) This amendatory Act of 1983 does not apply to pupils
12 entering the 9th grade in 1983-1984 school year and prior
13 school years or to students with disabilities whose course of
14 study is determined by an individualized education program.

15 This amendatory Act of the 94th General Assembly does not
16 apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2004-2005 school
17 year or a prior school year or to students with disabilities
18 whose course of study is determined by an individualized
19 education program.

20 (h) The provisions of this Section are subject to the
21 provisions of Section 27-22.05 of this Code and the
22 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act.

23 (i) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to modify
24 the requirements of this Section for any students enrolled in
25 grades 9 through 12 if the Governor has declared a disaster due
26 to a public health emergency pursuant to Section 7 of the

1 Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act.

2 (Source: P.A. 100-443, eff. 8-25-17; 101-464, eff. 1-1-20;
3 101-643, eff. 6-18-20.)

4 (105 ILCS 5/27-23.15 new)

5 Sec. 27-23.15. Instruction in history. Notwithstanding any
6 other provision of this Article to the contrary, beginning with
7 the 2021-2022 school year, schools must suspend all instruction
8 in history education. This suspension does not apply to
9 instruction during the 2021-2022 school year to students
10 entering their final year of elementary or secondary school
11 during the 2021-2022 school year who must receive history
12 instruction in order to satisfy graduation, college admission,
13 scholarship, or other academic requirements or to instruction
14 under Section 27-3 or 27-3.10. Notwithstanding Section 27-21,
15 instruction in civics education shall be taught in place of
16 instruction in the history of the United States during the
17 2021-2022 school year. Not later than June 30, 2021, the State
18 Superintendent of Education must prepare and make available to
19 schools instructional guidelines for these courses in civics
20 education. Not later than June 30, 2022, the State
21 Superintendent of Education must provide to schools
22 instructional guidelines and standards based on the
23 recommendations of the Inclusive American History Commission
24 that are contained in the report filed under Section 25 of the
25 Inclusive American History Act so that schools may develop

1 alternative curricula to replace traditional course material
2 and instruction to ensure that students obtain a
3 multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive understanding
4 about history. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year,
5 schools shall resume instruction in history under this Section,
6 which shall require the use of age-appropriate discussion,
7 textbooks, and other course material that reframe the study of
8 history by presenting to students an examination of history
9 through the inclusion of diverse perspectives, contrary
10 interpretations, and the viewpoints of various groups of
11 people, such as women, Black people, indigenous people, Latinx
12 people, and people of color, ethnic minorities, faith-based
13 minorities, immigrants, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual,
14 and transgender community, persons with disabilities, and the
15 poor and working class, whose voices have traditionally been
16 excluded from the conventional teaching of history.

17 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
18 becoming law.

1 INDEX

2 Statutes amended in order of appearance

3 New Act

4 105 ILCS 5/27-3.5

5 105 ILCS 5/27-20.4 from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.4

6 105 ILCS 5/27-20.5 from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.5

7 105 ILCS 5/27-21 from Ch. 122, par. 27-21

8 105 ILCS 5/27-22 from Ch. 122, par. 27-22

9 105 ILCS 5/27-23.15 new