



## 103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB1485

Introduced 1/31/2023, 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, 2024. Amends the Courses of Study Article of the School Code. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, requires schools to suspend all instruction in history education, with exceptions. Not later than June 30, 2024, 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 2024-2025 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.

LRB103 03533 RJT 48539 b

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

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

22 (b) The Inclusive American History Commission is created  
23 to (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  
10 at 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  
13 this State.

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

16 (7) Four parents who have children enrolled in a  
17 public 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  
20          the 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  
3 history.

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

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

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

17           Section 25. Reporting.

18           (a) The Commission shall file a report on its findings,  
19 research, proposals, and guidelines with the Governor, the  
20 General Assembly, and the State Board of Education on or  
21 before December 31, 2023. Upon filing its report, the  
22 Commission is dissolved.

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

1 shall incorporate the recommendations made by the Commission  
2 into the instructional guidelines and standards provided to  
3 schools for the development of alternative curricula under  
4 Section 27-23.17 of the School Code.

5 Section 50. Repealer. This Act is repealed on December 31,  
6 2024.

7 Section 90. The School Code is amended by changing  
8 Sections 27-3.5, 27-20.4, 27-20.5, 27-21, and 27-22 and by  
9 adding Section 27-23.17 as follows:

10 (105 ILCS 5/27-3.5)

11 Sec. 27-3.5. Congressional Medal of Honor film. Subject to  
12 Section 27-23.17, each ~~Each~~ school district shall require that  
13 all students in grade 7 and all high school students enrolled  
14 in a course concerning history of the United States or a  
15 combination of history of the United States and American  
16 government view a Congressional Medal of Honor film made by  
17 the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. This requirement  
18 does not apply if the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation  
19 charges the school district a fee for a film.

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

21 (105 ILCS 5/27-20.4) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.4)

22 Sec. 27-20.4. Black History study. Subject to Section



1 27-23.17, every ~~Every~~ public elementary school and high school  
2 shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying  
3 the events of Black History, including the history of the  
4 pre-enslavement of Black people from 3,000 BCE to AD 1619, the  
5 African slave trade, slavery in America, the study of the  
6 reasons why Black people came to be enslaved, the vestiges of  
7 slavery in this country, and the study of the American civil  
8 rights renaissance. These events shall include not only the  
9 contributions made by individual African-Americans in  
10 government and in the arts, humanities and sciences to the  
11 economic, cultural and political development of the United  
12 States and Africa, but also the socio-economic struggle which  
13 African-Americans experienced collectively in striving to  
14 achieve fair and equal treatment under the laws of this  
15 nation. The studying of this material shall constitute an  
16 affirmation by students of their commitment to respect the  
17 dignity of all races and peoples and to forever eschew every  
18 form of discrimination in their lives and careers.

19 Subject to Section 27-23.17, the ~~The~~ State Superintendent  
20 of Education may prepare and make available to all school  
21 boards instructional materials, including those established by  
22 the Amistad Commission, which may be used as guidelines for  
23 development of a unit of instruction under this Section;  
24 provided, however, that each school board shall itself  
25 determine the minimum amount of instruction time which shall  
26 qualify as a unit of instruction satisfying the requirements

1 of this Section.

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

4 (Source: P.A. 100-634, eff. 1-1-19; 101-654, eff. 3-8-21.)

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

6 Sec. 27-20.5. Study of the History of Women. Every public  
7 elementary school and high school shall include in its  
8 curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of the  
9 history of women in America, subject to Section 27-23.17.  
10 These events shall include not only the contributions made by  
11 individual women in government, the arts, sciences, education,  
12 and in the economic, cultural, and political development of  
13 Illinois and of the United States, but shall also include a  
14 study of women's struggles to gain the right to vote and to be  
15 treated equally as they strive to earn and occupy positions of  
16 merit in our society.

17 Subject to Section 27-23.17, the ~~The~~ State Superintendent  
18 of Education may prepare and make available to all school  
19 boards instructional materials that may be used as guidelines  
20 for development of a unit of instruction under this Section.  
21 Each school board shall determine the minimum amount of  
22 instructional time that shall qualify as a unit of instruction  
23 satisfying the requirements of this Section.

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

1 (105 ILCS 5/27-21) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-21)

2 Sec. 27-21. History of United States. History of the  
3 United States shall be taught in all public schools and in all  
4 other educational institutions in this State supported or  
5 maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds, subject to  
6 Section 27-23.17. The teaching of history shall have as one of  
7 its objectives the imparting to pupils of a comprehensive idea  
8 of our democratic form of government and the principles for  
9 which our government stands as regards other nations,  
10 including the studying of the place of our government in  
11 world-wide movements and the leaders thereof, with particular  
12 stress upon the basic principles and ideals of our  
13 representative form of government. The teaching of history  
14 shall include a study of the role and contributions of African  
15 Americans and other ethnic groups, including, but not  
16 restricted to, Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish,  
17 Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czech, Slovak, French,  
18 Scots, Hispanics, Asian Americans, etc., in the history of  
19 this country and this State. ~~To reinforce the study of the role~~  
20 ~~and contributions of Hispanics, such curriculum shall include~~  
21 ~~the study of the events related to the forceful removal and~~  
22 ~~illegal deportation of Mexican American U.S. citizens during~~  
23 ~~the Great Depression. In public schools only, the teaching of~~  
24 ~~history shall include a study of the roles and contributions~~  
25 ~~of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the~~  
26 ~~history of this country and this State. The teaching of~~

1 ~~history also shall include a study of the role of labor unions~~  
2 ~~and their interaction with government in achieving the goals~~  
3 ~~of a mixed free enterprise system.~~ Beginning with the  
4 2020-2021 school year, the teaching of history must also  
5 include instruction on the history of Illinois, subject to  
6 Section 27-23.17. The teaching of history shall include the  
7 contributions made to society by Americans of different faith  
8 practices, including, but not limited to, Muslim Americans,  
9 Jewish Americans, Christian Americans, Hindu Americans, Sikh  
10 Americans, Buddhist Americans, and any other collective  
11 community of faith that has shaped America. Subject to Section  
12 27-23.17, no ~~no~~ pupils shall be graduated from the eighth  
13 grade of any public school unless he or she has received such  
14 instruction in the history of the United States and gives  
15 evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof, which  
16 may be administered remotely.

17 (Source: P.A. 101-227, eff. 7-1-20; 101-341, eff. 1-1-20;  
18 101-643, eff. 6-18-20; 102-411, eff. 1-1-22.)

19 (105 ILCS 5/27-22) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-22)

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

21 (a) (Blank).

22 (b) (Blank).

23 (c) (Blank).

24 (d) (Blank).

25 (e) Through the 2023-2024 school year, as a prerequisite

1 to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil entering the  
2 9th grade must, in addition to other course requirements,  
3 successfully complete all of the following courses:

4 (1) Four years of language arts.

5 (2) Two years of writing intensive courses, one of  
6 which must be English and the other of which may be English  
7 or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive  
8 courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other  
9 graduation requirements.

10 (3) Three years of mathematics, one of which must be  
11 Algebra I, one of which must include geometry content, and  
12 one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science  
13 course. A mathematics course that includes geometry  
14 content may be offered as an integrated, applied,  
15 interdisciplinary, or career and technical education  
16 course that prepares a student for a career readiness  
17 path.

18 (3.5) For pupils entering the 9th grade in the  
19 2022-2023 school year and 2023-2024 school year, one year  
20 of a course that includes intensive instruction in  
21 computer literacy, which may be English, social studies,  
22 or any other subject and which may be counted toward the  
23 fulfillment of other graduation requirements.

24 (4) Two years of science.

25 (5) Two years of social studies, of which at least one  
26 year must be history of the United States or a combination

1 of history of the United States and American government,  
2 subject to Section 27-23.17, and, beginning with pupils  
3 entering the 9th grade in the 2016-2017 school year and  
4 each school year thereafter, at least one semester must be  
5 civics, which shall help young people acquire and learn to  
6 use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare  
7 them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout  
8 their lives. Civics course content shall focus on  
9 government institutions, the discussion of current and  
10 controversial issues, service learning, and simulations of  
11 the democratic process. School districts may utilize  
12 private funding available for the purposes of offering  
13 civics education. Beginning with pupils entering the 9th  
14 grade in the 2021-2022 school year, one semester, or part  
15 of one semester, may include a financial literacy course.

16 (6) One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C)  
17 foreign language, which shall be deemed to include  
18 American Sign Language, (D) vocational education, or (E)  
19 forensic speech (speech and debate). A forensic speech  
20 course used to satisfy the course requirement under  
21 subdivision (1) may not be used to satisfy the course  
22 requirement under this subdivision (6).

23 (e-5) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, as a  
24 prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil  
25 entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other course  
26 requirements, successfully complete all of the following

1 courses:

2 (1) Four years of language arts.

3 (2) Two years of writing intensive courses, one of  
4 which must be English and the other of which may be English  
5 or any other subject. If applicable, writing-intensive  
6 courses may be counted toward the fulfillment of other  
7 graduation requirements.

8 (3) Three years of mathematics, one of which must be  
9 Algebra I, one of which must include geometry content, and  
10 one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science  
11 course. A mathematics course that includes geometry  
12 content may be offered as an integrated, applied,  
13 interdisciplinary, or career and technical education  
14 course that prepares a student for a career readiness  
15 path.

16 (3.5) One year of a course that includes intensive  
17 instruction in computer literacy, which may be English,  
18 social studies, or any other subject and which may be  
19 counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation  
20 requirements.

21 (4) Two years of laboratory science.

22 (5) Two years of social studies, of which at least one  
23 year must be history of the United States or a combination  
24 of history of the United States and American government  
25 and at least one semester must be civics, which shall help  
26 young people acquire and learn to use the skills,

1 knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be  
2 competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives.  
3 Civics course content shall focus on government  
4 institutions, the discussion of current and controversial  
5 issues, service learning, and simulations of the  
6 democratic process. School districts may utilize private  
7 funding available for the purposes of offering civics  
8 education. One semester, or part of one semester, may  
9 include a financial literacy course.

10 (6) One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C)  
11 foreign language, which shall be deemed to include  
12 American Sign Language, (D) vocational education, or (E)  
13 forensic speech (speech and debate). A forensic speech  
14 course used to satisfy the course requirement under  
15 subdivision (1) may not be used to satisfy the course  
16 requirement under this subdivision (6).

17 (e-10) Beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, as a  
18 prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil  
19 entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other course  
20 requirements, successfully complete 2 years of foreign  
21 language courses, which may include American Sign Language. A  
22 pupil may choose a third year of foreign language to satisfy  
23 the requirement under subdivision ~~paragraph~~ (6) of subsection  
24 (e-5).

25 (f) The State Board of Education shall develop and inform  
26 school districts of standards for writing-intensive



1 coursework.

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

10 (g) Public Act 83-1082 ~~This amendatory Act of 1983~~ does  
11 not apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in 1983-1984 school  
12 year and prior school years or to students with disabilities  
13 whose course of study is determined by an individualized  
14 education program.

15 Public Act 94-676 ~~This amendatory Act of the 94th General~~  
16 ~~Assembly~~ does not apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in the  
17 2004-2005 school year or a prior school year or to students  
18 with disabilities whose course of study is determined by an  
19 individualized education program.

20 Subdivision (3.5) of subsection (e) does not apply to  
21 pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2021-2022 school year or a  
22 prior school year or to students with disabilities whose  
23 course of study is determined by an individualized education  
24 program.

25 Subsection (e-5) does not apply to pupils entering the 9th  
26 grade in the 2023-2024 school year or a prior school year or to

1 students with disabilities whose course of study is determined  
2 by an individualized education program. Subsection (e-10) does  
3 not apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2027-2028  
4 school year or a prior school year or to students with  
5 disabilities whose course of study is determined by an  
6 individualized education program.

7 (h) The provisions of this Section are subject to the  
8 provisions of Section 27-22.05 of this Code and the  
9 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act.

10 (i) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to modify  
11 the requirements of this Section for any students enrolled in  
12 grades 9 through 12 if the Governor has declared a disaster due  
13 to a public health emergency pursuant to Section 7 of the  
14 Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act.

15 (Source: P.A. 101-464, eff. 1-1-20; 101-643, eff. 6-18-20;  
16 101-654, Article 50, Section 50-5, eff. 3-8-21; 101-654,  
17 Article 60, Section 60-5, eff. 3-8-21; 102-366, eff. 8-13-21;  
18 102-551, eff. 1-1-22; 102-864, eff. 5-13-22; revised 9-2-22.)

19 (105 ILCS 5/27-23.17 new)

20 Sec. 27-23.17. Instruction in history. Notwithstanding any  
21 other provision of this Article to the contrary, beginning  
22 with the 2023-2024 school year, schools must suspend all  
23 instruction in history education. This suspension does not  
24 apply to instruction during the 2023-2024 school year to  
25 students entering their final year of elementary or secondary

1 school during the 2023-2024 school year who must receive  
2 history instruction in order to satisfy graduation, college  
3 admission, scholarship, or other academic requirements or to  
4 instruction under Section 27-3 or 27-3.10. Notwithstanding  
5 Section 27-21, instruction in civics education shall be taught  
6 in place of instruction in the history of the United States  
7 during the 2023-2024 school year. Not later than June 30,  
8 2023, the State Superintendent of Education must prepare and  
9 make available to schools instructional guidelines for these  
10 courses in civics education. Not later than June 30, 2024, the  
11 State Superintendent of Education must provide to schools  
12 instructional guidelines and standards based on the  
13 recommendations of the Inclusive American History Commission  
14 that are contained in the report filed under Section 25 of the  
15 Inclusive American History Act so that schools may develop  
16 alternative curricula to replace traditional course material  
17 and instruction to ensure that students obtain a  
18 multiperspective, inclusive, and comprehensive understanding  
19 about history. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year,  
20 schools shall resume instruction in history under this  
21 Section, which shall require the use of age-appropriate  
22 discussion, textbooks, and other course material that reframe  
23 the study of history by presenting to students an examination  
24 of history through the inclusion of diverse perspectives,  
25 contrary interpretations, and the viewpoints of various groups  
26 of people, such as women, Black people, indigenous people,

1 Latinx people, and people of color, ethnic minorities,  
2 faith-based minorities, immigrants, members of the lesbian,  
3 gay, bisexual, and transgender community, persons with  
4 disabilities, and the poor and working class, whose voices  
5 have traditionally been excluded from the conventional  
6 teaching of history.

7 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
8 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 5/27-23.17 new