

State of Arkansas
92nd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2019

As Engrossed: H3/12/19

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1747

By: Representative Dotson

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING AMERICAN HERITAGE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS; TO EXPAND THE TYPES OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND EVENTS THAT MAY BE DISCUSSED, READ, OR POSTED IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING OR CLASSROOM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO EXPAND THE TYPES OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND EVENTS THAT MAY BE DISCUSSED, READ, OR POSTED IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING OR CLASSROOM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-16-122 is amended to read as follows:

6-16-122. American heritage.

(a) *Local school district boards of directors shall allow any teacher or administrator in a public school district of this state to read or post in a public school building, or classroom, or at an event, any excerpts or portions of:*

- (1) The Preamble to the Arkansas Constitution;
- (2) The Declaration of Independence;
- (3) The United States Constitution;

(4) Amendments 1-10 of the United States Constitution, known as "the Bill of Rights";

- ~~(4)~~(5) The Mayflower Compact;
- ~~(5)~~(6) The national motto;



~~(6)~~(7) The national anthem;
~~(7)~~(8) The Pledge of Allegiance;
~~(8)~~(9) The writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the founding fathers and ~~Presidents~~ presidents of the United States;
~~(9)~~(10) Organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist, and post-Federalist eras;
~~(10)~~(11) United States Supreme Court decisions and records; ~~and~~
~~(11)~~(12) Acts and published records of the United States Congress;

(13) Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet entitled "Common Sense";
(14) Executive orders of the presidents of the United States;
(15) The Northwest Ordinance;
(16) President George Washington's Farewell Address;
(17) The Emancipation Proclamation;
(18) The Gettysburg Address; and
(19) Any other document of historical significance relating to the founding of the United States or the State of Arkansas.

(b) There shall be no content-based censorship of American history or heritage in this state based on religious or other references in these writings, documents, and records.

(c) A copy of this section shall be distributed to the superintendent of each public school district in the state by the Department of Education, ~~whereupon~~ and the public school district superintendents then shall provide a copy of this section to each teacher and each public school district board member.

(d) To ensure public high school students understand the United States' representative form of limited government, the liberties secured in the Bill of Rights, federalism, and other basic principles that are essential to the stability and endurance of our constitutional republic, a public school district may:

(1) Require that public high school students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nation's founding and documents relevant to the nation's founding in order to receive a certificate or diploma of graduation from the public high school;

(2) Include among the requirements for graduation from a public high school in the public school district a passing grade in a course that

includes without limitation primary instruction regarding:

- (A) The Declaration of Independence;
- (B) The United States Constitution and its amendments; and
- (C) Representative readings from the Federalist Papers;

and

(3) Require that a public high school teach public high school students about the nation's founding and documents relevant to the nation's founding, including without limitation:

- (A) The Declaration of Independence;
- (B) The United States Constitution and its amendments; and
- (C) Representative readings from the Federalist Papers.

/s/Dotson

APPROVED: 4/10/19