

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015**

**SESSION LAW 2015-291
SENATE BILL 524**

AN ACT TO ENHANCE THE RIGOR OF INSTRUCTION OF THE FOUNDING PRINCIPLES AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO USE FUNDS TO CONDUCT A PILOT PROGRAM ON INTEGRATED COMMUNITY-BASED ADAPTED SPORTS PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Civic Literacy. –

(1) ~~Local boards of education~~ The State Board of Education shall require during the high school years the teaching of a semester course "~~American History I – The Founding Principles,~~" to include at least that includes instruction in the following: following Founding Principles of the United States of America and the State of North Carolina:

- a. The Creator-endowed inalienable rights of the people.
- b. Structure of government, separation of powers with checks and balances.
- c. Frequent and free elections in a representative government.
- d. Rule of law.
- e. Equal justice under the law.
- f. Private property rights.
- g. Federalism.
- h. Due process.
- i. Individual rights as set forth in the Bill of Rights.
- j. Individual responsibility.
- k. Constitutional limitations on government power to tax and spend and prompt payment of public debt.
- l. Strong defense and supremacy of civil authority over military.
- m. Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none.

A passing grade in the course shall be required for graduation from high school.

(2), (3) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-273, s. 2, effective June 23, 2011, and applicable beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.

(3a) Local boards of education shall allow and may encourage any public school teacher or administrator to read or post in a public school building, classroom, or event, excerpts or portions of writings, documents, and records that reflect the history of the United States, including, but not limited to, (i) the preamble to the North Carolina Constitution, (ii) the Declaration of Independence, (iii) the United States Constitution, (iv) the Mayflower Compact, (v) the national motto, (vi) the National Anthem, (vii) the Pledge of Allegiance, (viii) the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the founding fathers and Presidents of the United States, (ix) decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, and (x) acts of the Congress of the United States, including the published text of the Congressional Record. Local boards, superintendents, principals, and supervisors shall not allow content-based censorship of American history in the public schools of this



State, including religious references in these writings, documents, and records. Local boards and professional school personnel may develop curricula and use materials that are limited to specified topics provided the curricula and materials are aligned with the standard course of study or are grade level appropriate.

- (3b) A local school administrative unit may display on real property controlled by that local school administrative unit documents and objects of historical significance that have formed and influenced the United States legal or governmental system and that exemplify the development of the rule of law, such as the Magna Carta, the Mecklenburg Declaration, the Ten Commandments, the Justinian Code, and documents set out in subdivision (3a) of this subsection. This display may include, but shall not be limited to, documents that contain words associated with a religion; provided however, no display shall seek to establish or promote religion or to persuade any person to embrace a particular religion, denomination of a religion, or other philosophy. The display of a document containing words associated with a religion shall be in the same manner and appearance generally as other documents and objects displayed and shall not be presented or displayed in any fashion that results in calling attention to it apart from the other displayed documents and objects. The display also shall be accompanied by a prominent sign quoting the First Amendment of the United States Constitution as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."
- (4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level curriculum-based tests for the course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection developed and administered statewide beginning with the ~~2014-2015~~2016-2017 academic year include questions related to the philosophical foundations of our form of government and the principles underlying the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.
- (5) The Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of education, as appropriate, shall provide or cause to be provided curriculum content for the semester course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection and teacher training to ensure that the intent and provisions of this subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established shall include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all races.
- (6) The Department of Public Instruction shall submit a biennial report by October 15 of each odd-numbered year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee covering the implementation of this subsection."

SECTION 3. Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction or State Aid for Public Schools for the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, the Department may use up to three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) each fiscal year to develop and implement a pilot program for an integrated community-based adapted sports program for students with disabilities in grades kindergarten through 12. If the Department uses funds for this purpose, the pilot program shall be consistent with the "Dear Colleague" letter addressing equal access to extracurricular athletics for students with disabilities released by the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, on January 25, 2013. The pilot program shall also include specific strategies to overcome barriers to the participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular athletics and incorporate a philosophy of personal empowerment for those students. The pilot program may be conducted in one or more local school administrative units and provide for collaboration with universities and community colleges and other community organizations to achieve the purposes of the program.

SECTION 4. Section 1 of this act is effective when this act becomes law and applies beginning with students entering the ninth grade in the 2016-2017 school year. Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2015. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 29th day of September, 2015.

s/ Philip E. Berger
President of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Pat McCrory
Governor

Approved 9:32 a.m. this 29th day of October, 2015