

§ 115C-81.45. Classes conducted in English; citizenship; and civic literacy.

(a) Except when a board authorizes teaching in a foreign language in order to comply with federal law, local boards of education shall require all teachers and principals to conduct classes except foreign language classes in English. Any teacher or principal who refuses to do so may be dismissed.

(b) Local boards of education shall provide for the efficient teaching at appropriate grade levels of all materials set forth in the standard course of study, including integrated instruction in the areas of citizenship in the United States of America, government of the State of North Carolina, government of the United States, fire prevention, the free enterprise system, and the dangers of harmful or illegal drugs, including alcohol.

(c) Democratic Process and Citizenship Education for Middle School Social Studies. – The State Board of Education shall include instruction in civic and citizenship education in the standard course of study for middle school social studies. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to include, at a minimum, the following components in the middle school civic and citizenship education standard course of study:

- (1) A tour of representative local government facilities, such as the local jail, the courthouse, or a town hall, to help students understand the way their community is governed.
- (2) Allowing students to choose and analyze a community problem and offer public policy recommendations on the problem to local officials.
- (3) Information about getting involved in community groups.

(d) **(Applicable to students entering the ninth grade before the 2021-2022 school year)** Civic Literacy. –

- (1) The State Board of Education shall require during the high school years the teaching of a semester course on the Founding Principles of the United States of America and the State of North Carolina. A passing grade in the course shall be required for graduation from high school, and the course shall include at least the following subjects:
 - 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.
- (2) 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 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.

- (3) 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 professional development 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.
- (4) 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.

(d) **(Applicable to students entering the ninth grade in the 2021-2022 school year)**
Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy. –

(1) The State Board of Education shall require instruction in civic and citizenship education in the standard course of study for high school social studies through the teaching of a full-credit course that shall be called Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy. A passing grade in the course shall be required for graduation from high school.

(1a) The course required by subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be solely focused on civics and citizenship education, and shall include at least the following subjects:

- 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.

(1b) The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to include the following components in the course required by subdivision (1) of this subsection:

- a. That students write to a local, State, or federal elected official about an issue that is important to them.
- b. Instruction on the importance of voting and otherwise participating in the democratic process, including instruction on voter registration.
- c. Information about current events and governmental structure.
- d. Information about the democratic process and how laws are made.

(2) 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 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.

- (3) The Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of education, as appropriate, shall provide or cause to be provided curriculum content for the course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection and professional development 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.
- (4) 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. (2017-126, s. 5; 2019-82, s. 3(a).)