

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

4 FOR

5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1397

6 By: Lepak

7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

8 An Act relating to schools; mandating curriculum
9 include a unit on the civil rights movement;
10 providing description of curriculum; directing the
11 State Superintendent of Public Instruction to prepare
12 and make available materials; providing for
13 codification; and providing an effective date.

14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

15 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
16 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.6p of Title 70, unless
17 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

18 A. The State Department of Education shall develop and make
19 available to every public elementary school and high school in the
20 State of Oklahoma, a curriculum that may be taught as a stand-alone
21 unit of instruction, or may be integrated into one or more existing
22 courses of study, studying the events of the civil rights movement
23 from 1954 to 1968, the natural law and natural rights principles
24 that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., drew from that informed
his leadership of the civil rights movement, and the tactics and

1 strategies of nonviolent resistance that he championed in response
2 to the Jim Crow laws of that era. This period in American history
3 is known as the civil rights era because during this period reform-
4 minded Americans organized to press for a rejection of the doctrine
5 of "separate but equal" and to repeal the Jim Crow-era laws in parts
6 of the United States that embodied that doctrine. One of the
7 universal lessons of the civil rights era is that hatred on the
8 basis of immutable characteristics, including not just race or
9 ethnicity, but also characteristics such as nationality, religious
10 belief, disability, or sex, can overtake any nation or society,
11 leading to profound injustice. To reinforce that lesson, such
12 curriculum shall include an additional unit of instruction studying
13 other acts of discriminatory injustice, such as genocide, committed
14 elsewhere around the globe. The study of this material is a
15 reaffirmation of the commitment of the people of this state to
16 reject bigotry, to champion equal protection under the law as a
17 foundational principle of our Republic, and to act in opposition to
18 injustice wherever it may occur.

19 B. The State Department of Education shall identify resources
20 and provide exemplar units or sample lesson plans designed to help
21 teachers provide instruction on the subject matter outlined in this
22 act.

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1 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

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