

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SENATE BILL 850

By: Bullard

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to school curriculum; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 11-103.6b, which relates to social studies curriculum and textbooks; requiring the United States history component to include certain information about the original intent of the founding fathers; requiring teachers to use certain primary sources certain and specific quotes; directing inclusion of certain primary sources and certain specific quotes; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 11-103.6b, is amended to read as follows:

Section 11-103.6b. A. The State Board of Education shall adopt a social studies core curriculum with courses of instruction for all students enrolled in the public schools that reflect the racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of the United States of America. The United States history and Oklahoma history components required in the social studies curriculum for all students shall include, but not be limited to, African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans. The United States history component

1 required in the social studies curriculum for all students shall
2 include information:

3 1. Information about Juneteenth commemorating emancipation of
4 enslaved African Americans; and

5 2. Information regarding the original intent of the founding
6 fathers while constructing the United States Constitution. Teachers
7 of United States history shall include primary sources from the
8 founding era and throughout United States history and specific
9 quotes from the founding fathers about the United States's Christian
10 heritage including the influence of the Ten Commandments and the
11 Bible on the United States's founding documents if presented
12 objectively as part of a secular program of education. Primary
13 sources shall include, but not be limited to, John Adams, Joseph
14 Story, George Washington, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Adams, Patrick
15 Henry, John Jay, James Otis, and Noah Webster. Information provided
16 pursuant to this paragraph shall also include, but not be limited
17 to, the following specific quotes:

18 a. "[I]t is religion and morality alone which can
19 establish the principles upon which freedom can
20 securely stand. [R]eligion and virtue are the only
21 foundations...of republicanism and of all free
22 governments. Our Constitution was made only for a
23 moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate

1 to the government of any other," John Adams, signer of
2 the Declaration of Independence,

3 b. "[R]eligion and good morals are the only solid
4 foundations of public liberty and happiness. While
5 the people are virtuous, they cannot be subdued; but
6 when once they lose their virtue, they will be ready
7 to surrender their liberties to the first external or
8 internal invader," Samuel Adams, signer of the
9 Declaration of Independence,

10 c. "Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length
11 of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian
12 religion (whose morality is so sublime and pure)...are
13 undermining the solid foundation of morals- the best
14 security for the duration of free governments,"
15 Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration of
16 Independence,

17 d. "[T]he cultivation of the religious sentiment
18 represses licentiousness...inspires respect for law
19 and order, and gives strength to the whole social
20 fabric. Moral habits...cannot safely be trusted on
21 any other foundation than religious principle, nor any
22 government be secure which is not supported by moral
23 habits.... Whatever makes men good Christians, makes
24 them good citizens," Daniel Webster,

1 e. "Republican government loses half of its value where
2 the moral and social duties are...negligently
3 practiced. To exterminate our popular vices is a work
4 of far more importance to the character and happiness
5 of our citizens, than any other improvements in our
6 system of education. [T]he moral principles and
7 precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the
8 basis of all our civil constitutions and laws.... All
9 the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice,
10 crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery and
11 war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the
12 precepts contained in the Bible," Noah Webster,

13 f. "We have no government armed with power capable of
14 contending with human passions unbridled by morality
15 and religion...Our Constitution was made only for a
16 moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate
17 to the government of any other," John Adams, signer of
18 the Declaration of Independence,

19 g. "While we are zealously performing the duties of good
20 citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be
21 inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the
22 distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our
23 highest glory to add the more distinguished character
24 of Christian," President George Washington,

1 h. "The general Principles, on which the Fathers achieved
2 independence, were the only Principles in which that
3 beautiful Assembly of young Gentlemen could Unite, and
4 these Principles only could be intended by them in
5 their address, or by me in my answer. And what were
6 these general Principles? I answer, the general
7 Principles of Christianity, in which all these Sects
8 were United: And the general Principles of English and
9 American Liberty...Now I will avow, that I then
10 believe, and now believe, that those general
11 Principles of Christianity, are as eternal and
12 immutable, as the Existence and Attributes of God; and
13 that those Principles of Liberty, are as unalterable
14 as human Nature and our terrestrial, mundane System,"
15 John Adams, signer of the Declaration of Independence,
16 i. "God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the
17 liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have
18 removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the
19 minds of the people that these liberties are of the
20 Gift of God? That they are not to be violated but
21 with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when
22 I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot
23 sleep forever..." Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State
24 of Virginia,

1 j. "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often
2 that this great nation was founded, not by
3 religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but
4 on the gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason
5 peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum,
6 prosperity, and freedom of worship here," Patrick
7 Henry, The Trumpet Voice of Freedom: Patrick Henry of
8 Virginia,

9 k. "Providence has given to our people the choice of
10 their ruler, and it is the duty, as well as the
11 privilege and interest of our Christian nation to
12 select and prefer Christians for their rulers," John
13 Jay,

14 l. "[T]he only means of establishing and perpetuating our
15 republican forms of government is the universal
16 education of our youth in the principles of
17 Christianity by means of the Bible," Dr. Benjamin
18 Rush,

19 m. "The great enemy of the salvation of man, in my
20 opinion, never invented a more effective means of
21 limiting Christianity from the world than by
22 persuading mankind that it was improper to read the
23 Bible at schools," Dr. Benjamin Rush, and

1 n. "One of the beautiful boasts of our municipal
2 jurisprudence is that Christianity is a part of the
3 Common Law. There never has been a period in which
4 the Common Law did not recognize Christianity as lying
5 at its foundations. I verily believe that
6 Christianity is necessary to support a civil society
7 and shall ever attend to its institutions and
8 acknowledge its precepts as the pure and natural
9 sources of private and social happiness," Joseph
10 Story.

11 B. The State Textbook Committee, when adopting textbooks, shall
12 incorporate the provisions of subsection A of this section into the
13 criteria used to evaluate United States history and Oklahoma history
14 textbooks. Any United States history or Oklahoma history textbook
15 on the state adopted textbook list shall conform to the purposes of
16 this section. The State Textbook Committee shall ensure that all
17 social studies textbooks and supplementary materials selected to be
18 purchased with state funds for use in Oklahoma classrooms reflect
19 the racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of the United
20 States.

21 C. It is the intent of the Legislature that a portion of the
22 state funds appropriated for professional development in local
23 school districts be used for workshops, seminars, guest lecturers,
24 and other methods which further the purposes of this section.

1 D. As used in this section, "curriculum" means the subject
2 matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to
3 Section 11-103.6 of this title. School districts shall exclusively
4 determine instruction, specific course curricula, reading lists, and
5 instructional materials pursuant to subsection F of Section 11-
6 103.6a of this title.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

8 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
9 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
10 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
11 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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