

CivicsAlliance

from NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of SCHOLARS

State Social Studies Standards: American Birthright

State standards are the single most influential documents in America's education system. State education departments use them to provide guidance to each public K-12 school district and charter school as they create their own courses. State standards also influence what textbook authors write and what assessment companies such as the College Board test for in their advanced placement examinations. They affect teacher training and they provide the framework for teachers' individual lesson plans. Private schools and homeschool parents also keep an eye on state standards.

The Civics Alliance wants to improve every aspect of American social studies instruction by inspiring America's state education departments to provide social studies standards that teach American students their birthright of liberty.

Every student should be educated to be another Harry Truman—a high-school graduate who, without ever graduating from college, has a solid grasp of history and is capable of serving as an officer, a judge, a senator, and president.

American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards teaches students to *identify* the ideals, institutions, and individual examples of human liberty, individualism, religious freedom, and republican self-government; *assess* the extent to which civilizations have fulfilled these ideals; and *describe* how the evolution of these ideals in different times and places has contributed to the formation of modern American ideals.

Above all, *American Birthright* teaches about the expansion of American liberty to include all Americans, the contributions that Americans from every walk of life have made to our shared history of liberty, and America's championship of liberty throughout the world. Students will learn of heroes of liberty such as Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ronald Reagan.

American Birthright will prepare our children for college and career because it provides comprehensive content knowledge in History, Geography, Civics, and Economics, as well as sustained coverage of Western Civilization, World History, United States History, and Civics. *American Birthright* integrates its standards with a series of primary source documents, so students can learn the actual materials of history. *American Birthright's* straightforward structure makes it easy for teachers to use

and easy for parents to hold teachers accountable for how well they teach social studies. *American Birthright's* intensive content standards also facilitate reliable assessment, whether by state-level testing or tests by school districts and individual teachers.

American Birthright will especially benefit the most disadvantaged students. Disadvantaged students benefit from intensive content instruction even more than better-off students, who receive large amounts of content knowledge from their families and peers. Content standards that abbreviate content foster an unequal society because they especially harm the education of disadvantaged children. *American Birthright's* intensive content standards fulfill America's promise of equal educational opportunities for everyone.

The Civics Alliance encourages all citizens to get in touch with state policymakers, to call for adopting some or all of *American Birthright* as a state social studies standard.

States and school districts should create social studies standards modeled on *American Birthright* because it teaches American students their birthright of liberty.

Learn more at <https://civicsalliance.org/american-birthright/>

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State Legislation: K-12 Civics Education

The Model K-12 Civics Code covers the entire range of K-12 civics education legislation. We have based this Model Civics Code as much as possible on existing state laws. The Code provides civics education reformers in each state a coherent model for what civics education should be.

Classroom Reform

Five model bills remove discriminatory ideologies and action civics from public K-12 classrooms. The *Partisanship Out of Civics Act* removes discriminatory ideologies and action civics from social studies classes. Four other bills eliminate service-learning pedagogy entirely from public K-12 schools (*Classroom Learning Act*), prohibit school walkouts (*Politics Out of Schools Act*), prevent identity-politics distortions of the curriculum (*Schools Nondiscrimination Act*), and prevent public schools from grading students for their level of commitment to any value or attitude that requires assent to any philosophy or political framework (*Values Assessment Act*).

School District Reform

Four model bills reform public school administration to ensure that education administrators comply with laws removing Critical Race Theory and action civics. These bills include a requirement to make publicly accessible both school documents (*Academic Transparency Act*) and school expenditures (*Financial Transparency Act*), as well as a bill to create born-open documents at both the K-12 and university level (*Born-Open Documents Act*). They also prohibit school districts from doing business with contractors that discriminate by using Critical Race Theory policies (*Contractor Nondiscrimination Act*).

School Board Reform

Three model bills strengthen parental control over school boards by shifting school board election dates to the general election (*School Board Election Date Act*), by establishing straightforward procedures by which to recall school board members (*School Board Member Recall Act*), and by making it easier to place new agenda items into school board business and to comment on existing business (*School Board Agenda Act*).

Legislative Oversight

The *Legislative Review Act* gives the state legislature and the governor the power to veto a state academic standard proposed by the Education Department.

Social Studies Instruction

Eight model bills establish a framework for proper K-12 social studies instruction. Four linked bills include overall required social studies instruction (*Social Studies Curriculum Act*) and requirements for year-long high school courses in Civics (*Civics Course Act*), United States History (*United States History Act*), and Western Civilization (*Western Civilization Act*). Other bills include a requirement that students take a civics test as a graduation requirement (*Civics Literacy Act*), that social studies classes use the historical documents of liberty (*Historical Documents Act*), and that schools be permitted to offer nonsectarian instruction in the Bible, especially of its role in establishing America's ideals of liberty (*Religious Liberty Act*). An eighth bill establishes a commission to draft social studies standards based on *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards* (*American Birthright Taskforce Act*).

Learn more at <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/>

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State Legislation: Higher Education

The Model Higher Education Code covers the entire range of necessary higher education reform. We have based this Model Higher Education Code as much as possible on existing state laws. The Code provides a coherent model for higher education reformers in each state.

Mission

A first bill commits every component of the public university system to the free and unpoliticized pursuit of truth (*Mission Statement Act*).

Accreditation

One bill re-asserts state control over accrediting organizations (*Accreditation Autonomy Act*) and another resolution declares the intention of state policymakers to found their own higher education accrediting organization (*Accreditation Autonomy Resolution*).

Accountability

Two more bills require transparency of college curriculum (*Syllabus Transparency Act*) and college finances (*College Finances Act*)—and also give state policymakers a line-item veto on university budgets (*College Finances Act*). A final bill will give the state legislature and the governor the power to veto proposed higher education gateway requirements at public universities, including admissions requirements, transfer requirements, general education requirements, competencies, learning objectives, and student learning outcomes (*Higher Education Gateway Requirements Act*).

Freedoms

The next six model bills guarantee a wide range of freedoms in public universities. These bills guarantee First Amendment freedoms (*Campus Freedoms Act*) and due process (*Campus Due Process*).

Act), as well as prohibiting discrimination on the basis of ideology (*Campus Intellectual Diversity Act*) or identity-group membership (*Universities Nondiscrimination Act*). Another model bill protects freedoms of speech and religion by requiring public universities to classify faculty, staff, and students by biological sex rather than by subjective and arbitrary “gender” (*Human Nature Act*). A final bill ensures compliance with these laws by establishing an Ombudsman (*Ombudsman Act*).

Reformed Instruction

The final six model bills establish a framework for proper university instruction in America’s ideals and institutions. One bill creates an independent School of General Studies to teach a core curriculum at a flagship public university (*General Education Act*). Another bill creates an autonomous School at the flagship institution of the state public university system, independent of the radical education establishment, to teach proper courses on Western and American history and government (*School of Intellectual Freedom Act*). Another bill prohibits discriminatory ideologies and requires transparency in early college classes (*College Credit Act*). Another bill establishes general education requirements in Western and American Heritage and allows policymakers to ensure they are taught well by integrating them with a core transfer curriculum and a dual credit system of college-level classes taught in high schools (*Core Curriculum Act*). Another bill adds an American History and Government general education requirement (*American History Act*). A final bill integrates Western and American Heritage requirements with teacher licensure requirements (*Heritage Certificates Act*).

Learn more at <https://civicsalliance.org/model-higher-education-code/>.

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Federal Legislation: Higher Education

Congress should reform higher education to promote intellectual freedom, academic rigor, equal opportunity, affordability—and limit foreign interference, politicization, and administrative bloat.

Title IV Federal Funds Eligibility

Reduce administrative bloat, reduce tuition, focus federal aid on needy colleges, and reduce dependence on adjuncts.

Federal Student Aid

Simplify student aid programs, make colleges partially responsible for student loans, provide a legal framework for income share agreements, require student loan buyback programs, increase student knowledge about college debt, redirect student aid disbursements to the states.

Rigorous Academic Standards

Eliminate financial aid for remedial coursework and link Title IV eligibility to academic rigor.

Title IX Due Process Protections

Link federal student loan eligibility to due process protection and require Title IX responsible employees to have criminal defense experience.

Freedom To Learn

Protect intellectual freedom, require an Intellectual Freedom Charter, and define sex as biological.

De-Politicize Campuses

Condition Title IV eligibility on intellectual diversity protection, sunset the diversity bureaucracy, defund politicized higher education, rescind service-learning authorization, dedicate civics funding to classroom instruction, and require colleges to disclose their speaker fees.

America's National Interest

Limit colleges' dependence on foreign student enrollment, limit Chinese government influence, mandate foreign gift transparency, end international branch campuses in undemocratic countries, reform Title VI area studies grants, forbid sanctuary campuses, strengthen the U.S. Civics Test.

Educational Variety

Treat for-profit colleges equally, make it easier to create new higher education institutions, prohibit discrimination against homeschool students, allow financial aid for dual credit courses.

Equal Opportunity

Mandate transparency about university discrimination, require assessable discriminatory policies, dismantle neo-segregation, and reframe support for "Minority-Serving Institutions."

Education Department Procedures

Depoliticize accreditation, protect religious freedom, replace "peer review" with "expert review."

College Board

Help rivals compete with the College Board and require it to cut ties with the Chinese government.

Learn more at <https://www.nas.org/policy/federal-legislation>.

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State Legislation: Education Licensure

The Model Education Licensure Code provides three model bills to reform education schools and the education licensure process—the Education Licensure Nondiscrimination Act, the Education Licensure Review Act, and the Education Licensure Certificate Act. Education reformers must include education schools and education licensure in their reform agenda, because radical activists use education schools and licensure requirements as their central means to gain power over America’s classrooms. These three reforms together will work to make it possible for a new generation of liberty-minded teachers to enter the classroom—teachers who will support education reform policy with a good heart.

Education Licensure Nondiscrimination Act

The Education Licensure Nondiscrimination Act provides a comprehensive solution to the politicization of state education requirements by depoliticizing education licensure requirements; depoliticizing materials for education licensure and professional development; requiring transparency for materials for education licensure and professional development; preventing State Boards of Education from applying for funds from external organizations that tie funding to politicization; preventing politicized external funding for education licensure and professional development; preventing approval of politicized education schools and departments; preventing alignment with politicized external education standards; and preventing group-identity discrimination in education licensure. We have carefully written this model language to respect the First Amendment—to bar the inculcation of politicized beliefs and pedagogies, not the free discussion of their existence.

Education Licensure Review Act

The Education Licensure Legislative Review Act requires all existing education licensure requirements, and all forthcoming revisions, to be submitted to the state legislature and the governor for

review and possible veto. State policymakers ought to be able to review and veto state education certification criteria—and state education department bureaucrats will act in a more responsible fashion when they know that state policymakers have the possibility to veto their work.

Education Licensure Certificate Act

The Education Licensure Certificate Act creates a new, simplified education licensure pathway, which requires students to take a number of undergraduate courses, focused on subject matter content, as well as a standardized test focused on subject matter content—and no other requirements, such as an undergraduate degree or an education major. The Act then establishes temporary or provisional certificates for candidates who are still taking these courses and certificates of Professional Mastery for candidates who have taken further courses and tests focused on subject matter content. To facilitate access to this licensure pathway, the Act directs the State Board of Education to include as many courses as possible that are also components of the Core Transfer Curriculum. The Act finally forbids the State Board from including politicized requirements such as discriminatory concepts or service-learning.

Read more at <https://www.nas.org/policy/model-education-licensure-code>.

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State and Federal Legislation: Accreditation and Licensure

America's unelected accrediting organizations possess broad power over our nation's higher education institutions and professional licensure—power unchecked by any meaningful public oversight and used to advance a radical political agenda. Our colleges and universities cannot be reformed unless the accrediting organizations are as well.

Federal Policies

NACIQI Nomination Reform

The Education Department's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) is responsible for federal oversight of accrediting organizations. Federal policymakers should nominate dedicated accreditation reformers to NACIQI.

Accreditation Scope Act

Reduce the scope of accreditation to assessing fiscal health and institutional transparency.

Accreditation Freedom Act

Remove accrediting organizations' monopolies and let states create accrediting organizations.

Accreditation Innovation Act

Remove the institutional bias against new accrediting organizations and new institutions of higher education.

Accreditation Nondiscrimination Act

Prohibit accrediting organizations from imposing discriminatory policies on institutions of higher education.

Accreditation Depoliticization Act

Prohibit accrediting organizations from imposing politicized policies on institutions of higher education.

Accreditation Religious Freedom Act

Prohibit accrediting organizations from violating the religious mission of institutions of higher education.

State Policies

Accreditation Autonomy Act

Authorize state policymakers to give instructions to university officials on how to vote in accreditation organizations.

Accreditation Autonomy Resolution

Begin the process by which several states can undertake a deliberate process of preparing a replacement accrediting organization.

Licensure Nondiscrimination Act

Depoliticize and prevent group-identity discrimination in every aspect of professional licensure.

Learn more at <https://www.nas.org/model-accreditation-and-licensure-code>.