

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE BILL 442

Short Title: American Heritage Education Act.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Allran, Ballance (Cosponsors); Albertson, Ballance, Ballantine, Blust, Carpenter, Clark, Cochrane, East, Forrester, Foxx, Hartsell, Hoyle, Jordan, Ledbetter, Lucas, Martin of Pitt, Odom, Page, Perdue, Rand, Rucho, Shaw of Cumberland, Shaw of Guilford, Warren, and Webster.

Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

March 20, 1997

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS RECEIVE
INSTRUCTION ON OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE.

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 shall require during the high school years the teaching of the nation's founding and related documents, which shall include at least the major principles in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

(2) Local boards of education shall require that high school students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nation's founding and related documents in order to receive a certificate or diploma of graduation from high school.

(3) Local boards of education shall include among the requirements for graduation from high school a passing grade in all courses that include

1 primary instruction in the Declaration of Independence, the United
2 States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the
3 Federalist Papers.

4 (3a) Local boards of education shall allow and may encourage any public
5 school teacher or administrator to read or post in a public school
6 building, classroom, or event, any excerpts or portions of writings,
7 documents, and records that reflect the history or heritage of the United
8 States, including but not limited to (i) the preamble to the North
9 Carolina Constitution, (ii) the Declaration of Independence, (iii) the
10 United States Constitution, (iv) the Mayflower Compact, (v) the
11 national motto, (vi) the National Anthem, (vii) the Pledge of Allegiance,
12 (viii) the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the
13 founding fathers and Presidents of the United States, (ix) organic
14 documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist,
15 and post-Federalist eras, (x) decisions of the Supreme Court of the
16 United States, and (xi) acts of the Congress of the United States,
17 including the published text of the Congressional Record. There shall be
18 no content-based censorship of American history or heritage in the
19 public schools of this State based on religious or other references in
20 these writings, documents, and records.

21 (4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level
22 curriculum-based tests developed and administered statewide beginning
23 with academic year 1990-91 include questions related to the Declaration
24 of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments,
25 and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

26 (5) The State Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of
27 education, as appropriate, shall establish curriculum content and provide
28 for teacher training to ensure that the intent and provisions of this
29 subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established shall
30 include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all races
31 during the period in which our nation was founded."

32 Section 2. The State Board of Education shall provide a copy of this act to
33 each local school superintendent in the State, and each local school superintendent shall
34 ensure that school personnel within the unit are informed about the act.

35 Section 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.