

NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
of SCHOLARS

Civics  
Alliance  
from NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of SCHOLARS

Dr. Brian L. Maher, Commissioner of Education  
Nebraska Department of Education  
P.O. Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987  
[brian.maher@nebraska.gov](mailto:brian.maher@nebraska.gov)

May 9, 2025

Dear Commissioner Maher,

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) and the Civics Alliance work to ensure that every state has academic standards that promote first-rate education and protect school children from political indoctrination. We promote reform of content standards in every state, along the lines modeled by the Civics Alliance's *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards*,<sup>1</sup> and we have been asked by Nebraska citizens to comment on the Department of Education's current *Nebraska Social Studies Standards* (2019), to help inform the Department as it begins the process of reviewing and revising these standards.<sup>2</sup> We conclude that the *Standards* require complete revision—and that this improvement should be conducted by recruiting an independent commission to redraft new social studies standards.

### **The Existing *Standards*: Complete Insufficiency**

The *Nebraska Social Studies Standards* (hereafter *Standards*) have avoided the extreme politicization, unprofessional vocabulary, and ideologically extreme content that have degraded social studies standards in several states including Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Minnesota.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards*, Civics Alliance, <https://civicsalliance.org/american-birthright/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Nebraska Social Studies Standards* (2019), Nebraska Department of Education, <https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Nebraska-Social-Studies-Standards-Final-11-2019.pdf>; Social Studies Standards Revision, Nebraska Department of Education, <https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/social-studies-standards-revision-2/>.

<sup>3</sup> David Randall, *Disowned Yankees: How Connecticut's Social Studies Standards Shortchange Students* (National Association of Scholars, 2024), <https://www.nas.org/reports/disowned-yankees>; David Randall, *Taken for a RIDE: How Rhode Island's Social Studies Standards Shortchange Students* (National Association of Scholars, 2023), <https://www.nas.org/reports/taken-for-a-ride>; Wilfred M. McClay, *National Expert: Minnesota's Academic Standards Among the Nation's Worst: Review of the 2021 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies, Draft Three* (American Experiment, 2022), <https://files.americanexperiment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Among-The-Nations->

Unfortunately, the *Standards* have steered clear of most ideologically extreme content because they have steered clear of *any* content. The Thomas B. Fordham Institute in its *The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021* (2021) gave Nebraska a D in Civics and a D minus in U.S. History.<sup>4</sup> In its words:

Nebraska’s civics and U.S. History standards are inadequate. In addition to containing little of substance—especially in history—their rigid organization inhibits the complete and logical presentation of content. A complete revision is recommended. ... With its overbroad indicators and laundry lists of examples, Nebraska offers inadequate civics guidance and makes it hard to distinguish between essential and nonessential content. ... [Civics] Organization is poor. ... There is little detail, especially in high school. ... Many of the “examples” are confusing, if not downright misleading. ... Some essential content is missing. ... Nebraska’s rigidly thematic [U.S. History] standards do not even attempt a substantive historical outline, stressing analysis over memorization yet doing almost nothing to help teachers and districts identify the actual history to be analyzed. ... Nebraska’s standards largely fail to offer any substantive U.S. History outlining, leaving teachers and districts almost entirely without content guidance.

We concur with the Fordham Institute, and we would broaden this judgment to the entire *Standards*. It consists almost entirely of hollow “skills” prompts without substantive content, worsened slightly by muffled prompts toward politicized pedagogy.<sup>5</sup> We do not want to lengthen this comment unnecessarily, so we urge you to review the Fordham Institute’s 6 pages of detailed critique of Nebraska’s *Standards*.

We also believe that Nebraska only scored as well as it did on Fordham’s rankings because of its counterproductive commitments to action civics—commitments which the Fordham Institute shares, and which affect its rankings.<sup>6</sup> We suspect that a ranking that takes “action civics”—vocational training in progressive activism for classroom civics education—as a negative would give Nebraska an F for both Civics and U.S. History.<sup>7</sup>

We understand that the Nebraska Department of Education does not want to micro-manage the curriculum of school districts and individual teachers, and we agree with that choice. Yet a state

---

[Worst.pdf?\\_gl=1\\*hyyls\\*\\_ga\\*MjA3OTA5MTQ1Ny4xNzEyOTMzMjY5\\*\\_ga\\_03BRYTYNY0\\*MTcxMjkzMzE2OC4xLjEuMTcxMjkzMzE5MS4zNy4wLjA.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Jeremy Stern, et al., *The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021* (Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2021), pp. 207-212, <https://fordhaminstitute.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/20210623-state-state-standards-civics-and-us-history-20210.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., “SS 4.4.2 Analyze and explain multiple perspectives of events in Nebraska, including historically marginalized and underrepresented groups.” *Standards*, p. 26. See also, for the mechanical use of the phrase “marginalized and underrepresented groups,” SS 5.4.2, p. 33; SS 6.4.3, p. 40; SS 7.4.3, p. 45; SS 8.4.3, p. 51; SS HS.4.3, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup> David Randall, “Critique of the Fordham Institute’s ‘The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021’,” Civics Alliance, <https://civicsalliance.org/state-standards-civics-and-u-s-history/>.

<sup>7</sup> Stanley Kurtz, “‘Action Civics’ Replaces Citizenship with Partisanship,” *The American Mind*, January 16, 2021, <https://americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/>; Thomas K. Lindsay and Lucy Meckler, “Action Civics,” “New Civics,” “Civic Engagement,” and “Project-Based Civics”: *Advances in Civic Education?* (Texas Public Policy Foundation, 2020), <https://www.texaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Lindsay-Meckler-Action-Civics.pdf>.

academic content standard, if it is to be provided at all, should be a useful document. It should help new teachers who are unfamiliar with social studies content and will benefit from guidance about social studies content. It should help provide prompts for state and school district assessment. It should help professional development, curriculum frameworks, model lesson plans, and textbook creation. The *Standards*, unfortunately, are not useful for any of these purposes.

The Nebraska Department of Education should not attempt to revise these fundamentally flawed *Standards*. It should start from the beginning and create new social studies standards, along fundamentally different lines. Below we list our recommendations for what principles should guide the Department as it creates new social studies standards.

### **Principles to Guide Drafting New Social Studies Standards**

*Independent Drafting Commission.* Nebraska Department of Education personnel produced the existing, fundamentally flawed standards. Nebraskans should not delegate the revision of these standards to the same people who produced standards according to a fundamentally misguided model. Nebraska Department of Education personnel, moreover, may be expected to follow the radical structure imposed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and by like-minded organizations such as the American Institutes for Research (AIR). (See our discussion below.) Nebraskans realistically must expect that Department of Education personnel will reform Nebraska's social studies standards at best half-heartedly. Nebraskans should make sure that their standards are drafted independently by civics education experts who will make a clean break from the previous *Standards*, the NCSS, and the AIR, and who believe in and know how to accomplish thoroughgoing reform of civics standards. We therefore recommend that the Department, in consultation with the Governor and the Legislature, appoint an independent commission, not staffed by Department personnel, to redraft Nebraska's social studies standards.

*End Dependence on NCSS Materials:* Many flaws in the Nebraska's *Standards* proceed from one general cause: the *Standards* unfortunately derive too much of their structure and emphases from the National Council for the Social Studies' (NCSS) ideologically extreme definition of social studies,<sup>8</sup> as well as from the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*.<sup>9</sup> The *C3 Framework* in particular replaces content knowledge with insubstantial and opaque "inquiry"; replaces social studies pedagogy with identity politics ideologies such as Critical Race Theory; and inserts ideologically extreme activism pedagogies such as Action Civics.<sup>10</sup> The revised *Standards* should not be informed either by the NCSS's ideologically extreme definition of social studies or by the NCSS' *C3 Framework*.

*Do Not Employ the American Institutes for Research:* A major part of the *Standards'* dependence on the *C3 Framework*, and its fundamentally flawed approach, probably derived from the Department's decision to hire American Institutes for Research (AIR) to take part in Nebraska's

---

<sup>8</sup> Comment on the NCSS's New "Social Studies" Definition, Civics Alliance, <https://civicsalliance.org/comment-on-the-ncsss-new-social-studies-definition/>.

<sup>9</sup> *Social Studies*, p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> David Randall, *Issue Brief: The C3 Framework*, National Association of Scholars, <https://www.nas.org/blogs/article/issue-brief-the-c3-framework>; Stanley Kurtz, "Consensus by Surrender," *National Review*, June 10, 2021, <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/consensusby-surrender/>.

previous social studies standards revision process.<sup>11</sup> States that hire AIR to take part in their social studies standards revision process standardly produce social studies standards that recapitulate the flaws of the NCSS' *C3 Framework*: insufficient content knowledge, extensive use of “inquiry” pedagogy, heavy use of “skills” instruction; action civics; and at least some identity-politics ideology influence on content.<sup>12</sup> All these consequences are the predictable results of hiring AIR. The Department’s decision to hire AIR was tantamount to a decision to adopt the ideologically extreme structure of the NCSS' *C3 Framework*. The Department should not hire AIR, or in any way involve AIR, in any part of the creation or revision of its *Standards*.<sup>13</sup>

*Revised Structure*: The revised *Standards* should incorporate a thoroughly revised structure. Aspects of the revised structure should include:

*Liberty and Documents of Liberty*: The *Standards* should emphasize instruction in America’s foundational commitment to the ideal of liberty. The *Standards* should add to its four Disciplines (Civics, Economics, Geography, and History) Disciplines of *Liberty*<sup>14</sup> and *Documents of Liberty*. The *Standards* should incorporate throughout K-12 instruction a series of named documents that illustrate the Western and American commitment to the ideals and institutions of liberty into the *Standards*, including at least the 24 documents specified by Kentucky in KRS 158.196.<sup>15</sup> The series also should include a broader selection of documents illustrating the intellectual background of the Founding Documents and American history. (See **Appendix 1: Recommended Historical Documents**.) The Department also should publish a *Documents of Liberty Reader*, and provide lesson plans and professional development, to facilitate instruction in the Documents of Liberty.

*Geography*: The *Standards* throughout should focus on factual knowledge of the geography of Nebraska, the United States, and the world, and avoid material that prompts ideologically extreme activism (e.g., climate change activism or open borders activism).<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Standards and Assessments in Social Studies, American Institutes of Research, <https://www.air.org/resource/spotlight/standards-and-assessments-social-studies>.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., Alaska Social Studies Standards (2024), Department of Education and Early Development, <https://education.alaska.gov/akstandards/Adopted-AK-SS-Standards-2024.pdf>. “Alaska completed our RFP process and we received one vendor application for the facilitator. American Institutes for Research (AIR) was the selected vendor.” Kelly Manning (Deputy Director) to David Randall, March 31, 2023.

<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, journalists recently have published evidence that AIR has overcharged the federal government for its work as a contractor. Alex Gutentag and Michael Shellenberger, “US Education Department Contractor Overcharged Taxpayers While Spending Millions On Executive Salaries,” *Public*, March 17, 2025, <https://www.public.news/p/us-education-department-contractor>. Prudence suggests that the Department and state policymakers both should investigate whether AIR has overcharged the Department for its work.

<sup>14</sup> “Liberty” should be defined as: “The slow development and application of the ideals and institutions of liberty, particularly those embodied in constitutional self-government. Students generally should be able 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 at different times and in different places has contributed to the formation of modern American ideals.” *American Birthright*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>15</sup> KRS 158.196, <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=53057>.

<sup>16</sup> “Geography” should be defined as: “Geographers and students of geography learn how to make and understand maps, inform themselves of the natural and political contours of the world, and use this knowledge to illuminate their understanding of economics and history.”

*Patriotic Elementary School Education:* Many social studies standards use a misguided pedagogy, which assumes that children should learn first about the community, then about the state, then about the nation. Advocates of this pedagogy underestimate the ability of young children to understand the symbols, the nature, and the virtues of America—and, in consequence, they fail to provide students the necessary early education in Americans’ common heritage of freedom. Florida’s excellent *2021 Revised Civics and Government Strand* used a proper pedagogy to teach K-6 students about America,<sup>17</sup> and we have incorporated Florida’s patriotic emphasis into *American Birthright*. The revised standards should emphasize patriotic content, especially making sure to include it in K-2.

*American History:* The *Standards* should include material on America’s colonial history—the first 150 years of our nation’s history. It also should include substantial coverage of America’s and Nebraska’s common culture, integrated throughout its coverage of American and Nebraskan history. The history of common culture is the history of what unites Americans and Nebraskans, rather than what divides them. It also is the history of people enjoying themselves—their stories and their music—and students need to learn that history is more than a dour series of political and social problems and crises. Nebraska students should learn far more American cultural history, from Edgar Allan Poe to Tin Pan Alley to Georgia O’Keeffe.<sup>18</sup> Nebraska students also should learn more about Nebraska’s common culture, including its pioneer heritage, figures such as William Jennings Bryan and Willa Cather, and religious faith.

*Western Civilization:* The *Standards* should include a required Western Civilization sequence, consisting of spiraled instruction in Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and high school, which provides the coherent narrative of the ideals and institutions of liberty that formed America, as well as the histories of liberty, faith, science, and technology. The *Standards* would especially benefit from extended historical coverage of:

- i. the Renaissance rediscovery and elaboration of the concepts of liberty, individualism, republicanism, and tolerance;<sup>19</sup> and
- ii. England’s history of liberty from Magna Carta to Henry VIII to John Wilkes, including common law, the growth of parliamentary power, the English Civil War, the Glorious Revolution, legal freedoms such as *habeas corpus*, and the expansion in England of a culture and society animated by the ideals of freedom.

This Western Civilization sequence should replace existing World History instruction.

*World History:* The *Standards* also should create a distinct World History sequence, which provides fuller coverage of Asian, African, and Latin American history.

*Military, Religious, Economic, and Scientific History:* Nebraska students cannot understand the true history of the West, America, or Nebraska if they do not learn full

---

<sup>17</sup> Florida’s State Academic Standards – Social Studies, 2023, Florida Department of Education, <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/20573/urlt/5-3.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the extended coverage of American cultural history in *American Birthright: Grade 11, United States History*, Item 15 (pp. 124-25), Item 38 (p. 130), Item 48 (p. 132), Item 62J (p. 136), Item 63 (p. 136), Item 77 (p. 140).

<sup>19</sup> *American Birthright*, p. 28.



accounts of our wars, faiths, free markets, and scientific discoveries. The revised *Standards* should make central these fundamental themes of history.

*Primary Sources:* The *Standards* should integrate a large number of primary sources into K-12 instruction, especially Grades 8-12 instruction, such as are provided by *American Birthright*.

*Content-Rich Factual Standards:* The *Standards* should provide content-rich, factual social studies standards, such as *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards* and the social studies standards of Louisiana, South Dakota, and Virginia.<sup>20</sup> The factual material should provide sufficient material for state and local assessment, teacher preparation, textbook creation, and other educational purposes.

*Reading and Writing Expectations:* The *Standards* should have firm and clear expectations for reading and writing, which parents may use to hold their schools and their teachers accountable.

- i. The *Standards* should integrate concrete reading expectations, which build toward students capable by graduation from high school of reading an intellectually and stylistically sophisticated 200-page history book, to demonstrate that they are prepared for an undergraduate history course.
- ii. The *Standards* should integrate concrete writing expectations, which build toward students capable by graduation from high school of writing an intellectually and stylistically sophisticated 5-page history paper, to demonstrate that they are prepared for an undergraduate history course.

*Format and Style:* The *Standards* should be presented in a straightforward list format of content-rich Standards, without Concepts and Practices, Sample Evidence of Learning, Disciplinary Clarifications, or any other complicating categories that are not written as standards and that impede comprehension of what the *Standards* actually mandate. Wherever possible, concrete details should be presented as “i.e.” rather than “e.g.”, to make clear that what is mentioned is meant to be taught and assessed. The *Standards* should be lucid, concrete, and precise throughout.

*Minimize or Eliminate “Skills” and Inquiry-Based Pedagogy:* “Skills” focus and “Inquiry-Based Pedagogy” replace classroom focus on what to learn (content knowledge) with classroom focus on how to learn and what questions to ask. The advocates of “Skills” and “Inquiry-Based Pedagogy” claim that content, skills, and inquiries complement one another. Indeed they should, and in pedagogies such as Core Knowledge, which emphasizes acquiring substantive knowledge as a foundation for acquiring complementary skills, they do. Pedagogies that emphasize “skills” and “inquiry” in practice generally result in classrooms where students ask questions but never learn what the answers actually are. “Skills” and “Inquiry-Based Pedagogy” are at best unproductive and usually

---

<sup>20</sup> *American Birthright*, p. 18; Louisiana Student Standards Social Studies, Louisiana Department of Education, [https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/02-08-2022---draft-louisiana-social-studies-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=52de6518\\_14](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/02-08-2022---draft-louisiana-social-studies-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=52de6518_14); South Dakota Social Studies Standards, South Dakota Department of Education, <https://doe.sd.gov/contentstandards/documents/SS-Standards-2023.pdf>; 2023 History and Social Science Standards of Learning, Virginia Department of Education, <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/history-and-social-science/standards-of-learning-1276>.

counterproductive. *Recommendation:* The Department should include no “inquiry” pedagogy in the revised *Standards*, and instead frame its standards instead as specific content to be taught and learned. The Department should place any recommended pedagogies or skills in a separate *Curriculum Framework*, which should be made available for teachers, but not forced upon them by regulation or financial incentive. The Department also should eliminate both from the *Standards* and from every other part of its work all material referenced in “Instructional Shift I: Inquiry-Based Learning.”<sup>21</sup>

*Remove Action Civics:* Action civics repurposes civics instruction to ready students for public protest, emphasizes the defects of American society and the failures of American government, and diminishes attention to the virtues of America’s Constitutional order. It particularly uses the pedagogy of “service-learning” to substitute vocational training in progressive activism for classroom civics education.<sup>22</sup> The *Standards* should include no action civics, civic engagement, service-learning, or any other euphemism for the same activity. The Department also should eliminate both from the *Standards* and from every other part of its work all action-civics material referenced in “Instructional Shift II: Civic Education.”<sup>23</sup>

*Depoliticize Vocabulary:* The revised *Standards* should not use any ideologically extreme language, which distorts social studies instruction by word choice that embeds ideologically extreme arguments and suppresses pluralist debate. It should avoid using progressive vocabulary popular in education schools, including *active citizens*, *acknowledging*, *civically engaged*, *culturally aware*, *decision-making skills*, *democracy* (substituted for *republic*), *democratic values/principles* (substituted for *American values/principles*), *diverse/diversity*, *engaged*, *enslaved*, *equity/equitable*, *evidence based*, *global*, *indigenous*, *inquiry practices*, *interact*, *justice-oriented citizenship*, *multicultural*, *oppression*, *public protests*, and *socially responsible*. The *Standards* also should use “American” instead of “democratic” wherever education department personnel use *democratic* and *democracy* as shorthand for the broader complex of American values which include liberty, law, justice, civic virtue, natural law, a republican form of government, and democracy.

*Depoliticize Content:* The *Standards* should include no politicized distortions in social studies content.

## Strategic Recommendations

---

<sup>21</sup> “Instructional Shift I: Inquiry-Based Learning,” Social Studies Instructional Shifts, Nebraska Department of Education, <https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/instructional-shifts/>.

<sup>22</sup> Stanley Kurtz, “‘Action Civics’ Replaces Citizenship with Partisanship,” *The American Mind*, January 16, 2021, <https://americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/>; Thomas K. Lindsay and Lucy Meckler, “Action Civics,” “New Civics,” “Civic Engagement,” and “Project-Based Civics”: *Advances in Civic Education?* (Texas Public Policy Foundation, 2020), <https://www.texaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Lindsay-Meckler-Action-Civics.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> “Instructional Shift I: Inquiry-Based Learning,” Social Studies Instructional Shifts, Nebraska Department of Education, <https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/instructional-shifts/>.

We have provided the above recommendations for revision to the *Standards*, but we do not believe that social studies standards revision can or should be undertaken entirely by the Department. We make two strategic recommendations to the Department and to Nebraska policymakers.

*Licensure Requirements and Professional Development:* The Department also should update its licensure requirements and professional development to ensure that its teachers are equipped to teach curriculum that aligns with our suggested emphases.

*Statutory Reform:* The Department should ask state policymakers to enact laws that ensure proper social studies instruction in all Nebraska public K-12 schools.<sup>24</sup>

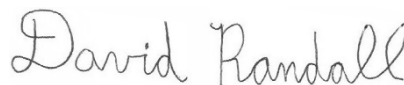
### Conclusion

The Nebraska Department of Education's *Standards* require fundamental overhaul. The Department should revise the *Standards* as we have recommended in this public comment. We suggest that the Department examine our model *American Birthright* social studies standards to help inform its revision of Nebraska's social studies standards, but we also suggest that the Department examine the fine alternate models of Louisiana, South Dakota, and Virginia to help inform its revision.<sup>25</sup>

Respectfully yours,



Peter Wood  
President, National Association of Scholars



David Randall  
Executive Director, Civics Alliance

---

<sup>24</sup> Civics Alliance: Social Studies Curriculum Act, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-palm-card/social-studies-curriculum-act/>; Civics Course Act, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/civics-course-act/>; United States History Act, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/united-states-history-act/>; Western Civilization Act, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/western-civilization-act/>; Historical Documents Act, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/historical-documents-act/>; and more broadly, the Model K-12 Civics Code, <https://civicsalliance.org/model-k-12-civics-code/>.

<sup>25</sup> 2022 K-12 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies, Louisiana Department of Education, [https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/k-12-louisiana-student-standards-for-social-studies.pdf?sfvrsn=df396518\\_38](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/k-12-louisiana-student-standards-for-social-studies.pdf?sfvrsn=df396518_38); South Dakota Social Studies Standards (2023), South Dakota Department of Education, <https://doe.sd.gov/contentstandards/documents/SS-Standards-2023.pdf>; 2023 History and Social Science Standards of Learning, Virginia Department of Education, <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/history-and-social-science/standards-of-learning-1276>.



## Appendix 1: Recommended Historical Documents

<i>Founding Documents, Intellectual Background</i>	Abraham Lincoln, “House Divided” speech (1858)
Magna Carta (1215)	Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address (1865)
Petition of Right (1628)	Niagara Movement Declaration of Principles (1905)
English Bill of Rights (1689)	Theodore Roosevelt, “The Man with the Muck-rake,” speech (1906)
Toleration Act (1689)	Woodrow Wilson, “Peace Without Victory,” speech (1917)
John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Civil Government</i> (1690)	<i>Schenck v. United States</i> (1919)
Montesquieu, <i>The Spirit of Laws</i> (1748)	Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes’ dissenting opinion in the case of <i>Abrams v. United States</i> (1919)
<i>United States Documents</i>	Herbert Hoover, <i>Rugged Individualism</i> (1928)
Articles, Laws, and Orders of Virginia (1610)	Franklin Delano Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address (1933)
Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (1639)	Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “Four Freedoms” speech (1941)
Massachusetts Body of Liberties (1641)	Justice Robert M. Jackson’s opinion for the Supreme Court in <i>West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette</i> (1943)
Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges (1701),	Learned Hand, <i>The Spirit of Liberty</i> (1944)
John Woolman, <i>Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes</i> (1754)	The Truman Doctrine (1947)
John Adams, <i>Braintree Resolves</i> (1765)	George Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” (1947)
<i>Common Sense</i> (1776)	John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address (1961)
Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776)	Ronald Reagan, Berlin Wall Speech (1987)
Massachusetts Constitution and Declaration of Rights (1780)	Ronald Reagan, Speech at Moscow State University (1988)
Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1786)	George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address (2005)
Northwest Ordinance (1787)	<i>District of Columbia v. Heller</i> (2008)
Anti-Federalist Papers: Brutus No. 1 (1787)	<i>Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization</i> (2022)
The Federal Farmer, <i>Letter III</i> (1787)	
The Federalist Nos. 9 (Alexander Hamilton), 39 (James Madison), and 78 (Alexander Hamilton) (1787-88)	
Benjamin Franklin, <i>The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin</i> (1791)	
Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address (1801)	
Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America, Volume I</i> (1835) and <i>Volume II</i> (1839)	
Abraham Lincoln, “Speech on the Dred Scott Decision” (1857)	