

**THE CIVICS ALLIANCE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS
MODEL CIVICS LEGISLATION**

CIVIC INTENT ACT

Introduction

Many states have provided statements of intent to guide Boards of Education and school districts as they craft detailed curricula. Laws that affect civics education include guides to civics education, statements of American ideals and principles, and mandates for patriotic instruction. We have incorporated elements of all three categories of state statute into our model Civic Intent legislation.

Our model Civic Intent legislation directs schools to craft curricula dedicated to the ideals of our constitutional republic, by means of patriotic rites, character instruction, knowledge of the documents of liberty, and instruction in American Government, United States History, and Western Civilization.

Too many states have included concepts such as “global citizens” in their statements of civic intent. We recommend that states remove all such ideals that distract from or directly undermine the proper civic focus of the public schools.

Model Legislative Text

SECTION A:

The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the mission of the State of [name], through its public school system, is to prepare students for the duties and responsibilities of American citizenship by an instructional program that provides:

(1) A commitment to preserve the institutions of our constitutional republic, which are dedicated to upholding the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; popular sovereignty; frequent and free elections; limited government; the rule of law; protection from violence and fraud; the democratic principle of equal opportunity for all individual citizens; and the equal protection of the law for all individual rights and private property.

(2) The commitment of subsection (1) shall be taught by means including appropriate instruction and ceremony that instills the proper reverence and respect for and the history and meaning of the

American flag, the national anthem, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gettysburg Address, and the constitution and laws of this state.

(3) Instruction in the qualities of patriotism, including love of one's country, one's fellow countrymen, and the country's common history and culture, and the willingness to devote and if necessary sacrifice one's life on their behalf.

(4) Instruction in the qualities of civic good character, including accountability, altruism, ambition, charity, cheerfulness, cleanliness, compassion, conscience, courage, courtesy, curiosity, dignity, diligence, duty, faith, familial devotion, forbearance, friendliness, gratitude, hardiness, helpfulness, honesty, honor, impartiality, independent judgment, initiative, industry, integrity, justice, kindness, loyalty, moderation, obedience, patience, perseverance, propriety, prudence, punctuality, reliability, responsibility, reverence, self-control, self-reliance, temperance, thrift, tolerance, and trustworthiness.

(5) Knowledge of the workings of the federal, state, and local levels of government.

(6) Knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens of our constitutional republic and of the State of [name], and knowledge of how to exercise, discharge, and defend those rights and responsibilities.

(7) Knowledge of the history of the ideals and institutions of liberty, including political, religious, economic, social, and cultural liberty, in Western Civilization, the United States of America, and the State of [name], by means of instruction that emphasizes the best achievements of these ideals and institutions of liberty, and which uses writings from prominent figures in Western Civilization, such as Aristotle, John Locke, and Thomas Jefferson.

(8) Knowledge of ideologies such as socialism, communism, and fascism, and of the ways that governments animated by these ideals have abrogated the ideals listed in subsection (1).

(8) Knowledge of exemplary figures in Western Civilization, the United States of America, and the State of [name] who have fought to secure liberty for their fellow men, such as Epaminondas, Martin Luther, and George Washington.

(9) Knowledge of the cultural heritage of Western Civilization, the United States of America, and the State of [name], above all their cultural heritage of liberty, which uses writings from prominent figures in Western Civilization, such as Homer, William Shakespeare, and Benjamin Franklin.

SECTION B:

If any provision of this chapter, or the application of any provision to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this chapter and the application of its provisions to any other person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby.

Existing State Statutes

Civic Intent

Indiana: [IC 20-30-4-1.5](#) [*Grade 6 initial graduation plan*]

Iowa: [Iowa Code § 256.37](#) [*School restructuring and effectiveness — policy — findings*]

Kansas: [K.S.A. 72-3218](#) [*Accredited schools; mandatory subjects and areas of instruction; legislative goal of providing certain educational capacities*]

Kentucky: [KRS § 158.645](#) [*Capacities required of students in public education system*]; [KRS § 158.6451](#) [*Legislative declaration on goals for Commonwealth's schools – Model curriculum framework*]

Massachusetts: [Ma. Gen. Laws, Ch.69, §10A](#) [*Education for American citizenship; director*]; [Ma. Gen. Laws, Ch.69, §11](#) [*Powers and duties of the division of immigration and Americanization*]

Montana: [Mont. Code Ann. § 20-1-102](#) [*Legislative goals for public elementary and secondary schools*]

Nebraska: [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-701](#) [*Mission of public school system*]

New Hampshire: [NH RSA §193-E:2](#) [*Criteria for an Adequate Education*]

Oregon: [ORS 329.025](#) [*Characteristics of school system*]; [ORS 329.045](#) [*Revision of Common Curriculum Goals, performance indicators, diploma requirements, Essential Learning Skills and academic content standards*]

Tennessee: [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1028](#) [*Legislative findings – Public school courses and content to educate children in the United States and Tennessee governments*]

Texas: [Texas Education Code §4.001](#) [*Public Education Mission and Objectives*]

Washington: [Rev. Code Wash. § 28A.150.200](#) [*Program of basic education*]; [Rev. Code Wash. § 28A.150.210](#) [*Basic education—Goals of school districts*]

Wisconsin: [Wi. Stat. § 118.01](#) [*Educational goals and expectations*]

Instruction: Ideals and Principles

Arizona: [A.R.S. § 15-710](#) [*Instruction in state and federal constitutions, American institutions and history of Arizona*]

California: [Cal Ed Code Div. 2 Part 20 Chap. 4 § 33540](#) [*Instructional Quality Commission [33530 - 33546]*]

Florida: [Fla. Stat. § 1003.42](#) [*Required instruction*]

Georgia: [O.C.G.A. § 20-2-142](#) [*Prescribed courses*] [O.C.G.A. § 20-2-142.1](#) [*Coursework in the founding philosophy and principles of the United States of America*]

Illinois: [105 ILCS 5/27-3](#) [*Patriotism and principles of representative government - Proper use of flag - Method of voting - Pledge of Allegiance*]

Kansas: [K.S.A. 72-3217](#) [*Required courses of instruction; graduation requirements*]; [K.S.A. 72-3234](#) [*Same; state board of education; rules and regulations*]

Louisiana: [La. R.S. 17:265](#) [*The Founding Principles of the United States of America; required instruction*]

Massachusetts: [Ma. Gen. Laws, Ch.69, §1D](#) [*Statewide educational goals; academic standards; vocational training; grant program*]

Mississippi: [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-5](#) [*Display of Mississippi and United States flags; course of study*]

Missouri: [RSMo 170.011](#) [*Courses in the constitutions, American history and Missouri government, required, penalty — waiver, when — student awards — requirements not applicable to foreign exchange students*]

Nebraska: [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724](#) [*Committee on American civics; created; duties; school board, State Board of Education, and superintendent; duties*]

New Jersey: [N.J. Stat. § 18A:35- 2](#) [*Contents of course of study*]

New York: [NY CLS Title 1, Article 17, § 801](#) [*Courses of instruction in patriotism and citizenship and in certain historic documents*]

North Carolina: [N.C. Gen. Stat. §115C.81.45](#) [*Classes conducted in English; citizenship; and civic literacy*]

Ohio: [Ohio Rev. Code Ann. §3313.602](#) [*Pledge of allegiance - principles of democracy and ethics - Veterans' day observance*]

Oklahoma: [Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 11-103](#) [*Courses for instruction - What to include*]

Pennsylvania: [24 P.S. § 7-771](#) [*Display of United States flag; development of patriotism*]; [24 P.S. § 16-1605](#) [*Courses of study*]

South Carolina: [S.C. Code Ann. §59-29-10](#) [*Required subjects*]

Virginia: [Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-201](#) [*Study of documents of Virginia history and United States Constitution*]

West Virginia: [W. Va. Code § 18-2-9](#) [*Required course of instruction*]

Wyoming: [Wyo. Stat. Ann.. § 21-9-102](#) [*Instruction in state and federal constitutions required; satisfactory examination a prerequisite to graduation*]; [Wyo. Stat. Ann.. § 21-9-103](#) [*Penalty for failure to carry out requirements of W.S. 21-9-102*]

Instruction: Patriotic

Arkansas: [ACA § 6-16-111](#) [*Morals, manners, patriotism, and integrity*]

Florida: [Fla. Stat. § 1003.44](#) [*Patriotic programs; rules*]