

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 88th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2011

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 171

4  
5 By: Senator Salmon

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO IMPROVE ARKANSAS HISTORY EDUCATION IN  
9 PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

12 TO IMPROVE ARKANSAS HISTORY EDUCATION IN  
14 PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

16  
17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

18  
19 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-16-124 is amended to read as follows:  
20 6-16-124. Arkansas history – Required ~~social studies~~ course.

21 (a) ~~Beginning with the 1997-1998 school year:~~

22 (1)(A) A unit of Arkansas history shall be taught as a social  
23 studies subject at each elementary grade level in every public elementary  
24 school, including public charter schools, in this state, with greater  
25 emphasis at the fourth and fifth grade levels.

26 (B) A unit of Arkansas history shall include a minimum of  
27 fifteen (15) hours of documented instruction, which may include on-site  
28 instruction time during field trips, in kindergarten, first, second, third,  
29 and sixth grade and a minimum of thirty (30) hours of documented instruction,  
30 including field trips, in fourth and fifth grade. and

31 (2) At least one (1) full semester of Arkansas history shall be  
32 taught to all students at the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, or  
33 twelfth grade level in every public secondary school, including public  
34 charter schools, in this state.

35 (3) Instruction provided at all grade levels shall conform to  
36 the course content guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.



1           (b) A student is not entitled to graduate with a diploma from an  
 2 Arkansas public high school or public charter school until the student  
 3 successfully completes:

4                   (1) One (1) semester of Arkansas history at the secondary level;  
 5 or

6                   (2) The Arkansas history basic knowledge assessment developed  
 7 under § 6-16-141.

8           (c)(1) Annually, each public school district, including public charter  
 9 schools, shall:

10                   (A) Maintain records for each school in the district that  
 11 document for each grade the:

12                           (i) Amount of time spent on Arkansas history  
 13 instruction;

14                           (ii) Materials utilized for Arkansas history  
 15 instruction; and

16                           (iii) Curriculum or course guidelines used for  
 17 Arkansas history instruction; and

18                   (B) Certify to the Department of Education that the school  
 19 district is in compliance with this section by submitting a copy of the  
 20 annual records prepared under subdivision (c)(1) of this section.

21                   (2) A public school district or public charter school that fails  
 22 to offer the minimum required Arkansas history instruction at each grade  
 23 level may be subject to sanctions by the department for failure to meet  
 24 standards for accreditation.

25                   (3) The department shall send a letter of reprimand to the  
 26 school district board of directors, which shall be placed in the school  
 27 superintendent's personnel file, for each school district that fails to  
 28 comply fully with this section.

29                   (d) The department shall promulgate rules necessary to implement this  
 30 section.

31           ~~(b)(1) Course guidelines shall ensure that the courses represent the~~  
 32 ~~most accurate and historically sound account of the prehistory, history, and~~  
 33 ~~culture of Arkansas, including the significant contributions and achievements~~  
 34 ~~of all segments of the population.~~

35                   ~~(2) Any revisions in the Arkansas history course content~~  
 36 ~~guidelines shall be reported to the public schools and the House Interim~~

1 ~~Committee on Education and the Senate Interim Committee on Education no later~~  
2 ~~than July 1 of the year the course guidelines are to be implemented.~~

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4 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 1 is amended  
5 to add an additional section to read as follows:

6 6-16-141. Arkansas history education advisory panel - Course content  
7 guidelines.

8 (a)(1) The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a ten (10) member  
9 advisory panel consisting of:

10 (A) Six (6) professional historians, geographers,  
11 archeologists, political scientists, and economists with expertise in  
12 Arkansas history;

13 (B) Three (3) Arkansas history teachers from a public  
14 secondary school; and

15 (C) Three (3) Arkansas history teachers from a public  
16 elementary school.

17 (2) An advisory panel chair shall be selected from the  
18 membership and shall serve as a non-voting member of the advisory panel.

19 (3) The advisory panel shall:

20 (A) Recommend to the State Board of Education course  
21 content guidelines for Arkansas history instruction units taught at the  
22 elementary school level that are consistent with social studies curriculum  
23 standards for adoption;

24 (B) Recommend to the State Board of Education course  
25 content guidelines for Arkansas history instruction for semester long courses  
26 offered at the secondary school level that are consistent with social studies  
27 curriculum standards for adoption;

28 (C) Develop an Arkansas history basic knowledge assessment  
29 and related study materials that can be utilized to satisfy § 6-16-124(b);  
30 and

31 (D) Provide advice to the Department of Education on  
32 Arkansas history subject matter and Arkansas history professional development  
33 standards.

34 (4) The advisory panel shall meet a minimum of one (1) time each  
35 year.

36 (b)(1) Course content guidelines for Arkansas history instruction

1 shall ensure that the courses represent the most accurate and historically  
2 sound account of the prehistory, history, and culture of Arkansas, including  
3 the significant contributions and achievements of all segments of the  
4 population.

5 (2) Any revisions in the course content guidelines for Arkansas  
6 history instruction shall be reported to the public schools and the interim  
7 House Committee on Education and the interim Senate Committee on Education no  
8 later than July 1 of the year the course guidelines are to be implemented.

9  
10 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 1 is amended  
11 to add an additional section to read as follows:

12 6-16-142. Arkansas history internet resource guide.

13 (a) The Arkansas Department of Heritage shall coordinate the  
14 development of an Internet resource guide for Arkansas history instruction.

15 (b) The Internet resource guide shall include without limitation:

16 (1) A current list of professional development opportunities for  
17 teachers;

18 (2) Field trip opportunities and sites for students;

19 (3) Lesson plans aligned with adopted course content guidelines;

20 and

21 (4) Links to Internet-based and printed materials augmenting  
22 classroom resources.

23 (c) The Department of Education and other state agencies shall promote  
24 the internet resource guide to all public school districts, including public  
25 charter schools.

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