

**Representative Michael J. Petersen** proposes the following substitute bill:

**PUBLIC SCHOOL HISTORY CURRICULA AMENDMENTS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Michael J. Petersen**

Senate Sponsor: Daniel McCay

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill adds the "Ten Commandments" and the Magna Carta to a list of historical documents and principles that school curricula and activities may include for a thorough study.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ adds the "Ten Commandments" and the Magna Carta to a list of historical documents and principles that school curricula and activities may include for a thorough study; and
- ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**53G-10-302**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 293



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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **53G-10-302** is amended to read:

**53G-10-302. Instruction in American history and government -- Study and posting of American heritage documents.**

(1) As used in this section, "Ten Commandments" means the Decalogue, known as the Ten Commandments, as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures in Exodus 20:2-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

(2) The Legislature recognizes that a proper understanding of American history and government is essential to good citizenship, and that the public schools are the primary public institutions charged with responsibility for assisting children and youth in gaining that understanding.

~~[(2)]~~ (3) (a) The state board and local school boards shall periodically review school curricula and activities to ensure that effective instruction in American history and government is taking place in the public schools.

(b) The boards shall solicit public input as part of the review process.

(c) Instruction in American history and government shall include a study of:

(i) forms of government, such as a republic, a pure democracy, a monarchy, and an oligarchy;

(ii) political philosophies and economic systems, such as socialism, individualism, and free market capitalism; and

(iii) the United States' form of government, a compound constitutional republic.

~~[(3)]~~ (4) School curricula and activities shall include a thorough study of historical documents and principles such as:

(a) the Declaration of Independence;

(b) the United States Constitution;

(c) the national motto;

(d) the pledge of allegiance;

(e) the national anthem;

(f) the Mayflower Compact;

(g) the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founders and the

57 Presidents of the United States;

58 (h) organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist, and  
59 post Federalist eras;

60 (i) United States Supreme Court decisions;

61 (j) the Ten Commandments;

62 (k) the Magna Carta;

63 ~~[(j)]~~ (l) Acts of the United States Congress, including the published text of the  
64 Congressional Record; and

65 ~~[(k)]~~ (m) United States treaties.

66 ~~[(4)]~~ (5) To increase student understanding of, and familiarity with, American  
67 historical documents, public schools may display historically important excerpts from, or  
68 copies of, those documents in school classrooms and common areas as appropriate.

69 ~~[(5)]~~ (6) There shall be no content-based censorship of American history and heritage  
70 documents referred to in this section due to their religious or cultural nature.

71 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) Public schools shall display "In God we trust," which is declared in 36 U.S.C.  
72 302 to be the national motto of the United States, in one or more prominent places within each  
73 school building.

74 Section 2. **Effective date.**

75 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2024.