

# An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE  
BILL NO. 1397

By: Lepak and West (Tammy) of  
the House

and

Bergstrom and Jett of the  
Senate

An Act relating to schools; mandating curriculum include a unit on the civil rights movement; providing description of curriculum; directing the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to prepare and make available materials; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

SUBJECT: Civil rights movement

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.6p of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The State Department of Education shall develop and make available to every public elementary school and high school in the State of Oklahoma, a curriculum that may be taught as a stand-alone unit of instruction, or may be integrated into one or more existing courses of study, studying the events of the civil rights movement from 1954 to 1968, the natural law and natural rights principles that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., drew from that informed his leadership of the civil rights movement, and the tactics and strategies of nonviolent resistance that he championed in response to the Jim Crow laws of that era. This period in American history is known as the civil rights era because during this period reform-minded Americans organized to press for a rejection of the doctrine of "separate but equal" and to repeal the Jim Crow-era laws in parts of the United States that embodied that doctrine. One of the

universal lessons of the civil rights era is that hatred on the basis of immutable characteristics, including not just race or ethnicity, but also characteristics such as nationality, religious belief, disability, or sex, can overtake any nation or society, leading to profound injustice. To reinforce that lesson, such curriculum shall include an additional unit of instruction studying other acts of discriminatory injustice, such as genocide, committed elsewhere around the globe. The study of this material is a reaffirmation of the commitment of the people of this state to reject bigotry, to champion equal protection under the law as a foundational principle of our Republic, and to act in opposition to injustice wherever it may occur.

B. The State Department of Education shall identify resources and provide exemplar units or sample lesson plans designed to help teachers provide instruction on the subject matter outlined in this act.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

Passed the House of Representatives the 22nd day of March, 2023.

*Kevin Martin*  
Presiding Officer of the House  
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 25th day of April, 2023.

*Gov. Kevin Stitt*  
Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 26<sup>th</sup>

day of April, 20 23, at 2:36 o'clock p. M.

By: *Genevieve Curry*

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 2<sup>nd</sup>

day of May, 20 23, at 11:47 o'clock a. M.

*Kevin Stitt*  
Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this 2<sup>nd</sup>

day of May, 20 23, at 1:19 o'clock p. M.

By: *Brian Benjamin*