
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2037

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Couture, Senn, Leavitt, Fitzgibbon, Rude, Hutchins, Low, Christian, Ramel, Ryu, Ormsby, Barnard, Graham, Callan, Macri, Cheney, Sandlin, Goodman, Caldier, Nance, Riccelli, Reeves, Paul, Pollet, Griffey, and Davis)

READ FIRST TIME 01/31/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to Holocaust and genocide education in public
2 schools; amending RCW 28A.300.115; adding new sections to chapter
3 28A.230 RCW; providing an effective date; and providing an expiration
4 date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) April of each year is hereby designated international
9 genocide prevention and awareness month to provide space for formal
10 recognition of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide and
11 crimes against humanity.

12 (2) During the month of April, each public school shall conduct
13 or promote age-appropriate educational activities that provide
14 instruction, awareness, and understanding of the Holocaust and
15 genocide education to all students. These activities may include
16 classroom instruction, guest speaker presentations, school
17 assemblies, and other developmentally appropriate activities.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.300.115 and 2019 c 85 s 1 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

1 (1) ~~((Every))~~ (a) In addition to the requirements in section 1 of
2 this act, every public middle school, junior high school, and high
3 school is strongly encouraged to include in its curriculum
4 instruction on the events of the period in modern world history known
5 as the Holocaust~~(, the systemic, German state-sponsored persecution~~
6 ~~and murder of Jews and other innocent victims by the Nazi regime and~~
7 ~~its collaborators between the years 1933 and 1945. The instruction~~
8 ~~may also include other examples of genocide and crimes against~~
9 ~~humanity)).~~ The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored
10 genocide perpetrated between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its
11 collaborators with the aim of annihilating the Jewish people. During
12 the era of the Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups for
13 various reasons, including people with disabilities, the Romani
14 people, political dissidents, and gay men. In delivering the
15 instruction, educators are further encouraged to include genocides
16 and crimes against humanity in every region of the world and at
17 various points in history. The studying of this material is intended
18 to: Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and intolerance;
19 prepare students to be responsible citizens in a pluralistic
20 democracy; and be a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples
21 never again to permit such occurrences.

22 (b) Public schools are strongly encouraged to offer at least one
23 Holocaust and genocide education stand-alone elective that is
24 available to students at least once during grades six through 12.

25 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in
26 collaboration with ~~((an expert Washington nonprofit organization that~~
27 ~~teaches the lessons of the Holocaust))~~ a Washington nonprofit
28 organization with expertise in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust
29 and other nonprofit organizations with expertise in teaching lessons
30 on genocide and crimes against humanity in different regions of the
31 world and at various points in history, must:

32 (a) Develop best practices and guidelines for high quality
33 instruction under this section; and

34 (b) Encourage and support middle school, junior high school, and
35 high school teachers in implementing these best practices and
36 guidelines.

37 (3) Beginning September 1, 2020, middle schools, junior high
38 schools, and high schools that offer instruction as described in
39 subsection (1) of this section must follow the best practices and
40 guidelines developed under subsection (2) of this section.

1 (4) (a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
2 must update and electronically publish the best practices and
3 guidelines developed under this section on an annual basis.

4 (b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must
5 electronically publish, and update as needed, guidance on vertical
6 alignment, materials, and professional learning to support
7 implementation of the stand-alone elective described in subsection
8 (1)(b) of this section.

9 (5) This section expires July 1, 2027.

10 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 (1) (a) Beginning with the 2027-28 school year, when it aligns
13 with the social studies learning standards including United States
14 history and contemporary world history, public middle schools, junior
15 high schools, and high schools shall provide instruction on the
16 events of the period in modern world history known as the Holocaust.
17 The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored genocide
18 perpetrated between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its
19 collaborators with the aim of annihilating the Jewish people. During
20 the era of the Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups for
21 various reasons, including people with disabilities, the Romani
22 people, political dissidents, and gay men. The instruction must also
23 include genocides and crimes against humanity in every region of the
24 world and at various points in history. The studying of this material
25 is intended to: Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and
26 intolerance; prepare students to be responsible citizens in a
27 pluralistic democracy; and be a reaffirmation of the commitment of
28 free peoples never again to permit such occurrences. This instruction
29 must follow the best practices and guidelines developed and updated
30 under subsection (2) (a) of this section.

31 (b) Public schools are strongly encouraged to offer at least one
32 Holocaust and genocide education stand-alone elective that is
33 available to students at least once during grades six through 12.

34 (2) (a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in
35 collaboration with a Washington nonprofit organization with expertise
36 in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust and other nonprofit
37 organizations with expertise in teaching lessons on genocide and
38 crimes against humanity in different regions of the world and at
39 various points in history, shall:

1 (i) Develop and annually update and electronically publish best
2 practices and guidelines for high quality instruction under this
3 section; and

4 (ii) Support middle school, junior high school, and high school
5 teachers in implementing these best practices and guidelines.

6 (b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must
7 electronically publish, and update as needed, guidance on vertical
8 alignment, materials, and professional learning to support
9 implementation of the stand-alone elective described in subsection
10 (1)(b) of this section.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1,
12 2027.

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