

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 187

S.P. 74

In Senate, January 25, 2021

An Act To Require Education about African-American History and the History of Genocide

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on January 21, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator LUCHINI of Hancock.
Cosponsored by Representative TALBOT ROSS of Portland.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4706**, as amended by PL 2009, c. 313, §§8 and 9, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **§4706. Instruction in American history, African-American studies, Maine studies**
5 **and, Maine Native American history and the history of genocide**

6 Instruction in American history, government, citizenship ~~and, African-American~~
7 ~~studies, Maine studies and the history of genocide~~ must be aligned with the parameters for
8 essential instruction and graduation requirements established under section 6209.

9 **1. American history.** American history, government and citizenship, including the
10 Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the importance of
11 voting and the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship, must be taught in and required
12 for graduation from all elementary and secondary schools, both public and private. A
13 required component of American history is African-American studies, which must be
14 included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the system of
15 learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4.
16 African-American studies must address African-American cultural systems and the
17 experience of African-Americans throughout history. Topics may include, but are not
18 limited to, precolonial indigenous ethnic populations, African-American genocide, the
19 Underground Railroad, emancipation, Reconstruction, the Great Migration, Jim Crow
20 laws, the civil rights movement, the so-called war on drugs, the federal War on Poverty
21 initiative and mass incarceration. For the purposes of this subsection, "African-American
22 genocide" means discriminatory genocidal laws, policies or actions targeted against
23 African-Americans and indigenous ethnic populations throughout history, including
24 slavery, lynching, economic disenfranchisement and other state-sanctioned killings.

25 **2. Maine studies.** Maine history, including the Constitution of Maine, Maine
26 geography and environment and the natural, industrial and economic resources of Maine
27 and Maine's cultural and ethnic heritage, must be taught. ~~A required component~~ Required
28 components of Maine studies is are Maine Native American studies and Maine African-
29 American studies, which must be included in the review of content standards and
30 performance indicators of the learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209,
31 subsection 4. The Maine Native American studies must address the following topics:

- 32 A. Maine tribal governments and political systems and their relationship with local,
33 state, national and international governments;
- 34 B. Maine Native American cultural systems and the experience of Maine tribal people
35 throughout history;
- 36 C. Maine Native American territories; and
- 37 D. Maine Native American economic systems.

38 **3. History of genocide.** The history of genocide, including the Holocaust, must be
39 taught and must be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators
40 of the system of learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4.
41 For purposes of this subsection, "Holocaust" means the program of discriminatory and
42 genocidal laws, policies or actions targeted against discrete groups of individuals based on
43 race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disability or national origin, from

1 January 1, 1933 to December 31, 1945, in Nazi Germany or in any European country allied
2 with or occupied by Nazi Germany.

3 **Sec. 2. Development of curriculum; advisory groups.** The Department of
4 Education shall identify curricular themes, collect information and prepare and distribute
5 resources and materials for teaching African-American history and culture, including
6 Maine African-American history and culture, and the history of genocide in accordance
7 with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 4706. The department shall also
8 identify educators in the State who are implementing model approaches to teaching
9 African-American history and culture and the history of genocide and highlight these
10 educators in the distributed materials.

11 In order to collect information and prepare materials under this section for the teaching
12 of African-American history and culture, the department shall convene a volunteer
13 advisory group that includes scholars on African-American history and culture,
14 representatives from African-American civil rights organizations in the State,
15 African-American history and cultural organizations and the Gerald E. Talbot Collection
16 at the University of Southern Maine and members of the public with knowledge, life
17 experience or educational backgrounds that would inform the collection of information and
18 preparation of materials.

19 In order to collect information and prepare materials under this section for the teaching
20 of the history of genocide, the department shall convene a volunteer advisory group that
21 includes scholars on the Holocaust and genocide studies, representatives of civil and human
22 rights organizations and the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine and members
23 of the public with knowledge, life experience or educational backgrounds that would
24 inform the collection of information and preparation of materials.

25 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
26 allocations are made.

27 **EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

28 **Learning Systems Team Z081**

29 Initiative: Provides one-time funds for the costs associated with the Department of
30 Education holding meetings with stakeholders to revise the social studies standards.

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 31 GENERAL FUND | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
| 32 All Other | \$9,000 | \$0 |
| 33 | | |
| 34 GENERAL FUND TOTAL | <u>\$9,000</u> | <u>\$0</u> |

35 **SUMMARY**

36 This bill requires that African-American studies be taught in schools, aligned with the
37 parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements and included in the review
38 of content standards and performance indicators of the system of learning results. The bill
39 directs the Department of Education to convene 2 volunteer advisory groups to collect
40 information and prepare and make available materials for teaching African-American
41 history and culture and the history of genocide in accordance with this legislation.