
ENGROSSED 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; creating a new section; providing an effective date; and
4 providing expiration dates.

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 other nonprofit organizations with expertise in teaching lessons on
30 genocide and crimes against humanity in different regions of the
31 world and at various points in history, particularly including
32 diasporic communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made
33 refugee by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide, and a
34 public institution of higher education with expertise in advancing
35 knowledge about the Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity
36 that includes curriculum development and teacher training, must:

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

1 (b) Encourage and support middle school, junior high school, and
2 high school teachers in implementing these best practices and
3 guidelines.

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

8 (4) Screening criteria designed to eliminate bias in
9 instructional materials must be used when selecting curricula and
10 materials to implement this section.

11 (5)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
12 must update and electronically publish the best practices and
13 guidelines developed under this section (~~on an annual basis~~).

14 (b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must
15 develop and update as needed, in collaboration with the organizations
16 described in subsection (2) of this section, and electronically
17 publish, guidance on vertical alignment, materials, and training to
18 support implementation of the stand-alone elective described in
19 subsection (1)(b) of this section.

20 (6) This section expires July 1, 2027.

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

23 (1)(a) In addition to the requirements in section 1 of this act,
24 beginning with the 2027-28 school year, when it aligns with the
25 social studies learning standards including United States history and
26 contemporary world history, public schools that serve students in any
27 of grades six through 12 shall provide instruction on the events of
28 the period in modern world history known as the Holocaust. The
29 Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored genocide perpetrated
30 between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its collaborators with
31 the aim of annihilating the Jewish people. During the era of the
32 Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups for various reasons,
33 including people with disabilities, the Romani people, political
34 dissidents, and gay men. The instruction must also include genocides
35 and crimes against humanity in every region of the world and at
36 various points in history. The studying of this material is intended
37 to: Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and intolerance;
38 prepare students to be responsible citizens in a pluralistic
39 democracy; and be a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples

1 never again to permit such occurrences. This instruction must follow
2 the best practices and guidelines developed and updated under
3 subsection (3)(a) of this section.

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

7 (2) Screening criteria designed to eliminate bias in
8 instructional materials must be used when selecting curricula and
9 materials to implement this section.

10 (3)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in
11 collaboration with a Washington nonprofit organization with expertise
12 in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust, other nonprofit
13 organizations with expertise in teaching lessons on genocide and
14 crimes against humanity in different regions of the world and at
15 various points in history, particularly including diasporic
16 communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made refugee
17 by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide, and a public
18 institution of higher education with expertise in advancing knowledge
19 about the Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity that
20 includes curriculum development and teacher training, shall:

21 (i) Develop, update as needed, and electronically publish best
22 practices and guidelines for high quality instruction under this
23 section;

24 (ii) Support middle school, junior high school, and high school
25 teachers in implementing these best practices and guidelines; and

26 (iii) Develop, electronically publish, and update as needed,
27 guidance on vertical alignment, materials, and training to support
28 implementation of the stand-alone elective described in subsection
29 (1)(b) of this section.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) By September 30, 2025, and in
31 compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of
32 public instruction must report to the appropriate committees of the
33 legislature how the agency will meaningfully include or has
34 meaningfully included diasporic communities with lived experiences of
35 surviving, being made refugee by, or otherwise being directly
36 impacted by genocide when collaborating with organizations as
37 required by RCW 28A.300.115(2). The office of the superintendent of
38 public instruction must provide an interim update on their progress
39 to the appropriate committees of the legislature by January 15, 2025.

1 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must
2 include in the report:

3 (a) The stakeholders, organizations, and institutions with which
4 the office of the superintendent of public instruction has
5 collaborated or plans to collaborate in developing best practices and
6 guidelines for high quality instruction, and in supporting teachers
7 in implementing these best practices and guidelines, as required by
8 RCW 28A.300.115(2);

9 (b) The questions solicited and the feedback received in the
10 collaboration process;

11 (c) The methods by which organizations were identified for
12 collaboration; and

13 (d) Any other relevant information about the collaboration
14 process.

15 (3) This section expires July 1, 2026.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1,
17 2027.

--- END ---