

**JOINT RESOLUTION PROMOTING THE 3RS FRAMEWORK
OF RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITY, AND RESPECT IN
CLASSROOMS**

2022 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Derrin R. Owens

House Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution highlights the 3Rs framework, which is inspired by principles of the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, acknowledges the role of public school educators in preparing students for their civic responsibilities, and encourages the State Board of Education to support the state's public school educators in accessing instructional materials that support the 3Rs framework of rights, responsibility, and respect.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

► highlights the principles of the 3Rs framework, inspired by the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which includes the following:

- every person has rights;
- every person has the responsibility to protect the rights of others; and
- we honor the human dignity of others when we respectfully engage in civil

discourse;

► recognizes the value of public school educators using the 3Rs framework as a tool to prepare students to successfully navigate differences in American society and



28 dispel contempt in civic discourse;

29 ▶ acknowledges the role of public school educators in preparing students for their
30 civic responsibilities;

31 ▶ encourages the State Board of Education to support educators in accessing teaching
32 resources that support the 3Rs framework; and

33 ▶ acknowledges that the proper treatment of religion in public school settings will
34 prepare Utah's students to be champions of the First Amendment to the United
35 States Constitution.

36 **Special Clauses:**

37 None



39 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

40 WHEREAS, American society is more polarized and divided than ever, and in our
41 surging culture of contempt, youth are learning to value only those with whom they agree and
42 see others as the enemy;

43 WHEREAS, S.C.R. 2, A Call to Civility, passed during the 2009 General Session,
44 affirms ground rules for civic and public engagement framed in terms of rights, responsibilities,
45 and respect inherent in our civic and constitutional compact;

46 WHEREAS, H.C.R. 7, Resolution Promoting Character and Citizenship Education,
47 passed during the 2003 General Session, encourages Utah's public elementary and secondary
48 schools to promote character and citizenship education through an emphasis on rights,
49 responsibility, and respect;

50 WHEREAS, the United States Constitution, the supreme law of the land, provides
51 principles for self-government and establishes a republican form of government that requires
52 all American citizens to live in productive relationships with each other to keep our republic;

53 WHEREAS, the unique religion clauses of the First Amendment to the United States
54 Constitution have the following characteristics:

55 • they make it possible for American citizens to live in productive
56 relationships with one another;

57 • they are the boldest and most successful part of the entire American
58 experiment;

- 59 • they protect the individual ways we act on our consciences;
- 60 • they guarantee the state will not require any particular expression of faith
- 61 or penalize someone for their choice not to believe; and
- 62 • they protect what it means to be fully human and the essence of what it
- 63 means to be an American;

64 WHEREAS, the 3Rs framework - inspired by the principles of the religion clauses of
65 the First Amendment to the United States Constitution - includes the following components:

- 66 • every person has rights;
- 67 • every person has the responsibility to protect the rights of others; and
- 68 • we honor the human dignity of others when we respectfully engage in
- 69 civil discourse;

70 WHEREAS, commitment to the tenets of the 3Rs framework helps members of the
71 public live in productive relationships with their fellow citizens;

72 WHEREAS, as Utah citizens become champions for understanding the rights of others,
73 feel the responsibility to protect the rights of others, and honor the human dignity of others by
74 respectfully engaging in civil discourse, they will lead the country in overturning our current
75 national culture of contempt;

76 WHEREAS, Utahns are not required to change their values or agree with positions that
77 offend their consciences, but can model to the nation how to live in productive relationships
78 with fellow citizens across our deepest differences and within the framework of the United
79 States Constitution, and these productive and respectful relationships promote honest
80 conversation between trustworthy political rivals and help to counter the increase of contempt
81 and incivility in our country;

82 WHEREAS, the civic mission of public schools to prepare students for citizenship in
83 our constitutional republic;

84 WHEREAS, public schools are microcosms of the American public square where
85 students learn how to live in productive relationships across deep differences and schools have
86 a role in preparing students for their civic responsibilities, especially in equipping them with
87 the civic competencies of religious liberty, religious literacy, and civil dialogue;

88 WHEREAS, the processes and procedures of the Legislature and the decorum expected
89 throughout the legislative process provides a model for classroom teachers to facilitate

90 discussion across differences, such as neutral committee chairs allowing space for various
91 viewpoints in committee meetings, allowing space for strong disagreement without attacks, and
92 encouraging decorum and respect across deep differences;

93 WHEREAS, public school classroom discussions can reflect the decorum of the public
94 square demonstrated by the Legislature, with classroom teachers acting as neutral guides
95 through difficult discussions and serving as facilitators of student expression and exploration of
96 current events and ideas, which provides space for strong disagreement without attacks;

97 WHEREAS, teachers can use the 3Rs framework of rights, responsibility, and respect
98 to set expectations for students with differing views to engage with each other, which prepares
99 students to engage civilly in the public square, even across differences;

100 WHEREAS, public schools are not religion-free zones, nor are they places where
101 religion is transferred to the next generation; and

102 WHEREAS, the National Council for the Social Studies, the United States Department
103 of Education, and 21 additional organizations across the political spectrum published
104 consensus guidelines in 2000 for teaching about religion in public schools that include the
105 following tenets:

- 106 • the school's approach to religion is academic, not devotional;
- 107 • the school strives for student awareness of religions but does not press
108 for student acceptance of any religion;
- 109 • the school sponsors study about religion, not the practice of religion;
- 110 • the school may expose students to a diversity of religious views but may
111 not impose any particular view;
- 112 • the school educates about all religions but it does not promote or
113 denigrate religion; and
- 114 • the school informs the student about various beliefs but it does not seek
115 to conform students to any particular belief;

116 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
117 honors the role of public school educators in preparing Utah students for their civic
118 responsibilities and the urgent need to overturn the culture of contempt dividing our society.

119 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages the State Board of
120 Education to support public school educators in accessing teaching resources that support using

121 the 3Rs framework in preparing students with the practical understanding that every person has
122 rights, every person has the responsibility to protect the rights of others, and we honor the
123 human dignity of others when we respectfully engage in civil discourse.

124 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages public school educators
125 to support the development of the civic competencies of religious liberty, religious literacy, and
126 civil dialogue to prepare students for citizenship.

127 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature affirms the proper understanding of
128 religion in the American public school, specifically that the Establishment Clause of the First
129 Amendment to the United States Constitution requires the government, including public school
130 educators, to be neutral toward religion and the Free Exercise Clause protects public expression
131 of belief or no belief in the public square, including among public school students, and that
132 public school educators cannot favor one religion over another or suppress the free exercise of
133 conscience or religion among their students.

134 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature acknowledges that proper treatment
135 of religion, especially in terms of religious differences, in the public school setting will prepare
136 Utah students to be champions of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and
137 lead the nation in successfully navigating our deepest differences and overturning our rising
138 culture of contempt.

139 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the
140 Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each member of
141 the State Board of Education, the Utah School Superintendents Association for distribution to
142 the superintendents of Utah's 41 school districts, directors of each regional service center, the
143 Utah Rural Schools Association, and the Utah Association of Elementary School Principals
144 and the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals for distribution to every school
145 principal in Utah.