LET TEACHERS TEACH COALITION

TEACHER TOOLKIT | Let Teachers Teach Coalition

ADVOCATING FOR QUALITY CIVICS AND HISTORY CURRICULUM

Teachers should be trusted to teach students how America's system of self-government works, why its founding principles matter, and how citizens can preserve those freedoms. Quality civics and history instruction should be accurate, academically rigorous, and grounded in primary sources, not designed to recruit students into a political movement or impose an ideological viewpoint.

Understanding the Curriculum Adoption Process:

States establish academic standards and determine how much authority local districts have over curriculum and instructional materials. Depending on state law, materials may be approved by a state education agency, a local school board, or both. Teachers should determine:

- ★ Who approves instructional materials and whether supplemental resources are permitted.
- ★ How teachers can join curriculum-review committees and challenge biased or inaccurate materials.
- ★ When the curriculum will next be reviewed or adopted.

What Should Quality Civics and History Curriculum Include?

Strong civics and history instruction should:

- ★ Teach America's founding documents, constitutional government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- ★ Present American history accurately while encouraging students to examine evidence and form their own conclusions.
- ★ Prioritize academic mastery over political motives, ideological conditioning, or partisan instruction.

How to Identify Politically Motivated Instruction

A lesson or resource may warrant additional review when it:

- ★ Presents political viewpoints as fact, omits historical context, or replaces primary sources with biased, opinion-based materials.

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- ★ Assigns guilt or privilege based on identity or requires teachers and students to affirm beliefs about race, gender, or politics.
- ★ Grades students on ideological agreement or participation in protests, campaigns, or political advocacy.

How Teachers Can Participate in Curriculum Adoption

1. Review current materials:

Examine the district's approved textbooks, digital platforms, supplemental materials, lesson plans, and teacher-training requirements. Compare them with state academic standards and identify specific content that is inaccurate, incomplete, ideological, or unrelated to the required subject matter.

2. Join a curriculum-review committee:

Ask how teachers are selected and whether classroom educators from different schools, grade levels, and subject areas are represented. Teachers—not outside consultants or political organizations—should have a meaningful role in evaluating whether materials are accurate, age-appropriate, and useful in the classroom.

3. Document specific concerns:

Identify the exact lesson, passage, assignment, training, or policy at issue. Explain:

- ★ What the material says or requires and how it conflicts with approved academic standards.
- ★ How it affects classroom instruction or student learning.
- ★ What material or policy should replace it.

4. Recommend a clear alternative:

Do more than identify a problem. Recommend materials grounded in primary sources, factual accuracy, rigorous academic standards, and America's founding principles.

5. Follow the district review process:

Submit concerns through the appropriate department chair, principal, curriculum director, superintendent, or school board process. If the issue remains unresolved, request a formal review and ask that the matter be considered at a curriculum committee or public school board meeting.

Questions Teachers Can Ask

- ★ Who selects curriculum materials, and how can teachers participate in the review process?
- ★ Are lessons aligned with state standards, grounded in primary sources, and free from political bias?

- ★ Are teachers or students required to affirm ideological viewpoints, participate in activism, or be graded on political agreement?
- ★ How can teachers challenge inaccurate or biased materials without retaliation?
- ★ How much does the district spend on curriculum vendors, consultants, and ideological training, and when can proposed materials be reviewed?