

AMENDMENTS TO LB426

Introduced by Education.

1           1. Strike the original sections and insert the following new  
2 sections:

3           **Section 1.** Section 79-724, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
4 amended to read:

5           79-724 (1) It is the responsibility of society to ensure that youth  
6 are given the opportunity to become competent, responsible, patriotic,  
7 and civil citizens to ensure a strong, stable, just, and prosperous  
8 America. Such a citizenry necessitates that every member thereof be  
9 knowledgeable of our nation's history, government, geography, and  
10 economic system. The youth in our state should be committed to the ideals  
11 and values of our country's democracy and the constitutional republic  
12 established by the people. Schools should help prepare our youth to make  
13 informed and reasoned decisions for the public good. Civic competence is  
14 necessary to sustain and improve our democratic way of life and must be  
15 taught in all public, private, denominational, and parochial schools. A  
16 central role of schools is to impart civic knowledge and skills that help  
17 our youth to see the relevance of a civic dimension for their lives.  
18 Students should be made fully aware of the liberties, opportunities, and  
19 advantages we possess and the sacrifices and struggles of those through  
20 whose efforts these benefits were gained. Since young people are most  
21 susceptible to the acceptance of principles and doctrines that will  
22 influence them throughout their lives, it is one of the first duties of  
23 our educational system to conduct its activities, choose its textbooks,  
24 and arrange its curriculum in such a way that the youth of our state have  
25 the opportunity to become competent, responsible, patriotic, and civil  
26 American citizens.

27           (2) ~~(1)~~ The school board of each school district shall, at the

1 beginning of each calendar year, appoint from its members a committee of  
2 three, to be known as the committee on American civics, which shall:

3 (a) Hold no fewer than two public meetings annually, at least one  
4 when public testimony is accepted;

5 (b) Keep minutes of each meeting showing the time and place of the  
6 meeting, which members were present or absent, and the substance and  
7 details of all matters discussed;

8 (c) Examine and ensure that the social studies curriculum used in  
9 the district is aligned with the social studies standards adopted  
10 pursuant to section 79-760.01 and teaches foundational knowledge in  
11 civics, history, economics, financial literacy, and geography;

12 (d) Review and approve the social studies curriculum to ensure that  
13 it stresses the services of the men and women who played a crucial role  
14 in the achievement of national independence, establishment of our  
15 constitutional government, and preservation of the union and includes the  
16 incorporation of multicultural education as set forth in sections 79-719  
17 to 79-723 in order to instill a pride and respect for the nation's  
18 institutions and not be merely a recital of events and dates;

19 (e) Ensure that any curriculum recommended or approved by the  
20 committee on American civics is made readily accessible to the public and  
21 contains a reference to this section;

22 (f) Ensure that the district develops and utilizes formative,  
23 interim, and summative assessments to measure student mastery of the  
24 social studies standards adopted pursuant to section 79-760.01;

25 (g) Ensure that the social studies curriculum in the district  
26 incorporates one or more of the following for each student:

27 (i) Administration of a written test that is identical to the entire  
28 civics portion of the naturalization test used by United States  
29 Citizenship and Immigration Services prior to the completion of eighth  
30 grade and again prior to the completion of twelfth grade with the  
31 individual score from each test for each student made available to a

1 parent or guardian of such student; or

2 (ii) Attendance or participation between the commencement of eighth  
3 grade and completion of twelfth grade in a meeting of a public body as  
4 defined by section 84-1409 followed by the completion of a project or  
5 paper in which each student demonstrates or discusses the personal  
6 learning experience of such student related to such attendance or  
7 participation; or

8 (iii) Completion of a project or paper and a class presentation  
9 between the commencement of eighth grade and the completion of twelfth  
10 grade on a person or persons or an event commemorated by a holiday listed  
11 in subsection (8) ~~subdivision (6)~~ of this section or on a topic related  
12 to such person or persons or event; and

13 (h) Take all such other steps as will assure the carrying out of the  
14 provisions of this section and provide a report to the school board  
15 regarding the committee's findings and recommendations.

16 (3) ~~(2)~~ All social studies courses approved for grade levels as  
17 provided by this section shall include and adequately stress  
18 contributions of all ethnic groups to (a) the development and growth of  
19 America into a great nation, (b) art, music, education, medicine,  
20 literature, science, politics, and government, and (c) the military in  
21 all of this nation's wars.

22 (4) ~~(3)~~ All grades of all public, private, denominational, and  
23 parochial schools, below the sixth grade, shall devote at least one hour  
24 per week to exercises or teaching periods for the following purpose:

25 (a) The discussion of noteworthy events pertaining to American  
26 history or the exceptional acts of individuals and groups of Americans;

27 (b) The historical background, memorization, and singing of  
28 patriotic songs such as the Star-Spangled Banner and America the  
29 Beautiful;

30 (c) The development of respect for the American flag as a symbol of  
31 freedom and the sacrifices of those who secured that freedom; and

1 (d) Instruction as to proper conduct in the presentation of the  
2 American flag.

3 (5) Each public, private, denominational, and parochial school may,  
4 as a part of the social studies curriculum, engage students between the  
5 commencement of fifth grade and the completion of eighth grade in a one-  
6 hour American flag education program that includes, but need not be  
7 limited to, the United States Flag Code, the thirteen folds of the  
8 American flag, proper flag etiquette and conduct in the presentation of  
9 the flag, and the historical background of the flag. Such flag education  
10 program may be developed and presented in consultation and partnership  
11 with a local recognized veterans organization as defined in section  
12 80-401.01.

13 (6) {4} In at least two of the three grades from the fifth grade to  
14 the eighth grade in all public, private, denominational, and parochial  
15 schools, time shall be set aside for the teaching of American history  
16 from the social studies curriculum, which shall be taught in such a  
17 manner that all students are given the opportunity to (a) become  
18 competent, responsible, patriotic, and civil citizens who possess a deep  
19 understanding of and respect for both the Constitution of the United  
20 States and the Constitution of Nebraska and (b) prepare to preserve,  
21 protect, and defend freedom and democracy in our nation and our world.

22 (7) {5} In at least two courses in every high school, time shall be  
23 devoted to the teaching of civics and American history as outlined in the  
24 social studies standards adopted pursuant to section 79-760.01, during  
25 which specific attention shall be given to the following matters:

26 (a) The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution,  
27 the Constitution of Nebraska, and the structure and function of local  
28 government in this state;

29 (b) The benefits and advantages of representative government, the  
30 rights and responsibilities of citizenship in our government, and the  
31 dangers and fallacies of forms of government that restrict individual

1 freedoms or possess antidemocratic ideals such as, but not limited to,  
2 Nazism and communism;

3 (c) The duties of citizenship, which include active participation in  
4 the improvement of a citizen's community, state, country, and world and  
5 the value and practice of civil discourse between opposing interests; and

6 (d) The application of knowledge in civics, history, economics,  
7 financial literacy, and geography to address societal issues.

8 (8) ~~(6)~~ Appropriate patriotic exercises suitable to the occasion  
9 shall be held under the direction of the superintendent in every public,  
10 private, denominational, and parochial school on George Washington's  
11 birthday, Abraham Lincoln's birthday, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s  
12 birthday, Native American Heritage Day, Constitution Day, Memorial Day,  
13 Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving Day, or on the day or week preceding or  
14 following such holiday, if the school is in session.

15 (9) ~~(7)~~ Every school board, the State Board of Education, and the  
16 superintendent of each school district in the state shall be held  
17 directly responsible in the order named for carrying out this section.  
18 Neglect thereof by any employee may be considered a cause for dismissal.

19 **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council  
20 shall, in coordination with the State Department of Education, develop a  
21 grant program to provide funding to school districts for the purchase of  
22 American flags made in the United States for students as part of an  
23 American flag education program provided pursuant to subsection (5) of  
24 section 79-724.

25 (b) Subject to available appropriations, a school district may apply  
26 to the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council in a manner  
27 prescribed by the council to receive a grant pursuant to this section.  
28 Such grants shall be funded from the American Flag Education Grant Cash  
29 Fund administered by the State Department of Education.

30 (2) The American Flag Education Grant Cash Fund is created. The fund  
31 shall consist of any money transferred by the Legislature and any gifts,

1 grants, or bequests. The fund shall be used to provide grants pursuant to  
2 this section. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be  
3 invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital  
4 Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

5 **Sec. 3.** (1) The State Department of Education shall contract with  
6 the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council to carry out subsection  
7 (2) of this section.

8 (2) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council shall, in  
9 consultation and partnership with a statewide recognized veterans  
10 organization as defined in section 80-401.01, develop and make available  
11 online for use by schools, an educational video and learning materials  
12 relating to the American flag for purposes of an American flag education  
13 program provided pursuant to subsection (5) of section 79-724.

14 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate five thousand  
15 dollars for fiscal year 2025-26 from the General Fund to the State  
16 Department of Education to carry out this section.

17 **Sec. 4.** Section 79-1248, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
18 amended to read:

19 79-1248 The powers and duties of the Educational Service Unit  
20 Coordinating Council include, but are not limited to:

21 (1) Providing public access to lists of qualified distance education  
22 courses;

23 (2) Collecting and providing school schedules for participating  
24 educational entities;

25 (3) Facilitation of scheduling for qualified distance education  
26 courses;

27 (4) Brokering of qualified distance education courses to be  
28 purchased by educational entities;

29 (5) Assessment of distance education needs and evaluation of  
30 distance education services;

31 (6) Compliance with technical standards as set forth by the Nebraska

1 Information Technology Commission and academic standards as set forth by  
2 the State Department of Education related to distance education;

3 (7) Establishment of a system for scheduling courses brokered by the  
4 council and for choosing receiving educational entities when the demand  
5 for a course exceeds the capacity as determined by either the technology  
6 available or the course provider;

7 (8) Administration of learning management systems, either through  
8 the staff of the council or by delegation to an appropriate educational  
9 entity, with the funding for such systems provided by participating  
10 educational entities; ~~and~~

11 (9) Coordination with educational service units and postsecondary  
12 educational institutions to provide assistance for instructional design  
13 for both two-way interactive video distance education courses and the  
14 offering of graduate credit courses in distance education; and -

15 (10) Coordination with the State Department of Education to provide  
16 grants to school districts for the purchase of American flags pursuant to  
17 section 2 of this act.

18 **Sec. 5.** Original sections 79-724 and 79-1248, Reissue Revised  
19 Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.