

# **Ramona USD**

## **Board Policy**

### **Civic Education - U.S. History/U.S. Government**

**BP 6142.3**

#### **Instruction**

The Governing Board recognizes that historic and current civic instruction including involvement is essential to a democratic republic and desires to provide a comprehensive civic education program that teaches students the history, skills, and principles essential for informed, engaged, and responsible citizenship.

The District shall prepare the student for a mature political citizenry. Civics, U.S. History and U.S. Government education shall convey the purpose, nature, and structure of our constitutional republic. The Board acknowledges that cultivating this neutrality is every bit as necessary to the proper functioning of our democratic republic as is advocacy.

Civics and U.S. Government instruction shall include the following:

1. Promote equality: "All human beings are created equal, and are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Protecting these inalienable rights is the primary purpose of government."
2. Assert that freedom comes with a personal responsibility.
3. Encourage morality and good citizenship, upon which our government is based.
4. Support our process that produces laws which "are wholesome and necessary for the common good."
5. Confirm that liberty is protected through law. For rights to be protected, justice must be blind.
6. Verify that the fluidity of the Constitution relies solely on the Amendment process.
7. Students' shall be taught how the ideologies of communism and totalitarianism conflict with the founding principles of freedom and democracy of the United States. Curriculum shall include first person accounts from diverse individuals who demonstrate civic minded qualities, including those who have moved to this country after being persecuted in other nations.

The proper application of this policy requires staff to be trained on how to apply BP 6144 Controversial Issues.

The Board shall approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, academic standards and curriculum in civics and government that are aligned with state academic standards and reflect the District priorities and Local Control and Accountability Plan and educational goals. The following documents are incorporated into the curriculum:

- (A) The Declaration of Independence.
- (B) The United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights.
- (C) The Federalist Papers.
- (D) The Emancipation Proclamation.

- (E) The Gettysburg Address.
- (F) George Washington's Farewell Address.
- (G) The Magna Carta.
- (H) The Articles of Confederation.
- (I) The California Constitution.

Priority shall be given to instructional material that is supported in historical context and is reasonably complete. Preference will also be given to qualified free sources of supplemental material, in print and in electronic form that is in accordance with Board policies and Regulations.

- (BP 6000 - Concepts and Roles)
- (BP 6011 - Academic Standards)
- (BP 6141 - Curriculum Development and Evaluation)
- (BP 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)
- (BP 9000 - Role of the Board)

The Superintendent or designee shall determine specific courses within the K-12 curriculum in which civic education and government may be explicitly and systematically taught. He/she shall also integrate civic education into other subjects as appropriate.

- (BP 6143 - Courses of Study)
- (BP 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

The district's civic education program shall provide students with an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in American democracy and the workings of federal, state, and local governments. As appropriate, instruction should include an examination of fundamental American documents, including, but not limited to, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and other significant writings and speeches. Instruction should also promote a student's understanding of shared democratic principles and values, such as personal responsibility, justice, equality, respect for others, civic-mindedness, and patriotism, and enable students to make their own commitment to these civic values.

Should a balanced textbook (print or electronic) be unavailable for adoption, the Superintendent shall submit to the Board a recommendation for the closest material that has met the criteria for the adoption and/or the piloting process. This material may be adopted by the Board with approved corresponding companion notes. Each course instructor shall receive a copy of the notes. These notes shall accompany the issuance of the adopted educational material to each student enrolled in the course and shall be included in an easy to find manner on the classroom page for that course, and referenced in the course syllabus. The Superintendent shall ensure that there is a method to verify through assessment and accountability that the notes have been applied with curricular precedence over that portion of the adopted material.

Until replaced, the above shall apply to the 2006 Board adopted textbook with notes; Magruder's American Government, Prentice Hall, California Edition, Copyright 2005 for Social Science Civics 12th Grade. Please reference the notes on the Evaluation and Compiling of Corrections & Adjustments for the aforementioned textbook.

Any course on history, civics, U.S. Government and politics, social studies, or similar subject areas (whether for regular credit or advanced placement credit) shall not require affiliation, or service learning in association with, any organization engaged in lobbying for legislation at the local, state, or federal level, or in social or public policy advocacy. Nor shall any course require for regular credit or advanced

placement credit; lobbying for legislation at the local, state, or federal level, or any practicum, or like activity, involving social or public policy advocacy.

Without Board approval, no private funding shall be accepted by the district for curriculum development, purchase or choice of curricular materials, teacher training, professional development, or continuing teacher education pertaining to courses on history, civics, U.S. government and politics, social studies, or similar subject areas, whether for regular credit or advanced placement credit. This does not pertain to publically available free courses provided through the internet as long as the course content, instructional materials, and any hyperlinks associated meet the same district criteria for policy, regulation, and instructional material requirements, as an in-person course would require.

Where the curriculum guides indicate, course outlines and instructional materials, including supplemental instructional materials, shall include the historic role that racism has played and the inequities that resulted from it, but shall not impart any of the following concepts:

- (a) one race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex;
- (b) an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously;
- (c) an individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of the individual's race;
- (d) members of one race cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race;
- (e) an individual's moral standing or worth is necessarily determined by his or her race or sex;
- (f) an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex;
- (g) any individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his or her race or sex;
- (h) meritocracy or traits such as a hard work ethic are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race to oppress members of another race;
- (i) that the advent of slavery in the territory that is now the United States constituted the true founding of the United States; or
- (j) that, with respect to their relationship to American values, slavery and racism are anything other than deviations from, betrayals of, or failures to live up to, the authentic founding principles of the United States, which include liberty and equality

Service learning, extracurricular and cocurricular activities, class and school elections, simulations of government, student-led debates, voter education, and observation of local government processes may be used to reinforce classroom instruction by linking civic knowledge to practical experience and encouraging civic involvement.

(BP 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(BP 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

(BP 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)

(BP 9150 - Student Board Members)

Whenever civic education includes topics that may be controversial due to political beliefs or other influences, instruction shall be presented in a balanced manner that does not promote any particular viewpoint. Students shall not be discriminated against for expressing their ideas and opinions and shall be encouraged to respect different points of view.

(BP 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(BP 6144 - Controversial Issues)

## **Constitution/Citizenship Day**

Each year on or near September 17, in commemoration of Constitution and Citizenship Day, the district shall hold an educational program for students in grades K-12 pertaining to the United States Constitution which shall include exercises and instruction in the purpose, meaning, and importance of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights. (Education Code 37221; 36 USC 106 Note)

(BP 6115 - Ceremonies and Observances)

## **Student Voter Registration**

To encourage students to participate in the elections process when they are of voting age, the Superintendent or designee shall provide high school students with voter registration information, including information regarding the state's online voter registration system.

The Board shall determine the most effective means of distributing voter registration forms provided by the Secretary of State, which may include, but are not limited to, distributing the forms at the start of the school year with orientation materials, placing voter registration forms at central locations, including voter registration forms with graduation materials, and/or providing links and the web site address of the Secretary of State's online voter registration system on the district's web site and in email notices sent to students.

During the last two full weeks in April and September, in areas on each high school campus that are reasonably accessible to all students as designated by the superintendent, principal or designee, the county elections official shall be allowed to register students and school personnel to vote. (Education Code 49040). Superintendent shall require that such voter registrations shall be politically neutral.

### **Legal Reference:**

#### **EDUCATION CODE**

54 Student service on boards and commissions

233.5 Teaching of principles

33540 Standards for government and civics instruction

37221 Commemorative exercises including anniversary of U.S. Constitution

48205 Absence from school for jury duty or precinct board service

49040-49041 Student voter registration

51210 Courses of study, grades 1-6

51220 Courses of study, grades 7-12

51530 Prohibition and definition re advocating or teaching communism with intent to indoctrinate

60043 Instructional material must contain the documents; the Declaration of Independence & the U.S. Constitution

#### **ELECTIONS CODE**

2146 Student voter registration

2148 Student voter registration, contact person

12302 Precinct boards, appointment of students

#### **UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20**

6711-6716 Education for Democracy Act

#### **UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 36**

101-144 Patriotic observances