

SB349 INTRODUCED



1 SB349
2 5IQY636-1
3 By Senator Allen
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 30-Apr-24



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SYNOPSIS:

This bill would establish the American History and Civics Excellence Initiative within the State Department of Education.

This bill would provide for an online course of study on American history and civics that high school teachers may complete in order to receive the American History and Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement and, subject to appropriation, a onetime stipend.

This bill would authorize the State Superintendent of Education to appoint, and the Senate to confirm, a program director.

This bill would also require the State Board of Education to oversee the initiative and adopt rules.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to teacher endorsements; to create the American History and Civics Excellence Initiative; to provide for the appointment and confirmation of a program director; to provide for an online course of study that high school students may complete to qualify for the American History and



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29 Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement; to provide for a
30 onetime stipend, subject to appropriation; and to require the
31 State Board of Education to adopt rules.

32 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

33 Section 1. (a) For the purposes of this section, the
34 following terms have the following meanings:

35 (1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.

36 (2) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

37 (3) ENDORSEMENT. The American History and Civics Seal
38 of Excellence Endorsement.

39 (4) INITIATIVE. The American History and Civics
40 Excellence Initiative.

41 (5) TEACHER. A high school teacher who holds a valid
42 Alabama Teacher Certificate issued by the department.

43 (b) (1) The American History and Civics Excellence
44 Initiative is created within the department. The initiative
45 shall consist of an online course of study that takes a
46 minimum of 50 educational hours to complete.

47 (2) The course of study shall address topics including,
48 but not limited to, the following:

49 a. The philosophical underpinnings of the American
50 Republic and the root foundation of American exceptionalism.

51 b. The success of the United States and the success or
52 failure of other nations' governing philosophies to evaluate
53 their past, present, and likely future effects.

54 c. The value of civic pride and regular participation
55 by citizens in government.

56 d. The rights and responsibilities of citizens,



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57 including the process of advocating properly with government
58 officials.

59 (c) The State Superintendent of Education shall
60 appoint, subject to confirmation by the Senate, a program
61 director within the department. The program director shall
62 direct and manage the initiative in compliance with this
63 section.

64 (d) (1) The State Superintendent of Education shall
65 develop, and the State Board of Education shall approve, the
66 American History and Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement
67 subject to the requirements of this section.

68 (2) A teacher who completes the online course of study
69 is eligible for the endorsement. Upon successful completion of
70 the course of study, the teacher may submit an application to
71 the program director to add the American History and Civics
72 Seal of Excellence Endorsement to his or her valid Alabama
73 Teacher Certification.

74 (3) Each teacher who successfully completes the course
75 of study and receives the endorsement may also submit an
76 application to the program director for a onetime stipend of
77 three thousand dollars (\$3,000). The program director shall
78 review each application, confirm that the teacher has
79 completed the course of study and received the endorsement,
80 and, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, facilitate
81 the awarding of the stipend.

82 (4) Any monies appropriated shall be budgeted and
83 allotted pursuant to the Budget Management Act in accordance
84 with Article 4, commencing with Section 41-4-80 of Chapter 4



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85 of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and only in the amounts
86 provided by the Legislature in the general appropriations act
87 or other appropriations act.

88 (e) (1) The board shall oversee the initiative and adopt
89 rules to implement and administer this section.

90 (2) The board shall develop separate application forms
91 that a teacher must complete to: (i) receive the endorsement;
92 and (ii) receive the stipend.

93 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
94 1, 2024.