

**HOUSE BILL NO. 171**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES KAPSNER, Stevens, Kookesh, Joule, Whitaker, McGuire, Berkowitz, Fate, Wilson, Meyer, Croft, Murkowski, Kerttula, Hayes, Guess, Morgan**

**Introduced: 3/9/01**

**Referred: House Special Committee on Education, Health, Education and Social Services, Finance**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to a curriculum for Alaska history; and providing for an effective**  
2 **date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
5 to read:

6 FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

7 (1) an education rich in history and government is vital to the development of  
8 a representative democracy and a civil society; knowledge of a person's own state history and  
9 government is fundamental to informed and effective participation in state and local affairs;

10 (2) Alaska's human history is at least 10,000 years old and reflects the  
11 diversity of Native, European, American, and Asian cultures; the study of Alaska history  
12 should be as rich as Alaska's origins and evolution as a political community, and it should  
13 take into consideration the ancient, historic, and modern interactions of Native, European,  
14 American, and Asian cultures, economies, governments, and values; every student graduating

1 from an Alaska secondary school should do so with a demonstrable understanding of Alaska's  
2 rich and unique history;

3 (3) the face of Alaska is changing demographically, economically, and  
4 socially; the speed of change makes it imperative for Alaska's citizens and leaders to have a  
5 sound understanding of the state's history;

6 (4) a knowledge of history provides a context for understanding where  
7 Alaskans came from and what Alaskans value about the diversity and richness of the state;  
8 that knowledge can help Alaskans make decisions individually and collectively that will  
9 protect and enhance what Alaskans value both now and into the future;

10 (5) a civics component to an Alaska history curriculum, including how  
11 Alaska's economy and Alaska's form of government developed, is crucial to understanding  
12 how to deal with today's issues, including urban and rural cooperation and the state's fiscal  
13 challenges;

14 (6) an educated Alaska populace with a full appreciation for the history of  
15 Alaska will make better decisions for the good of all Alaska citizens, both rural and urban;

16 (7) an understanding of Alaska's history will help Alaska avoid mistakes of  
17 the past and will contribute to a prosperous, successful future for all Alaskans;

18 (8) Alaska schools are positioned to transmit knowledge of Alaska history to  
19 the majority of people who will inhabit Alaska in coming generations;

20 (9) 22 other states currently require by statute the teaching of state history;

21 (10) over the past decade, a number of instructional resources have become  
22 available and could be used to teach courses on Alaska and Alaska Native history.

23 (b) It is the intent of this Act

24 (1) to ensure that every future Alaska high school graduate receive instruction  
25 in Alaska history through a locally adopted curriculum that meets the state social studies  
26 standards;

27 (2) that Alaska school districts should receive the instructional support needed  
28 to put an Alaska history curriculum in place and to prepare teachers to maximize the effect of  
29 the curriculum;

30 (3) to encourage public and private involvement and support for  
31 implementation of an Alaska history curriculum;

1 (4) to provide for a broad based Alaska history curriculum that includes study  
 2 of the state's geography, resource development, economics, government, anthropology, art,  
 3 Native history, and cultural relationships.

4 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.255(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) A charter school operates as a school in the local school district except that  
 6 the charter school (1) is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program,  
 7 curriculum, and scheduling requirements; (2) is exempt from AS 14.14.130(c); the  
 8 principal of the charter school shall be selected by the academic policy committee and  
 9 shall select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school; and (3)  
 10 operates under the charter school's annual program budget as set out in the contract  
 11 between the local school board and the charter school under (c) of this section. A  
 12 local school board may exempt a charter school from other local school district  
 13 requirements if the exemption is set out in the contract. **A charter school is subject**  
 14 **to the requirements of AS 14.30.440.**

15 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

16 **Article 6A. Alaska History Education.**

17 **Sec. 14.30.440. Alaska history education.** (a) The department shall develop  
 18 a standards-based Alaska history education curriculum within grades 9 through 12.  
 19 The curriculum must include a Native studies component. Each school board shall  
 20 implement the curriculum as a part of regular classroom studies and shall require that  
 21 each student complete the curriculum with a passing grade as a requirement for  
 22 graduation.

23 (b) In this section,

24 (1) "curriculum" means a course of study that, by the completion of the  
 25 12th grade, is the equivalent of at least one semester;

26 (2) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990.

27 \* **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 28 read:

29 **APPLICABILITY.** This Act applies to students who begin the ninth grade on or after  
 30 July 1, 2002.

31 \* **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2001.