

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 27, 2024
AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 16, 2024
AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 11, 2024
AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 19, 2024

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2023–2024 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO. 1277

Introduced by Senator Stern

~~(Coauthor: Senator Rubio)(Coauthors: Assembly Members Berman, Friedman, Blanca Rubio, and Ward)~~

(Coauthors: Senators Becker, Newman, Portantino, Rubio, and Wiener)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bauer-Kahan, Berman, Connolly, Flora, Friedman, Muratsuchi, Pellerin, Blanca Rubio, Ward, and Zbur)

February 15, 2024

An act to add Section 51221.1 to the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1277, as amended, Stern. Pupil instruction: genocide education: the Holocaust.

Existing law requires the State Department of Education to incorporate age-appropriate materials relating to, among other things, genocide and the Holocaust into publications that provide examples of curriculum resources for teacher use, consistent with the subject frameworks on history and social science. Under existing law, the Legislature encourages the incorporation of survivor, rescuer, liberator, and witness oral testimony into the teaching of genocide and the Holocaust.

This bill would establish the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, to be responsible for establishing a statewide teacher professional development program on genocide, including the Holocaust, for school district, county office of education, and charter school teachers. The bill would require the collaborative, under the State Department of Education's direction, to consist of leading genocide and Holocaust education organizations and institutions, genocide survivors, and community leaders. The bill would provide that the collaborative's mission is to ensure that genocide, including Holocaust, education is taught consistent with, among other things, the content standards, curriculum frameworks, and instructional materials adopted by the State Board of Education, in ways that are interdisciplinary and age-appropriate to pupils of different grade levels. The bill would prescribe the duties of the collaborative, including, among others, providing, as determined by the department, annual verbal or written reports to the department and the Legislature on the collaborative's achievement of its mission. The bill would make the implementation of these provisions contingent upon an appropriation.

Digest Key

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

Bill Text

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) Holocaust and genocide education can help develop a more empathetic, morally courageous, and socially responsible next generation. This mission is central to California's status as a welcoming, diverse, and dynamic state.
- (b) Holocaust and genocide education is urgently needed to meet the ever-evolving challenges California faces in sustaining a civic life and a public discourse that values and protects all of its citizens.
- (c) Since 1985, California has required Holocaust and genocide education to be taught in public schools, as required pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 51220 of the Education Code.
- (d) Section 51220 of the Education Code prescribes that the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, include age-appropriate instruction on human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide and the Holocaust.
- (e) Currently, there is no systematic teacher training on Holocaust and genocide education.
- (f) Establishment of the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education as a permanent collaborative under the direction of the State Department of Education would enable the state to train teachers in every school district, county office of education, and charter school, on an ongoing basis, on how to effectively provide Holocaust and genocide education using the state's history-social science content standards-based curricula and best practices, thereby setting a national standard for Holocaust and genocide education that other states can follow.

SEC. 2. Section 51221.1 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51221.1. (a) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Collaborative" means the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education.
- (2) "Genocide" means, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group:
 - (A) Killing members of the group.
 - (B) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.
 - (C) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about, in whole or in part, its physical destruction.
 - (D) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.
 - (E) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
- (3) "Holocaust" means, as described by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of 6,000,000 European Jews by the Nazi regime and its

allies and collaborators.

(b) The California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education is hereby established. The collaborative shall be responsible for establishing a statewide teacher professional development program on genocide, including the Holocaust, for school district, county office of education, and charter school teachers.

(c) The collaborative, under the department's direction, shall consist of leading genocide and Holocaust education organizations and institutions, genocide survivors, and community leaders.

(d) The collaborative's mission is to ensure that genocide, including Holocaust, education is taught consistent with the current content standards, curriculum frameworks, and instructional materials adopted by the state board, and any other requirements of this code, including, but not limited to, Sections 51204.5 and 60040, in ways that are interdisciplinary and age-appropriate to pupils of different grade levels.

(e) In addition to focusing on education regarding the Holocaust and ~~the genocides~~ *other genocides, including, but not limited to, those* of the Armenian, Bosnian, Cambodian, Guatemalan, Indigenous American, Rwandan, and Uyghur peoples, the collaborative shall focus on education to identify and confront anti-Semitism and hate in modern society.

(f) The duties of the collaborative shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(1) Distributing grants to genocide and Holocaust education organizations and institutions to provide teacher training programs, and developing innovative academic standards-based curricula and digital tools, consistent with the purposes of this section.

(2) Creating a robust digital library of lesson plans and resources on genocide, including Holocaust, education that align with the academic standards, distributing these lesson plans to school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools statewide, and supporting teachers with the successful implementation of the lesson plans through workshops, conferences, and digital tools.

(3) Organizing statewide and regional workshops, and providing participating teachers with transportation and accommodation.

(4) Launching and maintaining an internet website that serves as a central hub for sharing the latest educational resources, including curricula and other materials, and best practices on genocide education to provide access to all California teachers of pupils in any of grades 6 to 12, inclusive, and increasing the use of high-quality resources, in school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools.

(5) Evaluating the implementation and administration of this section annually to assess the degree to which teachers' efficacy on teaching about genocide, including the Holocaust, has improved, and the mission of the collaborative, as described in subdivision (d), has been met.

(6) Providing, as determined by the department, annual verbal or written reports to the department and the Legislature, pursuant to Section 9795 of the Government Code, on the collaborative's achievement of its mission, as described in subdivision (d).

(g) The implementation of this section is contingent upon an appropriation for its purposes in the annual Budget Act or another statute.