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**ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2037**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Couture, Senn, Leavitt, Fitzgibbon, Rude, Hutchins, Low, Christian, Ramel, Ryu, Ormsby, Barnard, Graham, Callan, Macri, Cheney, Sandlin, Goodman, Caldier, Nance, Riccelli, Reeves, Paul, Pollet, Griffey, and Davis)

AN ACT Relating to Holocaust and genocide education in public schools; amending RCW 28A.300.115; adding new sections to chapter 28A.230 RCW; creating a new section; providing an effective date; and providing expiration dates.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:

(1) April of each year is hereby designated international genocide prevention and awareness month to provide space for formal recognition of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide and crimes against humanity.

(2) During the month of April, each public school shall conduct or promote age-appropriate educational activities that provide instruction, awareness, and understanding of the Holocaust and genocide education to all students. These activities may include classroom instruction, guest speaker presentations, school assemblies, and other developmentally appropriate activities.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.300.115 and 2019 c 85 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) ((~~Every~~)) (a) In addition to the requirements in section 1 of this act, every public middle school, junior high school, and high school is strongly encouraged to include in its curriculum instruction on the events of the period in modern world history known as the Holocaust((~~, the systemic, German state-sponsored persecution and murder of Jews and other innocent victims by the Nazi regime and its collaborators between the years 1933 and 1945. The instruction may also include other examples of genocide and crimes against humanity~~)). The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored genocide perpetrated between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its collaborators with the aim of annihilating the Jewish people. During the era of the Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups for various reasons, including people with disabilities, the Romani people, political dissidents, and gay men. In delivering the instruction, educators are further encouraged to include genocides and crimes against humanity in every region of the world and at various points in history. The studying of this material is intended to: Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and intolerance; prepare students to be responsible citizens in a pluralistic democracy; and be a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples never again to permit such occurrences.

(b) Public schools are strongly encouraged to offer at least one Holocaust and genocide education stand-alone elective that is available to students at least once during grades six through 12.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with ((~~an expert Washington nonprofit organization that teaches the lessons of the Holocaust~~)) a Washington nonprofit organization with expertise in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust, other nonprofit organizations with expertise in teaching lessons on genocide and crimes against humanity in different regions of the world and at various points in history, particularly including diasporic communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made refugee by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide, and a public institution of higher education with expertise in advancing knowledge about the Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity that includes curriculum development and teacher training, must:

(a) Develop best practices and guidelines for high quality instruction under this section; and

(b) Encourage and support middle school, junior high school, and high school teachers in implementing these best practices and guidelines.

(3) Beginning September 1, 2020, middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools that offer instruction as described in subsection (1) of this section must follow the best practices and guidelines developed under subsection (2) of this section.

(4) Screening criteria designed to eliminate bias in instructional materials must be used when selecting curricula and materials to implement this section.

(5)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must update and electronically publish the best practices and guidelines developed under this section ((~~on an annual basis~~)).

(b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must develop and update as needed, in collaboration with the organizations described in subsection (2) of this section, and electronically publish, guidance on vertical alignment, materials, and training to support implementation of the stand-alone elective described in subsection (1)(b) of this section.

(6) This section expires July 1, 2027.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) In addition to the requirements in section 1 of this act, beginning with the 2027-28 school year, when it aligns with the social studies learning standards including United States history and contemporary world history, public schools that serve students in any of grades six through 12 shall provide instruction on the events of the period in modern world history known as the Holocaust. The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored genocide perpetrated between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its collaborators with the aim of annihilating the Jewish people. During the era of the Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups for various reasons, including people with disabilities, the Romani people, political dissidents, and gay men. The instruction must also include genocides and crimes against humanity in every region of the world and at various points in history. The studying of this material is intended to: Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and intolerance; prepare students to be responsible citizens in a pluralistic democracy; and be a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples never again to permit such occurrences. This instruction must follow the best practices and guidelines developed and updated under subsection (3)(a) of this section.

(b) Public schools are strongly encouraged to offer at least one Holocaust and genocide education stand-alone elective that is available to students at least once during grades six through 12.

(2) Screening criteria designed to eliminate bias in instructional materials must be used when selecting curricula and materials to implement this section.

(3)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with a Washington nonprofit organization with expertise in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust, other nonprofit organizations with expertise in teaching lessons on genocide and crimes against humanity in different regions of the world and at various points in history, particularly including diasporic communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made refugee by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide, and a public institution of higher education with expertise in advancing knowledge about the Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity that includes curriculum development and teacher training, shall:

(i) Develop, update as needed, and electronically publish best practices and guidelines for high quality instruction under this section;

(ii) Support middle school, junior high school, and high school teachers in implementing these best practices and guidelines; and

(iii) Develop, electronically publish, and update as needed, guidance on vertical alignment, materials, and training to support implementation of the stand-alone elective described in subsection (1)(b) of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) By September 30, 2025, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must report to the appropriate committees of the legislature how the agency will meaningfully include or has meaningfully included diasporic communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made refugee by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide when collaborating with organizations as required by RCW 28A.300.115(2). The office of the superintendent of public instruction must provide an interim update on their progress to the appropriate committees of the legislature by January 15, 2025.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must include in the report:

(a) The stakeholders, organizations, and institutions with which the office of the superintendent of public instruction has collaborated or plans to collaborate in developing best practices and guidelines for high quality instruction, and in supporting teachers in implementing these best practices and guidelines, as required by RCW 28A.300.115(2);

(b) The questions solicited and the feedback received in the collaboration process;

(c) The methods by which organizations were identified for collaboration; and

(d) Any other relevant information about the collaboration process.

(3) This section expires July 1, 2026.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1, 2027.

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