



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2965		DATE: 4/8/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA MICHEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 4:49 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I support black literature and history being required in all Missouri schools. We all benefit from this type of curriculum.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF		PHONE NUMBER: 314-440-9000	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCACY		TITLE: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX #1535			
CITY: O' FALLON		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63366
EMAIL: ArnieDienoff@Mail.Com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 11:55 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BILL NICHOLS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 5:33 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 2965. Missouri's slaves were emancipated 162 years ago and ever since then there has been a concerted and intentional effort (see United Daughters of the Confederacy) to indoctrinate Missouri children with falsehoods about the practice of slavery and also a persistent effort to minimize the history of the evil practice and to diminish the accomplishments of Blacks and Black Missourians. That minimization and diminishment propagated and fueled the attitudes of White superiority, racism and dehumanization of Blacks and other people of color that we see now even in 2026. Incorporating Black history and Black literature into high schools curriculums will help treat that cancer as well as increase in GPA's, graduation rates, college enrollment, and attendance improvement.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER: 314-600-6018	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP		TITLE: PAL TEAM LEAD VOLUNTEER	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1352			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63302
EMAIL: dlb@missouriequity.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 12:30 PM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Missouri Equity Education Partnership supports this bill. It teaches history fully and accurately. It will help students understand how underrepresented communities have directly impacted our history and culture. There are requirements for a Missouri History test and transfer students manage to graduate with that requirement, even transferring in late; sometimes it's as easy as an EOC test in lieu of the courses. Of course the best way to teach African American History and Literature would be to truly integrate it in the standards. Until then, this bill is a good and necessary way to make sure our students understand our history and culture.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELLEN M GOUGH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 9:59 PM

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I support HB 2965. We should teach African American history and literature in our schools. African American history is a large part of American history.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JERE HOCHMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 11:50 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I write in support of HB 2965.

It is essential that every student in the State of Missouri complete at minimum, one unit of Black history and one unit of Black literature. Missouri's official, legal history begins with the compromise and agreement to enter the United States as a slave state to balance Maine's entrance. For those in opposition of this bill, can you verify that every Missouri student learns about the Missouri Compromise in their American History classes?

In 1847 The Missouri legislature passed (and later rescinded) a law that prohibited teaching Black children to read and write.

Can you verify that every Black child is now being instructed successfully to read and write - without the heavy hand of grade level retention is their reading level (and any child's reading level) is not at grade level?

Can you verify that when book banning and pressure on librarians and teachers to remove particular books occurs (of which you are well aware) that a full complement of relevant and meaningful black literature is not removed?

It is a sad commentary when a State legislature seeks to dictate specificity in what is taught in schools and how it is taught. That is government overreach.

In this instance, it is necessary.

Furthermore, in consideration of this bill and all bills related to curriculum and instruction, legislation must include that ANY school receiving State funding directly must comply including those which utilize Taxpayers' state dollars to fund private schools.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOY WEESE MOLL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 6:12 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I belong to an adult book group that specializes in books about race in America. One of our most common questions is "Why didn't I learn about this in school?" We've asked this about the East St. Louis and Tulsa Race Riots, about slave rebellions and about secret enclaves of people who escaped slavery, about the Great Migration, about sundown towns, and so much more. We're angry about missing out on so much of our American history, history that is necessary to understand our modern realities. Let's not let another generation grow up as ignorant as we did.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KIMBERLY MAXWELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 9:35 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA WARD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 6:29 PM

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Incorporating Black history and Black literature into high schools curriculums has shown an increase in GPA's, graduation rates, college enrollment, and attendance improvement. This reflects how overall engagement is positively impacted by access to these classes.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LAURA BURKHARDT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 4:39 PM

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As a mother of 3 kids in Missouri, 2 of them still in high school, I wish this legislation would have been in place years ago. Expanding access to information for our children is the best thing we can do for them. I fully support this bill and I strongly urge the committee to do the same. Thank you to Representative Bosley for bringing HB 2965 forward!



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA PATTERSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 6:27 PM

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The contributions by people of color to our state and our country must not be ignored.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LIBBY WILLIAMS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/7/2026 5:45 PM
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I am in support.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LYNNE GRONEFELD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 6:56 PM
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As a retired high school ELA teacher, I SUPPORT the freedom of students and families to choose courses that bring in ALL parts of America as shown through of literature. America IS all these voices! We share truth when we share experiences.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 11:30 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE WIETHOP		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 11:26 PM	
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Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RACHEL MORROW		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/7/2026 5:55 PM
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I support teaching Black History in schools.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SHARON GEUEA JONES		PHONE NUMBER: 573-808-2156
REPRESENTING: MO NAACP		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: sharon.geuea.jones@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 12:36 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHIRLEY SEABAUGH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/7/2026 9:16 PM
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History has many perspectives. They all need to be taught.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SLOAN SHEFFIELD COWELL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 7:11 PM	

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My child greatly benefited from having the opportunity of attending classes where she learned about experiences outside of her realm. It is important that we learn from each other when it is not our lived experience.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/8/2026 7:26 AM
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This bill does not just introduce curriculum—it mandates it as a condition of graduation.

That distinction matters.

Because once something becomes a graduation requirement, it is no longer guidance or enrichment.

It is a state-imposed obligation that every district must absorb, regardless of capacity, scheduling constraints, or existing requirements.

**This bill requires:
two full units of credit,
designed at the state level,
imposed on every student statewide.**

That is a significant expansion of state control over what constitutes a diploma.

Second, the structure bypasses normal safeguards. The bill explicitly removes application of section 160.514, which governs broader education standards.

That is not incidental—that is a carve-out.

**So the process becomes:
a state-selected work group defines the content,
the state adopts it as mandatory, and
districts are required to implement it without the usual statutory framework.**

That is not standard curriculum development.

That is direct insertion.

Third, this is mandate stacking. Graduation requirements are finite. Every new required credit displaces flexibility—whether that is career training, electives, or locally prioritized coursework.

And while the state-level cost is minimal, the real burden shifts downward. Districts must find the staff, the time, and the structure to deliver this—whether or not they are equipped to do so.

So I am placing this clearly on the record:

When the state mandates specific coursework as a condition of graduation, bypasses standard statutory frameworks, and shifts implementation burdens onto local districts, it is exercising direct control over both curriculum and capacity without corresponding accountability.

And when that approach appears alongside other legislation this session that centralizes authority and reduces local discretion—

it reflects a broader pattern of expanding top-down control over education systems.

Curriculum matters.

But so does who controls it—and how it is imposed.

This bill crosses that line.

For those reasons, I stand in opposition.