



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION William W. Cobey Jr., Chairman

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., State Superintendent

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September 16, 2014

Senator Jerry W. Tillman  
Senate Majority Whip  
627 Legislative Office Building  
300 N. Salisbury Street  
Raleigh, NC 27609-5925

Dear Senator Tillman:

In your recent letter to Chairman Cobey and me, you asked that we send you in writing that the AP U.S. History course fully meets the legislative requirement of teaching a semester long U.S. History course based on the Founding Principles, founding fathers, and related documents.

Beginning with the 9th grade class of 2012-13, all students are required to earn four credits in social studies-- World Studies, Civics and Economics, American History I, and American History II. These courses are in addition to the eight years of study students have experienced in social studies grades 1-8.

The required course, Civics and Economics, includes the following founding principles outlined in the Founding Principles Act:

- The Creator-endowed inalienable rights of the people
- Structure of government, separation of powers with checks and balances
- Frequent and free elections in a representative government
- Rule of law
- Equal justice under the law
- Private property rights
- Federalism
- Due process
- Individual rights as set forth in the Bill of Rights
- Individual responsibility.

American History I includes the same principles but at a greater depth of understanding and application.

Current State Board of Education policy adopted in 2012 allows students to take AP U.S. History I in lieu of American History I. It states that AP U.S. History and an additional social studies elective satisfy the American History I and American History II credit requirement for graduation.

According to the College Board's web site in the question and answer section about AP U.S. History, the following documents are required reading:

- Thomas Paines *Common Sense*
- The Declaration of Independence
- Articles of Confederation
- Constitution

## OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- George Washington's "Fairwell Address"
- Kansas-Nebraska Act
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment
- 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment
- 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment
- *Plessy v Ferguson*
- Treaty of Versailles
- Brown v Board of Education
- Civil Rights Act of 1964

The following link gives more detail about AP U.S. History:

[http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers\\_corner/3501.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/3501.html)

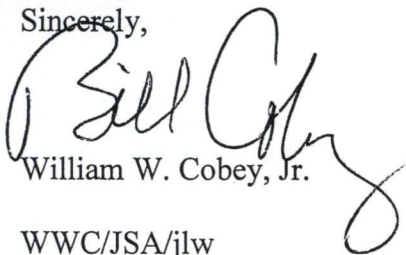
OR direct FAQ sheet: [http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam\\_information/224882.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/224882.html).

While each Advanced Placement teacher has flexibility in how to approach the teaching of AP U. S. History, these documents cover the Founding Principles required by the General Assembly's legislation that hold local boards of education accountable for making sure the Founding Principles Act is followed.

Since all Advanced Placement courses are electives, local boards of education have the authority to determine which ones; if any, to offer. The 2013 General Assembly legislation requires the Department of Public Instruction to establish the North Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership to broaden access and successful participation in advanced courses, primarily focused on AP courses. The College Board is leading that effort in partnership with DPI.

Please let us know if we can provide any additional information. Thank you for your continued support of public education.

Sincerely,



William W. Cobey, Jr.

WWC/JSA/jlw



June St. Clair Atkinson

C Rep. Bryan Holloway  
Rep. Linda Johnson