



# 2018 New York State YMCA

## Youth And Government

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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Assembly Liberty 5

Bill #: AL-32

1 **Sponsors:** Mikayla Blunt, Thomas Kane, Tyler Lewis, & Madison Boughton

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3 AN ACT TO: Amend Section 801.2 of the education law to include the teaching of  
4 current events curriculum in grades 9-12.

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6 *The People of the State of New York, represented in the*  
7 *Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:*

8

### 9 **PURPOSE**

10 This bill seeks to expose high school students to current events curriculum to have  
11 informed citizenry and informed adult voters.

### 12 **SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS**

#### 13 **Section 1: Definitions**

14 **Current events:** Present-time news events concerning important people, places,  
15 things, and ideas

16 **Public School:** A secondary school in the United States supported by public funds  
17 and providing free education for children of a community or district.

#### 18 **Section 2: Provisions**

19 The education law subsection 2 is amended to read as follows:

20 1. The regents shall prescribe courses of instruction in the history,  
21 meaning, significance and effect of the provisions of the constitution of the United  
22 States, the amendments thereto, the declaration of independence, the constitution  
23 of the state of New York and the amendments thereto, **and current events** to be  
24 maintained and followed in all of the schools of the state. The boards of education  
25 and trustees of the several cities and school districts of the state shall require  
26 instruction to be given in such courses, by the teachers employed in the schools  
27 therein. All pupils attending such schools, in the ~~eight~~ **ninth** and higher grades,  
28 shall attend upon such instruction.

29

### 30 **JUSTIFICATION**

31 Current New York State 12<sup>th</sup> grade Participation in Government curriculum  
32 ([https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-  
34 framework](https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-<br/>33 framework)) covers "**Active, engaged, and informed citizens are critical to the  
35 success of the United States representative democracy**" lessons. However,  
36 this curriculum is not taught until the senior year. This law seeks to include current  
37 events curriculum into all four years of high school starting in grade 9. Thomas  
38 Jefferson stated, "If we are to guard against ignorance and remain free, it is the  
39 responsibility of every American to be informed". Given that many current high  
40 school students will be able to vote in the next presidential election, being an  
informed student is imperative. Being informed can only happen through



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1 awareness and of daily current events at the local, state, national and international  
2 levels and an understanding of how these current events affect us. Informed  
3 students have exposure to larger vocabularies and conversational skills which helps  
4 to build stronger language skills. Informed students can in turn score higher on  
5 standardized achievement tests, be more aware of global issues, be more media  
6 'literate' and will be able to have more constructive conversations based on fact.  
7 Studying current events curriculums can lead to stronger reading comprehension,  
8 critical thinking, problem solving, oral expression and listening skills. Studying  
9 current events curriculum stimulates students to be more attentive to the news  
10 cycles and better able to evaluate what is true news vs. "fake news". Teaching  
11 current events in 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade curriculums will help to develop an informed citizenry  
12 and lifelong learners.

13 [www.blog.mimo.com/current-events-and-why-we-need-to-teach-them](http://www.blog.mimo.com/current-events-and-why-we-need-to-teach-them)

14 [www.blog.brown.edu/choices/2016/09/23/why-should-we-teach-current-events/](http://www.blog.brown.edu/choices/2016/09/23/why-should-we-teach-current-events/)

15 [www.socialstudies.pressible.org/lizhoelzle/current-events](http://www.socialstudies.pressible.org/lizhoelzle/current-events)

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17 **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

18 The Department of Ed needs to accommodate these new directives within its  
19 existing budget as the cost is not significant.

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21 **EFFECTIVE DATE**

22 This bill will go into effect one year after its passage.

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