

Censoring Public Education

Missouri Republicans introduced legislation to require the Ten Commandments to be displayed in schools. Missouri Republicans introduced HB 34/SB 594 to require that classrooms display the religious Ten Commandments in “large, easily readable font” beginning Jan. 1, 2026. Missouri students would see the words “I AM THE LORD thy God” followed by the Ten Commandments posted in every public and charter school classroom they enter. According to the ACLU of Missouri, “the bill violates the U.S. and Missouri constitutions. Children are required to attend school, and SB 594 could pressure students into adopting the state’s preferred religion, usurping parents’ right to choose what religious doctrine, if any, to instill in their children.” Even though the bill likely violates the Constitution’s Establishment Clause, this legislation is part of an ongoing legal battle. Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry signed a similar bill into law last year. A federal judge blocked the law in November, and the state appealed the court’s decision. The Senate version had a hearing in the Education Committee in March, and the House version had its second reading in January. During the hearing, the Columbia Missourian reports, “Sen. Rick Brattin, R-Harrisonville, who chairs the education committee, spoke at length in favor of the measure. He cited his belief that the U.S. was founded as a Christian nation.” [Columbia Missourian, [3/25/2025](#)]

Conservative Extremists in the Missouri Legislature passed legislation interfering with public school curricula in an attempt to intimidate instruction on topics related to racism and race-related issues. Over the past few years, Conservative Extremists in Missouri have led the nation in educational intimidation legislation, outpacing Texas and Oklahoma. Senate Bill 4 is only one of thirty-one such attacks on Missouri students and teachers. This bill attempts to intimidate teachers and public instruction related to racism and race-related issues by creating a statewide portal housing school financial data and every public school curriculum. Senate Bill 4, like many other Republican-led attacks on teachers and students, banned the teaching of Critical Race Theory in public schools. Critical Race Theory, or CRT, has become a catch-all term for Conservative Republicans’ attempts to ban instruction on racism. According to KCUR, any district out of compliance with these Conservative Extremist demands would “be subject to litigation or other form of redress and to a civil penalty of \$500 per occurrence.” [SB4, Missouri State Legislature, Regular Session 2023; KCUR, [1/24/2023](#); St. Louis Post Dispatch, [8/23/2023](#)]

Conservative Extremists in the Missouri Legislature introduced legislation outlawing the discussion of LGBTQ-related issues in public schools. Over the past few years, Conservative Extremists in Missouri have led the nation in educational intimidation legislation, outpacing Texas and Oklahoma. Senate Bill 134 is only one of thirty-one such attacks on Missouri students and teachers. Senate Bill 134, Missouri’s more extreme version of Florida’s infamous “Don’t Say Gay” bill, would outlaw K-12 discussion of any LGBTQ person or related issue. According to the Associated Press, “Missouri’s bill would only allow licensed mental health care providers to talk to students about gender identity and LGBTQ issues in K-12 public schools, and only if guardians first give permission.” The bill stipulates that any violation of the Conservative Extremist demands will result in “charges of incompetence, immorality, and neglect of duty under the laws governing the

discipline of holders of certificate of license to teach.” [[SB134](#), Missouri State Legislature, Regular Session 2023; Associated Press, [2/7/2023](#)]

Conservative Extremists in the Missouri Legislature outlawed college and K-12 trans students from participating on girl’s sports teams. Senate Bill 39, according to the Kansas City Star, “bans both public and private schools, including colleges, from allowing students to compete in sports that don’t match the gender on their birth certificate. It allows female students to compete in male sports if there are no women’s sports available...schools that violate the law will be stripped of all state aid or revenue. It also allows parents to sue schools.” Conservative Republicans across the country have waged massive culture war attacks on transgender students in schools including their ability to play sports, use their preferred pronouns, and receive gender-affirming health care. [SB39, Missouri State Legislature, Regular Session 2023, Kansas City Star, [6/7/2023](#)]