**African and African American History: A Resource Guide for Arkansas Teachers**

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* [Early African History; Middle Passage and Enslavement History](http://arkansased.org/educators/curriculum/aah/early.html)
* [Abolition and Reconstruction; Disenfranchisement and Jim Crow](http://arkansased.org/educators/curriculum/aah/abolition.html)
* [Civil Rights/Contemporary Study](http://arkansased.org/educators/curriculum/aah/contemporary.html)
* [Resources; Appendix](http://arkansased.org/educators/curriculum/aah/resources.html)

**The Challenge**

Act 326 of 1997 requires the Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education "to overseedissemination of instructional materials and training for the teaching of African-American history in grades K-12 in Arkansas public schools and training in racial and ethnic awareness and sensitivity for teachers and administrators."

The Act further directs the Commissioner to establish a seven-member task force to select appropriate instructional materials in all grade clusters, K-12, and to advise the Commissioner in the selection of training components for using the instructional materials and training components for racial and ethnic awareness and sensitivity. The Chair of the Black History Advisory Committee, Arkansas History Commission, was responsible for nominating the members of the task force.

The work of the Task Force has resulted in *African and African American History: A Resource Guide for Arkansas Teachers* as well as the training called for in the Act. The Act also directs that all training be delivered through the fifteen education service cooperatives and the three Pulaski County school districts. Full texts of the Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Arkansas Department of Education appear in the Appendix.

**The Task Force Process**

The Chair of the Black History Advisory Committee, Mr. Curtis Sykes of North Little Rock, appointed seven educators to the Task Force established by Act 326 of 1997. Members of the Task Force included:

* Dr. Nudie Williams, Chair, University of Arkansas at Fayetteville
* Ms. Thelma Bryant, Helena-West Helena School District
* Ms. Erma Franks, Little Rock School District
* Ms. Judy Mackey, Fayetteville School District
* Ms. Kelly McCabe, Conway School District
* Ms. Carol Neves, Jonesboro School District
* Mr. Nakiea Williams, Helena-West Helena School District

At meetings during 1998, the Task Force established a mission statement, rationale and organization of the Resource Guide. It then proceeded to advise the Commissioner of the Department on training components as specified in the Act.

In its work, the Task Force was counseled by Dr. Theman Taylor, Sr. and Dr. John Graves, liaisons to the Black History Advisory Committee of the Arkansas History Commission, as well as by the Advisory Committee's Chair, Mr. Curtis Sykes. It was also assisted by Calvin White and James Bland, Graduate Assistants in the Department of History, University of Central Arkansas, who provided publisher information for some of the citations. Many of the citations in Arkansas Resources were taken from *Arkansas History: An Annotated Bibliography* with the permission of one of its authors, Tom W. Dillard. The full citation for this work is found in General Resources.

**The Rationale**

African-Americans have played a major role in the United States becoming a leading world power, therefore students deserve to know the **complete**history of our country. In order for students to make a positive connection to our country, they must become aware of the vital contributions of all ancestors.

When students are taught the truth about themselves and others, respect, pride and self-esteem follow. This mutual respect among all students and teachers builds racial harmony and understanding. The result is an environment that increases student achievement.

**Mission Statement**

The Black History Task Force defined its purpose in terms of a Mission Statement, adopted in June 1998.

**The mission of the Black History Task Force is to promote knowledge of the integral role of African-Americans in the history and heritage of our country and state. Interdisciplinary studies of the African-American experience will identify and relate to the core values of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America. These studies will empower Arkansas students to develop attitudes of tolerance and acceptance of the dignity of every person.**

**Usage**

The history sections of the Resource Guide organize resources by level (elementary and secondary). They also begin with broad essential questions to guide use of resources in the eras.

Both Arkansas Resources and General Resources only indicate the level(s) for an individual entry in most instances. In these two parts, "E" indicates elementary, "M" indicates middle, and "S" indicates high school. All of the resources listed should be available from your local public library as an interlibrary loan if they are not otherwise accessible to a school or to a teacher. This includes the many journal listings within Arkansas Resources.

Materials related to diversity issues should be useful to school districts for staff development or classroom instruction.

The Appendix includes the law, rules and regulations, and material which may assist school districts in the integration of these resources into classroom instruction at all levels. To this end, it offers sample lessons prepared by members of the task force who utilize resources from the guide.

This does not constitute an exhaustive listing of all materials related to African and African-American history. Arkansas teachers are undoubtedly aware of books, media, or internet sites not listed in these pages. You may use the response form in the Appendix to submit any suggestions to the Department of Education for inclusion should an addendum be issued. The mailing address appears at the bottom of the form. Funds related to this project may be used to purchase materials in this guide or other materials which support the study of African and African-American history.