



# AMERICAN CIVICS AND HISTORY INITIATIVE

Poll after poll tells us Americans neither understand nor even know the political system bestowed upon us by our Founders. If our republic is to endure, we must raise up citizens educated in America's founding texts and the ideals they embody. The [American Civics and History Initiative](#) aims to prepare secondary school teachers to teach American history and our founding principles. The Initiative is a collaboration between the Jack Miller Center, the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University, and the Bill of Rights Institute, three of America's leading civic education organizations. By leveraging our institutional strengths and concentrating them on specific states, we are committed to providing teachers in those states with the content knowledge and pedagogies they need to cultivate generations of informed, patriotic citizens.

The partners of the American Civics and History Initiative are united around three key convictions:

- 1) That the mission statement of the United States is set forth in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence: "...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," with the emphasis on the freedom and responsibilities of the individual;
- 2) That the Constitution is the strategic plan for the achievement of that mission; and
- 3) That our history as a country is a journey of effort, failure, and progress toward that mission.

We understand that opinions about historical events, policies, and the realization of our ideals will differ. Nonetheless, we believe all Americans must understand and share these convictions.

We launched ACHI in Florida on August 1, 2020, with a commitment to conduct nearly 200 professional development opportunities for secondary-school civics teachers by July 31, 2022. This will build our combined reach in Florida to 6,800 teachers, each of whom can reach up to 5,000 students over their career. Despite COVID-19, we have already provided 109 of our proposed 179 programs and grown our combined reach to 6,410 unique teachers. In fall 2020 we will shift to a sustaining presence in Florida and prepare to take our campaign to Texas, where we will again implement a dense, concentrated calendar of professional development opportunities.

ACHI believes the national crisis has become so severe that only with this intensity will we rebuild support for America's founding principles and the ongoing history of our struggle to live up to them. For this reason we are joining forces and focusing our combined strength, first on one state and building out from there. We began in Florida because it is a large, important, diverse state with a growing student population. We chose Texas for the same reasons. We will continue this work until we have equipped all American civics teachers to prepare their students for mature and patriotic citizenship.