

Study: Educators not teaching about 9/11 in U.S. schools

Publisher's note: Lake Tahoe News wanted to do a story for its 9/11 series about how K-12 educators in the Lake Tahoe Basin-Truckee area address the event in the classroom. The reporter was thwarted in his efforts. One assistant principal in Truckee said, "Teachers may or may not be open to talking to local media based on the topic, and Is the topic something that may be damaging to our school or district?" Lake Tahoe News regrets at this time not being able to tell you what local children are learning about 9/11.

By Valerie Strauss, Washington Post

Most states do not include in their social studies/history standards a direct mention of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, according to a new study, and only four states actually name Osama bin Laden or al-Qaeda.

An earlier stage of the study had found that many of the best-selling history and civics textbooks used in schools have "a startling lack of detail about what actually happened" on Sept. 11.

Twenty states plus the District of Columbia mention the terrorist attacks but most don't require that students learn more than a few key facts devoid of context, it says. Of those that don't directly mention Sept. 11, 14 states include some reference to terrorism or another key term related to the war on terror. And 14 states don't include any reference to 9/11, the war on terror or terrorism.

"For the most part, students are not directed to examine the roots and causes of terrorism, but instead are asked to learn about the impact of these attacks, primarily on the United States," a summary of the report says.

The study was conducted by Professors Jeremy Stoddard from the College of William & Mary and Diana Hess at the University of Wisconsin-Madison/Spencer Foundation. It was released by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tisch College at Tufts University.

It was released just days before the 10th anniversary of the attacks and contributes to a debate about how, when and what children should be taught in school about the event.

For example, a separate report just issued by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute argues that some 9/11 lessons being taught to children are missing the point of the event, giving too little information about the history and instead discussing related issues.

Read the whole story