

Utah's flag In error

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KAYSVILLE -- Students at Burton Elementary School are learning how a resolution gets acted on.

To help the students understand the process, state Rep. Julie Fisher explained in an assembly at the school Friday how the Utah state flag has an error on it and how she hopes to correct that error.

Then, when she takes the resolution to the upcoming session of the Legislature, some of the fourth-grade students from Burton will be at the Capitol to watch her introduce it.

"I want to educate the kids on how the process works," Fisher said.

Each year she looks for ways to interest, teach and involve elementary school students in the legislative process. This year, her efforts are centered on a resolution concerning Utah's flag.

Fisher spoke to students about the history of the flag and how the error in design came about. This year is the 100th anniversary of the flag's first adoption by the Legislature.

"I think it is good to change and make the flag the way it is described so a new generation will know and have the right flag to look up to," said fifth-grader Wilson Piper. "This made me very interested in legislating."

Wilson is a nephew of newly elected legislator Brad Wilson. "I learned a lot from my uncle."

"I am happy we are getting a new flag because the whole time it was wrong," said Riley Whitesides. "It has to do with history, and I like history. I like to do stuff that has to do with the state and the United States. This is cool. I might even run for office."

And his friend and classmate Nathan Nielson said, "It made me interested in politics. I also like the history of politics. I learned the flag is messed up."

During this year's legislative session, Fisher will introduce House Concurrent Resolution 2 to honor the state's flag and the early Utahns who established it. HCR 2 also will correct an error made to the flag's design in 1922 that has been perpetuated for 88 years.

"The state flag has been out of compliance since 1922," Fisher said. "The lady who embroidered the flag made a mistake and left off the date."

When the lady realized what she had done, she added the date but in a different place than it was on the original flag. She placed it below the shield, and the date should have been located directly below the beehive on the shield. Fisher is proposing the Legislature change the flag back to the original for all new state flags; however, the state flags done in error will still be OK to use.

Flags from the Utah Historical Society Collection were on display for students to see but not touch.

"They are absolutely precious because they are hand done," said Fisher of the historical flags.

Flags are now made by machine.

Fisher said she is also recommending that March 9 of each year become Utah's Flag Day, similar to the U.S. Flag Day

on June 14. March 9, 1911, was the day the Legislature acted and Gov. Heber M. Wells signed the resolution for the state flag.

Fourth-grade classes from Burton Elementary have been invited by Fisher to go to the Capitol to participate as the resolution is presented at the Legislature.

"I want to encourage students to learn the democratic process," Fisher said.

Burton Elementary School Principal Sharolyn Knudsen said the students were very interested in the flags and the process.

"They were really animated. It was an incredible experience for them to see some old flags," she said.

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