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# CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS

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High School 2024-25

# NOTES



# UIL CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS NOTES

**Academic Year - 2024-2025**

Written by Beth Bryant, Jennifer King and Linda Tarrant

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As of January 2024, 749 defendants have had their cases adjudicated and received sentences. The harshest sentence passed down was 22 years in prison for Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío, who was found guilty on charges of seditious conspiracy and other felonies.

The Supreme Court in *Fischer v. United States* reversed a judgment of a lower court that a felony charge of obstructing an official proceeding. The decision of the court was that this charge only applied when a defendant damaged a document or object used in such an official proceeding. This will likely affect multiple other Jan. 6 cases.

## U.S. SECRET SERVICE PROBLEMS



U.S. SECRET SERVICE

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General released a redacted version of the January 6 report to the American public. The 82-page report details failed response to multiple events on January 6, 2021. The entity was responsible for securing President Trump's speech, protecting and moving then Vice President Pence, and protecting and moving Vice President-elect Harris. The report identified failure by the United States Secret Service (USSS) to secure the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and failed to detect an explosive device in front of the building where Harris was driven within feet of the device.

Former Director Kim Cheatle admitted delaying and interfering the investigation. Text messages and letters were deleted after requests had been sent for preservation of electronic communication.

The report confirmed that there was never a plan on the part of Trump to go to the Capitol. He asked the USSS to take him to the capitol but was told they would not, and he returned to the White House.

A more serious issue occurred in Butler, PA, at a rally where Trump was speaking. Trump was shot from the roof of a building 164 yards from the campaign stage in a direct line of sight. An AR-15 has an accuracy range of 400 to 600 yards. Trump turned at a perfect time, and the shot going toward him hit the top of his ear. Other shots killed one person at the rally and wounded two others.

After the Butler assassination attempt, the director stepped down and Deputy Director Ronald Rowe was named as acting director. At least five other agents were placed on leave or reassigned following the incident.

In a separate incident that occurred during a Kamala Harris rally, Secret Service apologized to salon owner Alicia Powers for breaking in to her salon in order to use the bathroom and to give others access.

## VOTING RESTRICTIONS

Republican efforts to install more restrictive voting laws have sparked concern from Democrats who argue that the laws are an act of voter suppression. Republicans say the measures will help prevent voting fraud. Some of the measures include requiring voter identification, granting more control to partisan poll watchers, and limiting ballot drop boxes. Many states have introduced bills that would change signature verification to a copy of a driver's license with a mail-in ballot. Lawsuits relating to voting have been filed in nearly half of the U.S.

Issues in these lawsuits include the following:

- Absentee ballot deadlines
- Ballots cast by individuals who were no longer residents of a state
- Electoral College
- Fraud and vote dilution
- Legality of drive-through voting
- Limits on number of drop boxes for absentee ballots
- Providing unsolicited vote-by-mail applications
- Redistricting issues
- Restrictions on voting by mail
- State law that does not provide voters ability to cure mismatched signatures on ballots
- Violation of state constitution through improper election procedures and post-election reviews
- Violations of election clauses of the U.S. Constitution
- Voter identification issues
- Voter intimidation
- Voter registration deadlines
- Witness and notary requirements

## LEADERS OF PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF AFRICA

Not all countries are depicted, and of course, this list is subject to change. If a different nation becomes a hot spot, look up its leaders.

African Country	Title	Name	Start
<b>Algeria</b>	President	Abdelmadjid Tebboune	2019
	Prime Minister	<b>Nadir Larbaoui</b>	2023
<b>Angola</b>	President	João Lourenço	2017
<b>Benin</b>	President	Patrice Talon	2016
<b>Botswana</b>	President	Mokgweetsi Masisi	2018
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	President & Junta Leader	Ibrahim Traoré	2022
	Prime Minister	Apollinaire Joachim Kyélem de Tambèla	2022
<b>Burundi</b>	President	Évariste Ndayishimiye	2020
	Prime Minister	Gervais Ndirakobuca	2022
<b>Cameroon</b>	President	Paul Biya	1982
	Prime Minister	Joseph Ngute	2019
<b>Cape Verde</b>	President	Jose Maria Neves	2021
	Prime Minister	Ulisses Correia e Silva	2021
<b>Central African Republic</b>	President	Faustin-Archange Touadéra	2016
	Prime Minister	<b>Félix Moloua</b>	2022
<b>Chad</b>	Chairman of Transitional Military Council	Mahamat Idriss Déby	2021
	Prime Minister	<b>Succès Masra</b>	2024
<b>Republic of the Congo Brazzaville</b>	President	Denis Sassou Nguesso	1997
	Prime Minister	Anatole Collinet Makosso	2021
<b>Democratic Republic of Congo</b>	President	Félix Tshisekedi	2019
	Prime Minister	Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde	2021
<b>Djibouti</b>	President	Ismail Omar Guelleh	1999
	Prime Minister	Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed	2013
<b>Egypt</b>	President	Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi	2014
	Prime Minister	Moustafa Madbouly	2018
<b>Equatorial Guinea</b>	President	Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo	1979
	Prime Minister	Manuela Roka Botey	2023
<b>Eritrea</b>	President	Isaias Afwerki	1991
<b>Eswatini</b>	King	Mswati III	1986
<b>Ethiopia</b>	President	Sahle-Work Zewde	2018
	Prime Minister	Abiy Ahmed	2018
<b>Gabon</b>	President & Junta Leader	<b>Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema</b>	2023
	Prime Minister	<b>Raymond Ndong Sima</b>	2023
<b>Gambia</b>	President	Adama Barrow	2017
<b>Ghana</b>	President	Nana Akufo-Addo	2017
<b>Guinea</b>	President & Junta Leader	Mamady Doumbouya	2021
	Interim Prime Minister	<b>Bah Oury</b>	2024
<b>Guinea-Bissau</b>	President	Umaro Sissoco Embaló	2020
	Prime Minister	<b>Rui Duarte de Barros</b>	2023
<b>Ivory Coast</b>	President	Alassane Ouattara	2010
	Prime Minister	<b>Robert Beugré Mambé</b>	2023
<b>Kenya</b>	President	William Ruto	2022
<b>Lesotho</b>	Monarch	Letsie III	1996
	Prime Minister	Sam Matekane	2022
<b>Liberia</b>	President	Robert Beugré Mambé	2024
<b>Libya</b>	Head of State	<b>Mohamed Yunus al-Menfi</b>	2021
	Prime Minister	Abdul Hamid Dbeibah	2021
	Contested – Rival Government	Osama Hamada	2023

outerspace. NASA gives money to SpaceX through different contracts and partnerships.

**Here are some ways NASA funds SpaceX:**

- Supplying the International Space Station (ISS): NASA pays SpaceX to send cargo, like food, equipment, and experiments, to the astronauts on the ISS. SpaceX uses its Dragon spacecraft and Falcon 9 rockets to deliver these supplies.
- Flying Astronauts to the ISS: NASA hires SpaceX to transport astronauts to and from the ISS. In 2020, SpaceX's Crew Dragon spacecraft successfully carried astronauts to the ISS and back. This was the first time a private company achieved this, which was a big milestone.
- Moon Landing Projects: NASA is planning to return humans to the Moon through a program called Artemis. They chose SpaceX to develop a lunar lander based on SpaceX's Starship design. NASA provides funding to SpaceX to build and test this spacecraft that will land astronauts on the Moon.

**SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corp.)**, founded by Elon Musk in 2002, is a private aerospace manufacturer and space transportation company. SpaceX's primary goal is creating reusable launch vehicles and carrying humans to Mars. Reusable rockets, Falcon 9, Falcon Heavy, and the Crew Dragon spacecraft, are said to be instrumental in significantly reducing the cost of space access in the future.

**FALCON 9:** Falcon 9 is a rocket made by SpaceX. It's used to launch satellites and the Dragon spacecraft into space. Its first stage can return to Earth and land upright, so it can be reused. Since 2010, Falcon 9 has been used to send cargo and astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS).

**FALCON HEAVY:** Built by SpaceX, it combines three Falcon 9 rockets and can launch large satellites. In 2018, Falcon Heavy's first flight sent a Tesla car into space as a test. Like Falcon 9, parts of Falcon Heavy can come back and land to be used again.

**CREW DRAGON SPACECRAFT:** The Crew Dragon is a spacecraft designed by SpaceX to carry astronauts to and from the ISS. It can hold up to seven people and has safety features like an escape system in case of an emergency. In May 2020, the Crew Dragon successfully took two NASA astronauts to the ISS. This was the first time a private company sent humans into orbit and was the first astronaut launch from the U.S. since 2011.



SPACEX LAUNCH

## SPACE MISSIONS, PROJECTS & MORE

Most countries in the world have something to do with space via the use of satellites for communications, weather forecasting, navigation and other processes. Many space projects have been started, and because of the long distances to travel, they will not start actively operating until a later year.

### INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION (ISS)

This is the largest modular space station in low Earth's orbit. Initial approval for this project was in President Ronald Reagan's State of the Union Address in 1984 to build an international space station within the next 10 years. Segments were first launched in 1998. The first crew to reside occurred in 2002. The lab module was added in 2001. The European Space Agency added a lab in 2008, and the Japanese Kibo lab was added soon after. By 2010, the ISS had been occupied for 10 years. The ISS is scheduled to complete work in 2030 and will crash into the Pacific Ocean in 2031. The part of the ocean known as Point Nemo is the furthest point from land on Earth where many satellites and debris have crashed.

### AXIOM MISSION

- **Axiom Mission 1 (AX-1)** – Launched in early April 2022, the mission was operated by Axiom Space in conjunction with NASA using the SpaceX Dragon as the vehicle to reach the ISS. This was the first private astronaut visit to the ISS, and it supported 26 science payloads and demonstrations of technology with multiple academic and research partners.