

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to required instruction in the public
 3 schools; providing a short title; amending s. 1003.42,
 4 F.S.; revising the curriculum of the character-
 5 development program required in kindergarten through
 6 grade 12; providing an effective date.

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 8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 10 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Character
 11 Education Act."

12 Section 2. Paragraph (s) of subsection (2) of section
 13 1003.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

14 1003.42 Required instruction.—

15 (2) Members of the instructional staff of the public
 16 schools, subject to the rules of the State Board of Education
 17 and the district school board, shall teach efficiently and
 18 faithfully, using the books and materials required that meet the
 19 highest standards for professionalism and historic accuracy,
 20 following the prescribed courses of study, and employing
 21 approved methods of instruction, the following:

22 (s) A character-development program in kindergarten
 23 through grade 12 ~~the elementary schools~~, similar to Character
 24 First, ~~or Character Counts, or The Leader in Me, which is~~
 25 ~~secular in nature.~~ The character-development curriculum shall
 26 stress the virtues of wisdom, pursuit of excellence, equality,
 27 responsibility, honesty, courage, patriotism, self-discipline,
 28 perseverance, duty, honor, charity, civility, tolerance, and

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29 other qualities of character that better prepare students to
30 recognize and accept their responsibility for preserving the
31 blessings of liberty inherited from previous generations.
32 ~~Beginning in school year 2004-2005, the character-development~~
33 ~~program shall be required in kindergarten through grade 12. Each~~
34 ~~district school board shall develop or adopt a curriculum for~~
35 ~~the character-development program that shall be submitted to the~~
36 ~~department for approval. Members of the administrative and~~
37 instructional staff must be informed of the requirements of this
38 program at the beginning of each school year. ~~The character-~~
39 ~~development curriculum shall stress the qualities of patriotism;~~
40 ~~responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for authority,~~
41 ~~life, liberty, and personal property; honesty; charity; self-~~
42 ~~control; racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance; and~~
43 ~~cooperation.~~

44
45 The State Board of Education is encouraged to adopt standards
46 and pursue assessment of the requirements of this subsection.

47 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2013.