By the Committee on Education and Senator Forman

304-1690A-99

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1 A bill to be entitled 2 An act relating to public school curricula; amending s. 233.061, F.S.; including a secular 3 4 character-development program in required 5 public school instruction in the elementary 6 schools; amending s. 233.0612, F.S.; deleting a provision encouraging school boards to 7 8 institute such programs; providing an effective 9 date. 10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida: 11 12 Section 1. Paragraph (q) is added to subsection (2) of 13 section 233.061, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, to read: 14 233.061 Required instruction. --15 (2) Members of the instructional staff of the public 16 17 schools, subject to the rules and regulations of the commissioner, the state board, and the school board, shall 18 19 teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and 20 materials required, following the prescribed courses of study, 21 and employing approved methods of instruction, the following: 22 (q) A character-development program, such as Character Counts or a like curriculum, in the elementary schools. Such a 23 program must be secular in nature and must stress such 24 25 character qualities as attentiveness, patience, and 26 initiative. 27 Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 233.0612, Florida 28 Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to read: 233.0612 Authorized instruction.--Each school district 29 30 may provide students with programs and instruction at the

appropriate grade levels in areas including, but not limited to, the following: (1) Character development and Law education. Each school board shall be encouraged to install in the elementary schools of the district a program in character development which is the same as or similar to the Character Counts or Character First! Education Series. The programs must be secular in nature and stress such character qualities as attentiveness, patience, and initiative. Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999. STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SB 698 The committee substitute requires that instruction in the public elementary schools include a secular character development programs such as Character Counts or a similar curriculum. The program must stress qualities such as attentiveness, patience, and initiative. The bill eliminates the provision in s. 233.0612(1), F.S., that encourages school districts to install character development programs in elementary schools elementary schools.