

The Florida Senate
PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Education Pre-K - 12 Appropriations Committee

BILL: CS/SB 468

INTRODUCER: Committee on Education Pre-K-12 and Senator Siplin

SUBJECT: Student Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation

DATE: April 13, 2007 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Carrouth</u>	<u>Matthews</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	<u>Armstrong</u>	<u>Hamon</u>	<u>EA</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill would require that conflict resolution management, including peer mediation, be included within each school district’s required character development program.

This bill amends section 1003.42 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Section 1003.42, F.S. includes elements of curriculum instruction in multiple content areas that must be taught in public schools. Those elements include, among others, civics and government, historical facts related to the Holocaust, African Americans, Native Americans, the principals of agriculture, the study of women’s contributions and those of the Hispanic community to the United States, and character development.

In particular, each school district is required to adopt a character development curriculum to include such topics as honesty, charity, self-control, racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance, and cooperation, and must submit the program to the Florida Department of Education (DOE) for approval.¹ Also, the DOE Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools provides best practices from district developed school safety plans, many of which include district required training in conflict resolution as a part of their master inservice plan.²

¹ s. 1003.42(2)(s), F.S.

² See http://www.firn.edu/doe/besss/safe_passage/2004pdf/2004brevard.pdf

The DOE Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools posts numerous links on its website to provide resources and support for students and teachers in several areas relevant to conflict resolution.³ Included on this site are materials developed by the University of Florida under a federally funded grant.⁴ These materials can be purchased by local school districts using state Safe and Drug Free Schools funding⁵ or other appropriate funding sources.⁶

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill requires that conflict resolution management, including peer mediation, be included within existing district-adopted character development programs. Because the topics of self-control, racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance, and cooperation are integral to conflict resolution and peer mediation, districts would have to make only minor, if any, adjustments to their adopted curriculum.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

There would be a minimal cost to school districts for incorporating conflict resolution and peer mediation into the character development curriculum.

³ <http://www.firn.edu/doe/besss/links.html>

⁴ <http://education.ufl.edu/web/?pid=305>

⁵ The 2006 Legislature appropriated \$75,350,000 for Safe Schools. Each district is guaranteed \$50,000 and the remaining funds are distributed based on a combination of the Florida Crime Index provided by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the district share of student enrollment.

⁶ <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/programs.html> - This site includes information on local and state block grants.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

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