

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Siplin

581-2245-07

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to required school instruction;  
amending s. 1003.42, F.S.; requiring the  
character-development program to include  
conflict-resolution management; providing an  
effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsection (2) of section 1003.42, Florida  
Statutes, is amended to read:

1003.42 Required instruction.--

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

(a) The history and content of the Declaration of  
Independence, including national sovereignty, natural law,  
self-evident truth, equality of all persons, limited  
government, popular sovereignty, and inalienable rights of  
life, liberty, and property, and how they form the  
philosophical foundation of our government.

(b) The history, meaning, significance, and effect of  
the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and  
amendments thereto, with emphasis on each of the 10 amendments  
that make up the Bill of Rights and how the constitution  
provides the structure of our government.

1           (c) The arguments in support of adopting our  
2 republican form of government, as they are embodied in the  
3 most important of the Federalist Papers.

4           (d) Flag education, including proper flag display and  
5 flag salute.

6           (e) The elements of civil government, including the  
7 primary functions of and interrelationships between the  
8 Federal Government, the state, and its counties,  
9 municipalities, school districts, and special districts.

10           (f) The history of the United States, including the  
11 period of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence,  
12 the Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its  
13 present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights  
14 movement to the present. American history shall be viewed as  
15 factual, not as constructed, shall be viewed as knowable,  
16 teachable, and testable, and shall be defined as the creation  
17 of a new nation based largely on the universal principles  
18 stated in the Declaration of Independence.

19           (g) The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the  
20 systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other  
21 groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of  
22 humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an  
23 investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the  
24 ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an  
25 examination of what it means to be a responsible and  
26 respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance  
27 of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and  
28 protecting democratic values and institutions.

29           (h) The history of African Americans, including the  
30 history of African peoples before the political conflicts that  
31 led to the development of slavery, the passage to America, the

1 | enslavement experience, abolition, and the contributions of  
2 | African Americans to society.

3 |       (i) The elementary principles of agriculture.

4 |       (j) The true effects of all alcoholic and intoxicating  
5 | liquors and beverages and narcotics upon the human body and  
6 | mind.

7 |       (k) Kindness to animals.

8 |       (l) The history of the state.

9 |       (m) The conservation of natural resources.

10 |       (n) Comprehensive health education that addresses  
11 | concepts of community health; consumer health; environmental  
12 | health; family life, including an awareness of the benefits of  
13 | sexual abstinence as the expected standard and the  
14 | consequences of teenage pregnancy; mental and emotional  
15 | health; injury prevention and safety; nutrition; personal  
16 | health; prevention and control of disease; and substance use  
17 | and abuse.

18 |       (o) Such additional materials, subjects, courses, or  
19 | fields in such grades as are prescribed by law or by rules of  
20 | the State Board of Education and the district school board in  
21 | fulfilling the requirements of law.

22 |       (p) The study of Hispanic contributions to the United  
23 | States.

24 |       (q) The study of women's contributions to the United  
25 | States.

26 |       (r) The nature and importance of free enterprise to  
27 | the United States economy.

28 |       (s) A character-development program in the elementary  
29 | schools, similar to Character First or Character Counts, which  
30 | is secular in nature. Beginning in school year 2004-2005, the  
31 | character-development program shall be required in

1 kindergarten through grade 12. Each district school board  
2 shall develop or adopt a curriculum for the  
3 character-development program that shall be submitted to the  
4 department for approval. The character-development curriculum  
5 shall stress the qualities of patriotism; responsibility;  
6 citizenship; kindness; respect for authority, life, liberty,  
7 and personal property; honesty; charity; self-control; racial,  
8 ethnic, and religious tolerance; ~~and~~ cooperation; and  
9 conflict-resolution management, including peer mediation.

10 (t) In order to encourage patriotism, the sacrifices  
11 that veterans have made in serving our country and protecting  
12 democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or  
13 before Veterans' Day and Memorial Day. Members of the  
14 instructional staff are encouraged to use the assistance of  
15 local veterans when practicable.

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17 The State Board of Education is encouraged to adopt standards  
18 and pursue assessment of the requirements of this subsection.

19 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

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21 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
22 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
23 Senate Bill 468

24 The committee substitute removes the requirement for a  
25 conflict resolution course for 6th grade students and instead,  
26 provides that conflict resolution, including peer mediation,  
27 be incorporated into existing character development programs.  
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