

HB 867

2007

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to required school instruction; amending
 3 s. 1003.42, F.S.; requiring the instructional staff of
 4 each public middle school to teach a comprehensive course
 5 in conflict resolution to students in grade 6; providing
 6 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. Subsection (2) of section 1003.42, Florida
 11 Statutes, is amended to read:

12 1003.42 Required instruction.--

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

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

26 (b) The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the
 27 provisions of the Constitution of the United States and
 28 amendments thereto, with emphasis on each of the 10 amendments

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29 | that make up the Bill of Rights and how the constitution
30 | provides the structure of our government.

31 | (c) The arguments in support of adopting our republican
32 | form of government, as they are embodied in the most important
33 | of the Federalist Papers.

34 | (d) Flag education, including proper flag display and flag
35 | salute.

36 | (e) The elements of civil government, including the
37 | primary functions of and interrelationships between the Federal
38 | Government, the state, and its counties, municipalities, school
39 | districts, and special districts.

40 | (f) The history of the United States, including the period
41 | of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence, the
42 | Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its present
43 | boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the
44 | present. American history shall be viewed as factual, not as
45 | constructed, shall be viewed as knowable, teachable, and
46 | testable, and shall be defined as the creation of a new nation
47 | based largely on the universal principles stated in the
48 | Declaration of Independence.

49 | (g) The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the
50 | systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other
51 | groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of
52 | humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an
53 | investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the
54 | ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an
55 | examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful
56 | person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity

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57 | in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting
58 | democratic values and institutions.

59 | (h) The history of African Americans, including the
60 | history of African peoples before the political conflicts that
61 | led to the development of slavery, the passage to America, the
62 | enslavement experience, abolition, and the contributions of
63 | African Americans to society.

64 | (i) The elementary principles of agriculture.

65 | (j) The true effects of all alcoholic and intoxicating
66 | liquors and beverages and narcotics upon the human body and
67 | mind.

68 | (k) Kindness to animals.

69 | (l) The history of the state.

70 | (m) The conservation of natural resources.

71 | (n) Comprehensive health education that addresses concepts
72 | of community health; consumer health; environmental health;
73 | family life, including an awareness of the benefits of sexual
74 | abstinence as the expected standard and the consequences of
75 | teenage pregnancy; mental and emotional health; injury
76 | prevention and safety; nutrition; personal health; prevention
77 | and control of disease; and substance use and abuse.

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

82 | (p) The study of Hispanic contributions to the United
83 | States.

84 | (q) The study of women's contributions to the United

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85 States.

86 (r) The nature and importance of free enterprise to the
87 United States economy.

88 (s) A character-development program in the elementary
89 schools, similar to Character First or Character Counts, which
90 is secular in nature. Beginning in school year 2004-2005, the
91 character-development program shall be required in kindergarten
92 through grade 12. Each district school board shall develop or
93 adopt a curriculum for the character-development program that
94 shall be submitted to the department for approval. The
95 character-development curriculum shall stress the qualities of
96 patriotism; responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for
97 authority, life, liberty, and personal property; honesty;
98 charity; self-control; racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance;
99 and cooperation.

100 (t) In order to encourage patriotism, the sacrifices that
101 veterans have made in serving our country and protecting
102 democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or
103 before Veterans' Day and Memorial Day. Members of the
104 instructional staff are encouraged to use the assistance of
105 local veterans when practicable.

106 (u) A comprehensive course on conflict resolution which is
107 taught to each student in grade 6.

108

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

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