

By Senator Fasano

11-243B-07

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to disability history and
3 awareness; creating the Pilot Project for
4 Disability History and Awareness in
5 Hillsborough, Leon, Pasco, and Pinellas
6 Counties; providing for the respective county
7 school boards to administer the project;
8 providing requirements; encouraging schools to
9 cooperate with community-based organizations;
10 encouraging postsecondary institutions to
11 conduct and promote related activities;
12 providing for technical assistance; requiring a
13 report to legislative education committees;
14 providing appropriations; providing an
15 effective date.

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

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19 Section 1. Pilot project for disability history and
20 awareness; creation; administration.--There is created the
21 Pilot Project for Disability History and Awareness in
22 Hillsborough, Leon, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties. Each county
23 school board shall administer the pilot project in its county.

24 (1) During the state Disability History and Awareness
25 Weeks, each public school in Hillsborough, Leon, Pasco, and
26 Pinellas Counties shall provide instruction in disability
27 history, people with disabilities, and the disability rights
28 movement and shall strive to raise disability awareness.
29 Disability history must include the people, events, and
30 timelines of the development and evolution of services to, and
31 the civil rights of, people with disabilities, including

1 people with disabilities from this state, as well as
2 acknowledged national leaders. Disability history must also
3 include the contributions of specific people with
4 disabilities. Disability awareness means a level of competence
5 in working and interacting with, and living beside, people
6 with different types of disabilities. The awareness aspect of
7 the project must emphasize a "people-first" or
8 socio-civil-rights model approach. The instruction must be
9 integrated into the existing school curriculum in ways
10 including, but not limited to, supplementing existing lesson
11 plans, holding school assemblies, and providing other
12 school-related activities such as disability-focused film
13 festivals. The instruction may be delivered by qualified
14 school personnel or by knowledgeable guest speakers, with a
15 particular focus on including people with disabilities.

16 (2) Desired outcomes for this pilot program include:

17 (a) Better treatment for people with disabilities in
18 society, especially for youth in school, and increased
19 attention to preventing the bullying of students with
20 disabilities.

21 (b) Promotion of the goal that, in the future,
22 students who have been exposed to disability history and
23 awareness will be more likely to hire, retain, and promote
24 people with disabilities.

25 (c) Encouraging people with disabilities to have
26 increased self-esteem, resulting in more people with
27 disabilities gaining pride in being a person with a
28 disability, going to college, leaving social security,
29 entering the workforce, and contributing to their communities.

30 (3) In implementing the pilot project, the schools in
31 the participating counties are encouraged to collaborate with

1 community-based organizations such as centers for independent
2 living, youth information centers, parent training and
3 information centers, and other consumer-driven groups and
4 disability membership organizations. Local businesses,
5 internship programs, and mentoring programs should be included
6 in outreach as well.

7 (4) State institutions of higher education are
8 encouraged to conduct and promote activities that provide
9 education, awareness, and understanding about disability
10 history, people with disabilities, and the disability rights
11 movement.

12 (5) The University Center for Excellence in
13 Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service
14 (UCEDD) at the University of South Florida, in collaboration
15 with the Florida Youth Council, shall provide technical
16 assistance to the participants in the pilot project.

17 (6) After the first year of the project, the
18 University of South Florida UCEDD, in collaboration with the
19 Florida Youth Council, shall prepare a report of the
20 implementation of and outcomes achieved by the pilot program
21 and shall, by January 30, 2008, submit the report to the
22 education committees of the Senate and the House of
23 Representatives and to the Commissioner of Education.

24 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General
25 Revenue Fund to:

26 (1) The Hillsborough County School Board the sum of
27 \$10,000;

28 (2) The Leon County School Board the sum of \$10,000;

29 (3) The Pasco County School Board the sum of \$10,000;

30 and

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