

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to disability history and awareness;  
 creating s. 1003.4205, F.S.; requiring district school  
 boards to designate "Disability History and Awareness  
 Weeks" during the first 2 weeks in October each year;  
 requiring students in all K-12 public schools to be  
 provided disability history and awareness instruction;  
 providing the content and goals of such instruction;  
 encouraging state postsecondary institutions to conduct  
 and promote activities related to disability history and  
 awareness; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 1003.4205, Florida Statutes, is created  
 to read:

1003.4205 Disability history and awareness instruction.--

(1) Each district school board shall provide disability  
 history and awareness instruction in all K-12 public schools in  
 the district during the first 2 weeks in October each year. The  
 district school board shall designate these 2 weeks as  
 "Disability History and Awareness Weeks."

(2) (a) During this 2-week period, students must be  
 provided intensive instruction to expand their knowledge,  
 understanding, and awareness of individuals with disabilities,  
 the history of disability, and the disability rights movement.  
 Disability history must include the events and timelines of the  
 development and evolution of services to, and the civil rights

29 of, individuals with disabilities. Disability history must also  
30 include the contributions of specific individuals with  
31 disabilities, including the contributions of acknowledged  
32 national leaders.

33 (b) The instruction must be integrated into the existing  
34 school curriculum in ways including, but not limited to,  
35 supplementing lesson plans, holding school assemblies, or  
36 providing other school-related activities. The instruction may  
37 be delivered by qualified school personnel or by knowledgeable  
38 guest speakers, with a particular focus on including individuals  
39 with disabilities.

40 (3) The goals of disability history and awareness  
41 instruction include:

42 (a) Better treatment for individuals with disabilities,  
43 especially for youth in school, and increased attention to  
44 preventing the bullying or harassment of students with  
45 disabilities.

46 (b) Encouragement to individuals with disabilities to  
47 develop increased self-esteem, resulting in more individuals  
48 with disabilities gaining pride in being an individual with a  
49 disability, obtaining postsecondary education, entering the  
50 workforce, and contributing to their communities.

51 (c) Reaffirmation of the local, state, and federal  
52 commitment to the full inclusion in society of, and the equal  
53 opportunity for, all individuals with disabilities.

54 Section 2. State postsecondary institutions are encouraged  
55 to conduct and promote activities on their campuses that provide  
56 education, understanding, and awareness of individuals with

HB 91

2008

57 disabilities, disability history, and the disability rights  
58 movement.

59 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.