

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS**

**BILL #:** CS/HB 13 Middle School Civics Education Assessment

**SPONSOR(S):** PreK-12 Policy Committee

**TIED BILLS:** **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

	<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>ANALYST</b>	<b>STAFF DIRECTOR</b>
Orig. Comm.:	PreK-12 Policy Committee	11 Y, 0 N, As CS	Duncan	Ahearn
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**SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

Current law requires middle school students to successfully complete, among other courses, three middle school or higher courses in social studies in order to be promoted. One semester of the three social studies courses must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.

The Committee Substitute (CS) for House Bill 13 provides that, beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2011-2012 school year, promotion from a school composed of grades 6, 7, and 8 requires the successful completion of a one-semester civics education course. The one-semester civics education course is included in the three middle school social studies courses currently required for promotion.

The civics education course must include the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.

The CS provides that during the 2011-2012 school year, an end-of-course assessment in civics education must be administered as a field test at the middle school level. During the 2012-2013 school year, each student's performance on the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in civics education in order to pass the course and receive course credit.

The CS includes the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education at the middle school level as a factor in designating a school's grade beginning in the 2012-2013 school year.

The CS does not appear to create a fiscal impact on school districts or local governments. Given the timeline provided in the bill, the start-up activities will be phased in by the Department of Education. See FISCAL COMMENTS section of this analysis.

## HOUSE PRINCIPLES

Members are encouraged to evaluate proposed legislation in light of the following guiding principles of the House of Representatives

- Balance the state budget.
- Create a legal and regulatory environment that fosters economic growth and job creation.
- Lower the tax burden on families and businesses.
- Reverse or restrain the growth of government.
- Promote public safety.
- Promote educational accountability, excellence, and choice.
- Foster respect for the family and for innocent human life.
- Protect Florida's natural beauty.

## FULL ANALYSIS

### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

##### **Present Situation**

##### *Middle School Social Studies Requirements*

Current law requires middle school students to successfully complete, among other courses, three middle school or higher courses in social studies in order to be promoted. One semester of the three social studies courses must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.<sup>1</sup>

##### *Sunshine State Standards*

The Sunshine State Standards establish core curricula and benchmarks for student achievement. The State Board of Education is reviewing the Sunshine State Standards and replacing them with Next Generation Sunshine State Standards that specify the core content knowledge and skills that K-12 public school students are expected to acquire.<sup>2</sup> In December 2008, the State Board of Education adopted the Next Generation Sunshine Standards for Social Studies.<sup>3</sup> Below are the social studies content areas required at each grade level.

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: geography, economics, world history, and civics and government.

7<sup>th</sup> Grade: geography, economics, and civics and government.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade: American history, geography, economics, and civics and government.<sup>4</sup>

##### *Student Assessment*

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) measures student achievement in grades 3 through 11 using benchmarks from the Sunshine State Standards.<sup>5</sup> The FCAT consists of criterion-

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<sup>1</sup> Middle school students are required to successfully complete three middle school or higher courses in English, mathematics, social studies, and science in order to be promoted. See section 1003.4156, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1003.41, F.S.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.floridastandards.org/Standards/FLStandardSearch.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Section 1008.22(3), F.S.

referenced tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.<sup>6</sup> Reading and mathematics are tested annually in grades 3 through 10. Writing and science are tested once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.<sup>7</sup> Students take the FCAT Science test in grades 5, 8, and 11.<sup>8</sup>

End-of-course assessments for subject areas also may be administered in addition to the comprehensive assessments. An end-of-course assessment must be rigorous, statewide, standardized, and developed or approved by the Department of Education (DOE).<sup>9</sup>

Currently, a civics assessment is administered in the state periodically in grades 4, 8, and 12 to randomly selected schools across the state as part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).<sup>10</sup> The NAEP is an assessment administered in grades 4, 8, and 12 and provides a basis for comparing knowledge and skills of Florida students with students in other states, and with the nation as a whole. The two major goals of NAEP are to measure student achievement and to report changes in performance over time. NAEP does not provide scores at the school or individual student levels.<sup>11</sup>

### *School Grades*

All public schools, including charter schools, which have at least 30 students with valid FCAT scores in reading for the current and prior years and at least 30 students with valid FCAT scores in mathematics for the current and prior years are assigned a school grade.<sup>12</sup> Student achievement data from the FCAT are used to establish both proficiency levels and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state.<sup>13</sup>

Currently, a school's grade is based upon a combination of:

- Student achievement scores, including achievement scores for students seeking a special diploma.
- Student learning gains as measured by annual FCAT assessments in grades 3 through 10; learning gains for students seeking a special diploma, as measured by an alternate assessment tool, must be included no later than the 2009-2010 school year.
- Improvement of the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students in the school in reading, mathematics, or writing on the FCAT, unless these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance.<sup>14</sup>

## **Effect of Proposed Changes**

### *Middle School Social Studies Requirements*

The Committee Substitute (CS) for House Bill 13 provides that, beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2011-2012 school year, promotion from a school composed of grades 6, 7, and 8 requires the successful completion of a one-semester civics education course. The one-semester civics education course is included in the three middle school social studies courses currently required for promotion.

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<sup>6</sup> Section 1008.22(3)(c)2., F.S. A criterion-referenced test (CRT) is an assessment in which an individual's performance is compared to a specific learning objective or performance standard and not to the performance of other students. CRTs show how well students performed on specific goals or standards rather than just telling how their performance compares to a norm group of students nationally or locally. The FCAT is based on the *Sunshine State Standards* and measures student progress toward meeting these standards. Florida Department of Education, *FCAT Handbook: A Resource for Educators*, 5 (2005), available at <http://fcats.fldoe.org/handbk/complete.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1008.22(3)(c), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Rule 6A-1.09422(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1008.22(3)(c), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Education, Analysis of PCS for HB 13, March 20, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/naep/flparticipation.asp>, Florida Department of Education, Assessment and School Performance, National Assessment of Educational Progress.

<sup>12</sup> Section 1008.34(3)(a)1., F.S. and Rule 6A-1.09981(4), F.A.C.

<sup>13</sup> Section 1008.34, F.S.

<sup>14</sup> Section 1008.34(3)(b)1., F.S.

The civics education course must include the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.

### *End-of-Course Assessment*

The CS provides that during the 2011-2012 school year, an end-of-course assessment in civics education must be administered as a field test<sup>15</sup> at the middle school level. During the 2012-2013 school year, each student's performance on the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in civics education in order to pass the course and receive course credit.

### *School Grades*

The CS includes the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education at the middle school level as a factor in designating a school's grade beginning in the 2012-2013 school year.

## B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

**Section 1:** Amends s. 1003.4156, F.S., relating to general requirements for middle school promotion.

**Section 2:** Amends s. 1008.22, F.S., relating to student assessment program for public schools.

**Section 3:** Amends s. 1008.34, F.S., relating to school grading system; school report cards; and district grade.

**Section 4:** Provides an effective date of July 1, 2009.

## II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

### A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

#### 1. Revenues:

The CS does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state government revenues.

#### 2. Expenditures:

See FISCAL COMMENTS section.

### B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

#### 1. Revenues:

The CS does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government revenues.

#### 2. Expenditures:

The CS does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government expenditures.

### C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

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<sup>15</sup> **Field-test questions** are newly-developed questions that are being tried out before they can be used on a future test. Field-test questions must be tried out at least one year before they are used to decide a student's score. If the data on the field-test questions are acceptable, then the questions may be used on an actual test and count toward a student's score. *See*

<http://www.fldoe.org/faq/default.asp?Dept=202&ID=656>.

## D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

### DOE Comment:

Generally, the estimated first year fiscal impact at the state-level for adding one examination, in one grade and subject, administered to all students, is approximately \$1,000,000. However, given the timeline provided in the bill, the start-up activities are able to be phased in between FY10 and FY11, as follows:

- FY10 (\$500,000). Activities to include selecting a contractor or amending a current contract, convening educator and experts to assist in developing test and item specifications, as well as other start-up activities.
- FY11 (\$500,000). Activities to include developing test items and preparing field test forms and administration and reporting procedures.
- FY12 (\$500,000- \$1,000,000) Cost depends on the number of students to be tested, assumes computer-based administration). Activities to include field-testing and analyzing the results of the civics end-of-course assessment. Since this is the first year of the civics requirement, it is assumed that the field test sample will be much smaller than in subsequent years.
- FY13 (\$1,500,000) Cost depends on the number of students to be tested, assumes computer-based administration). Activities to include administering the civics end-of-course assessment and reporting student results.<sup>16</sup>

Thirty-three (33) states include civics, citizenship education, or social studies in state assessments<sup>17</sup> and 7 of these states use end-of-course assessments<sup>18</sup> to evaluate student performance. Considering that statewide assessments, including end-of-course assessments, in civics, citizen education, or social studies are available, some of the costs associated with development of test items, the preparation of field tests, and administrative and reporting procedures may be mitigated.

## III. COMMENTS

### A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

#### 1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. The CS does not appear to require a county or municipality to spend funds or take an action requiring expenditures; reduce the authority that counties and municipalities had as of February 1, 1989, to raise revenues in the aggregate; or reduce the percentage of a state tax shared in the aggregate with counties and municipalities as of February 1, 1989.

#### 2. Other:

None.

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<sup>16</sup> Department of Education, Analysis of PCS for HB 13, March 20, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. See <http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=107>, Education Commission of the States, State Notes – Citizenship Education in Assessment and Accountability Systems, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Virginia. See <http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=107>, Education Commission of the States, State Notes – Citizenship Education in Assessment and Accountability Systems, 2008.

**B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

None.

**C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:**

None.

**IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**

On March 25, 2009, the PreK-12 Policy Committee reported the Proposed Committee Substitute favorably. The differences between the CS and the HB 13 are as follows:

- HB 13 amended the social studies standards of the Sunshine State Standards to require an emphasis on the integration of civics education at all grade levels, based on the framework provided by the National Standards for Civics and Government. The CS does not include this provision or amend the social studies standards.
- The CS amends the middle school requirements for promotion to provide that beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, students entering grade 6 are required to successfully complete a one-semester civics education course as part of the current three social studies courses they are required to complete for promotion. HB 13 did not include that requirement.
- HB 13 amended the state assessment program to require that a Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in social studies be administered at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. The CS does not include this provision, but does require an end-of-course assessment.
- The CS provides that during the 2011-2012 school year, an end-of-course assessment in civics education must be administered as a field test at the middle school level. During the 2012-2013 school year, each student's performance on the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in civics education in order to pass the course and receive course credit. HB 13 did not include this provision.
- The CS includes the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment in civics education at the middle school level as a factor in designating a school's grade beginning in the 2012-2013 school year. HB 13 did not contain this provision.