

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

BILL: SB 788

INTRODUCER: Senator Diaz de la Portilla

SUBJECT: Educational Instruction

DATE: April 14, 2011

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Carrouth	Matthews	ED	<b>Favorable</b>
2.			BC	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

**I. Summary:**

The bill requires school districts to designate one month of the school year to celebrate the Founding Fathers of the United States. Districts may integrate this instruction into existing school curriculum or through school-related activities.

This bill amends section 1003.44 of the Florida Statutes.

**II. Present Situation:**

State adopted curriculum standards in the content area of social studies emphasize student understanding of the history of the United States, our form of government, and the ideals on which our country was founded.<sup>1</sup> Instructional benchmarks that specifically address topics included in the bill are incorporated into the standards beginning at grade 2 and continuing through high school.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, current law requires instructional content to include, among other civics-related topics, the history and content of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.floridastandards.org/Standards/FLStandardSearch.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> For example, at grade 2, students are expected to recognize symbols, individuals, events, and documents that represent the United States; at grade 5, students are expected to explain the significance of historical documents including key political concepts, origins of these concepts, and their role in American independence; at grade 8, students are expected to examine the structure, content and consequences of the Declaration of Independence; at grades 9-12, students are expected to explain how the Declaration of Independence reflected the political principles of popular sovereignty, social contract, natural rights, and individual rights; and at grades 9-12, students are expected to evaluate the ideals and principles of the founding documents (Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Federalist Papers) that shaped American democracy.

States, an understanding of our republican form of government, United States history from the period of discovery to the present, and an appreciation of our founding fathers and the sacrifices of our veterans.<sup>3</sup>

Topics outlined in the bill are also addressed in the school district requirement to designate the last week of September as *Celebrate Freedom Week*<sup>4</sup> which includes an in-depth study of the Declaration of Independence.

Finally, required patriotic programs are also included in current law to encourage school districts to adopt rules to foster greater respect for our government and democracy.<sup>5</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill requires school districts to designate one month of the school year to celebrate the Founding Fathers of the United States. Districts may integrate this instruction into existing school curriculum or through school-related activities.

Because the topics required in the bill are currently covered in the K-12 state adopted curriculum standards, as well as in other provisions of law, additionally requiring school districts to designate a month to address this subject matter is duplicative.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

#### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

#### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

### **V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

#### **A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

#### **B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

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<sup>3</sup> s. 1003.42, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> s. 1003.421, F.S.

<sup>5</sup> s. 1003.44, F.S.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.