

By Senator Flores

38-01070-12

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to required instruction in the public  
3           schools; providing a short title; amending s. 1003.42,  
4           F.S.; revising the curriculum of the character-  
5           development program required in kindergarten through  
6           grade 12; providing an effective date.

7  
8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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10           Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Character  
11 Education Act."

12           Section 2. Paragraph (s) of subsection (2) of section  
13 1003.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

14           1003.42 Required instruction.—

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

22           (s) A character-development program in kindergarten through  
23 grade 12 ~~the elementary schools,~~ similar to Character First, ~~or~~  
24 Character Counts, ~~or The Leader in Me,~~ ~~which is secular in~~  
25 nature. The character-development curriculum shall stress the  
26 virtues of wisdom, pursuit of excellence, equality,  
27 responsibility, honesty, courage, patriotism, self-discipline,  
28 perseverance, duty, honor, charity, civility, tolerance, and  
29 other qualities of character that better prepare students to

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30 recognize and accept the responsibility for preserving the  
31  blessings of liberty inherited from prior generations. Beginning  
32  ~~in school year 2004-2005, the character-development program~~  
33  ~~shall be required in kindergarten through grade 12. Each~~  
34 district school board shall develop or adopt a curriculum for  
35 the character-development program that shall be submitted to the  
36 department for approval. Members of the administrative and  
37  instructional staff must be informed of the requirements of this  
38  paragraph at the beginning of each school year. The character-  
39  ~~development curriculum shall stress the qualities of patriotism;~~  
40  ~~responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for authority,~~  
41  ~~life, liberty, and personal property; honesty; charity; self-~~  
42  ~~control; racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance; and~~  
43  ~~cooperation.~~

44  
45 The State Board of Education is encouraged to adopt standards  
46 and pursue assessment of the requirements of this subsection.

47 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.