

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senators Ring and Fasano

581-01715-12

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to disability awareness; amending s.
3 1003.4205, F.S.; requiring each district school board
4 to provide disability history and awareness
5 instruction in all K-12 public schools; requiring the
6 Department of Education to assist in creating the
7 curriculum for the disability history and awareness
8 instruction; providing for individual presenters who
9 have disabilities to provide the disability history
10 and awareness instruction; requiring the Department of
11 Education to establish a disability history and
12 awareness advisory council; providing membership of
13 the council; requiring the department to provide a
14 liaison to assist the council; requiring the
15 department to act as the fiscal agent for all
16 financial transactions required by the council;
17 providing responsibilities of the council; providing
18 meeting times for the council; providing an effective
19 date.

20
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

22
23 Section 1. Section 1003.4205, Florida Statutes, is amended
24 to read:

25 1003.4205 Disability history and awareness instruction.—

26 (1) Each district school board shall ~~may~~ provide disability
27 history and awareness instruction in all K-12 public schools in
28 the district during the first 2 weeks in October each year. The
29 district school board shall designate these 2 weeks as

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30 "Disability History and Awareness Weeks." The Department of
31 Education shall assist in creating the curriculum for the
32 disability history and awareness instruction that will be used
33 in each school district.

34 (2) (a) During this 2-week period, students shall ~~may~~ be
35 provided intensive instruction to expand their knowledge,
36 understanding, and awareness of individuals who have ~~with~~
37 disabilities, the history of disability, and the disability
38 rights movement. Disability history must ~~may~~ include the events
39 and timelines of the development and evolution of services to,
40 and the civil rights of, individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities.
41 Disability history must ~~may~~ also include the contributions of
42 specific individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities, including the
43 contributions of acknowledged national leaders.

44 (b) Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the
45 instruction shall ~~may~~ be integrated into the existing school
46 curriculum in ways including, but not limited to, supplementing
47 lesson plans, holding school assemblies, or providing other
48 school-related activities. The instruction shall ~~may~~ be
49 delivered by individual presenters who have disabilities and who
50 have been approved by the Department of Education as presenters
51 ~~qualified school personnel or by knowledgeable guest speakers,~~
52 ~~with a particular focus on including individuals with~~
53 ~~disabilities.~~

54 (c) 1. The Department of Education shall establish a
55 disability history and awareness advisory council. The council
56 shall consist of the following members:

57 a. The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee.

58 b. The Florida Youth Council, a group of young people ages

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59 15 to 17, and emerging young leaders ages 18 to 30, who live in
60 this state and have disabilities or special health care needs.

61 c. A member of the House of Representatives, appointed by
62 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or his or her
63 designee.

64 d. A member of the Senate, appointed by the President of
65 the Senate, or his or her designee.

66 2. The department shall provide a liaison to assist the
67 council in its operation. The department shall act as the fiscal
68 agent for all financial transactions required by the council.

69 3. The responsibilities of the council shall be, but are
70 not limited to:

71 a. Ensuring that each presenter has first-hand knowledge
72 and experience pertaining to the challenges facing individuals
73 who have disabilities;

74 b. Ensuring that members of the Florida Youth Council in
75 this state continue to remain involved in leadership
76 development, self-advocacy, peer mentoring, and other activities
77 that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging
78 leaders who have disabilities;

79 c. Ensuring that each presenter meets the background
80 screening requirements of s. 1012.465; and

81 d. Submitting an annual report to the Governor, the
82 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
83 Representatives, and the superintendent of each school district
84 in this state.

85 4. The council shall meet at least four times a year and
86 more often as needed.

87 (3) The goals of disability history and awareness

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88 instruction include:

89 (a) Better treatment for individuals who have ~~with~~
90 disabilities, especially for youth in school, and increased
91 attention to preventing the bullying or harassment of students
92 who have ~~with~~ disabilities.

93 (b) Encouragement to individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities
94 to develop increased self-esteem, resulting in more individuals
95 who have ~~with~~ disabilities gaining pride in being an individual
96 with a disability, obtaining postsecondary education, entering
97 the workforce, and contributing to their communities.

98 (c) Reaffirmation of the local, state, and federal
99 commitment to the full inclusion in society of, and the equal
100 opportunity for, all individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities.

101 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.