

By the Committees on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs; and Education Pre-K - 12; and Senators Ring and Fasano

586-03222-12

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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 that each district school
4 board provide disability history and awareness
5 instruction in all K-12 public schools; requiring that
6 the Department of Education assist in creating the
7 curriculum for the disability history and awareness
8 instruction; providing for individual presenters who
9 have disabilities to augment the disability history
10 and awareness instruction; creating the Disability
11 History and Awareness Advisory Council within the
12 Department of Education; providing for certain
13 individuals to apply to the department for membership
14 on the council; providing that the Commissioner of
15 Education, the member of the Senate, and the member of
16 the House of Representatives are ex officio, nonvoting
17 members of the council; requiring that the department
18 provide a liaison to assist the council; requiring
19 that the department act as the fiscal agent for all
20 financial transactions required by the council;
21 providing responsibilities of the council; providing
22 meeting times for the council; providing an effective
23 date.

24
25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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27 Section 1. Section 1003.4205, Florida Statutes, is amended
28 to read:

29 1003.4205 Disability history and awareness instruction.—

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30 (1) Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, each district
31 school board shall ~~may~~ provide disability history and awareness
32 instruction in all K-12 public schools in the district during
33 the first 2 weeks in October each year. The district school
34 board shall designate these 2 weeks as "Disability History and
35 Awareness Weeks." The Department of Education shall assist in
36 creating the curriculum for the disability history and awareness
37 instruction that will be used in each school district.

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

48 (b) Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the
49 instruction shall ~~may~~ be integrated into the existing school
50 curriculum in ways including, but not limited to, supplementing
51 lesson plans, holding school assemblies, or providing other
52 school-related activities. The instruction shall ~~may~~ be
53 augmented by presentations from individuals who have
54 disabilities, who have been approved by the school or school
55 district as presenters, and who the school or school district
56 has ensured meet appropriate background screening requirements
57 of s. 1012.465 to enter schools and interact with children
58 ~~delivered by qualified school personnel or by knowledgeable~~

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59 ~~guest speakers, with a particular focus on including individuals~~
60 ~~with disabilities.~~

61 (c)1. There is created within the Department of Education
62 the Disability History and Awareness Advisory Council. The
63 council shall consist of the following 15 members:

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

65 b. A member of the House of Representatives, appointed by
66 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or his or her
67 designee.

68 c. A member of the Senate, appointed by the President of
69 the Senate, or his or her designee.

70 d. Six individuals who are younger than 30 years of age and
71 who must apply to the Department of Education to become members
72 of the council.

73 e. Six individuals who are 30 years of age or older and who
74 must apply to the Department of Education to become members of
75 the council.

76 2. The Commissioner of Education, the member of the Senate,
77 and the member of the House of Representatives, or their
78 designees, are ex officio, nonvoting members of the council.

79 3. The department shall provide a liaison to assist the
80 council in its operation. The department shall act as the fiscal
81 agent for all financial transactions required by the council.

82 4. The responsibilities of the council shall be, but are
83 not limited to:

84 a. Providing to the Department of Education input regarding
85 the curriculum for disability history and awareness;

86 b. Assisting, upon request, schools or school districts in
87 locating individuals who have disabilities to make presentations

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88 at schools; and

89 c. Submitting an annual report to the Governor, the
90 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
91 Representatives, and the superintendent of each school district
92 in this state by August 1, 2013, and each year thereafter. The
93 annual report must include, but is not limited to,
94 recommendations and policy alternatives regarding the state of
95 disability awareness in this state.

96 5. The council shall meet at least four times a year and
97 more often as needed.

98 (3) The goals of disability history and awareness
99 instruction include:

100 (a) Better treatment for individuals who have ~~with~~
101 disabilities, especially for youth in school, and increased
102 attention to preventing the bullying or harassment of students
103 who have ~~with~~ disabilities.

104 (b) Encouragement to individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities
105 to develop increased self-esteem, resulting in more individuals
106 who have ~~with~~ disabilities gaining pride in being an individual
107 with a disability, obtaining postsecondary education, entering
108 the workforce, and contributing to their communities.

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

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