

By the Committee on Education; and Senator Ring

581-03375-13

2013226c1

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; providing for
6 individual presenters who have disabilities to augment
7 the disability history and awareness instruction;
8 requiring each public school to establish a disability
9 history and awareness advisory council; providing
10 membership on the council at each school; providing
11 responsibilities of the council at each school;
12 providing meeting times for the council at each
13 school; providing an effective date.

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

16
17 Section 1. Section 1003.4205, Florida Statutes, is amended
18 to read:

19 1003.4205 Disability history and awareness instruction.—

20 (1) Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, each district
21 school board shall ~~may~~ provide disability history and awareness
22 instruction in all K-12 public schools in the district during
23 the first 2 weeks in October each year. The district school
24 board shall designate these 2 weeks as "Disability History and
25 Awareness Weeks."

26 (2) (a) During this 2-week period, students shall ~~may~~ be
27 provided intensive instruction to expand their knowledge,
28 understanding, and awareness of individuals who have ~~with~~
29 disabilities, the history of disability, and the disability

581-03375-13

2013226c1

30 rights movement. Disability history must ~~may~~ include the events
31 and timelines of the development and evolution of services to,
32 and the civil rights of, individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities.
33 Disability history must ~~may~~ also include the contributions of
34 specific individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities, including the
35 contributions of acknowledged national leaders.

36 (b) Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, the
37 instruction shall ~~may~~ be integrated into the existing school
38 curriculum in ways including, but not limited to, supplementing
39 lesson plans, holding school assemblies, or providing other
40 school-related activities. The instruction shall ~~may~~ be
41 augmented by presentations from individuals who have
42 disabilities, who have been approved by the school or school
43 district as presenters, and who the school or school district
44 has ensured meet appropriate background screening requirements
45 of s. 1012.465 to enter schools and interact with children
46 ~~delivered by qualified school personnel or by knowledgeable~~
47 ~~guest speakers, with a particular focus on including individuals~~
48 ~~with disabilities.~~

49 (c)1. Each public school in the state shall establish a
50 disability history and awareness advisory council. The council
51 at each school shall consist of the following seven members:

52 a. Six teachers who are employed at the public school.

53 b. One individual from the local community who has a
54 disability.

55 2. The responsibilities of the council at each school shall
56 be, but are not limited to:

57 a. Providing to the public school input regarding the
58 curriculum for disability history and awareness;

581-03375-13

2013226c1

59 b. Assisting in locating individuals who have disabilities
60 to make presentations at schools; and

61 c. Submitting an annual report to the superintendent of the
62 school district in which the public school is located by August
63 1, 2014, and each year thereafter. The annual report must
64 include, but need not be limited to, recommendations and policy
65 alternatives regarding the state of disability awareness at the
66 public school.

67 3. The council at each school shall meet at least four
68 times a year and more often as needed.

69 (3) The goals of disability history and awareness
70 instruction include:

71 (a) Better treatment for individuals who have ~~with~~
72 disabilities, especially for youth in school, and increased
73 attention to preventing the bullying or harassment of students
74 who have ~~with~~ disabilities.

75 (b) Encouragement to individuals who have ~~with~~ disabilities
76 to develop increased self-esteem, resulting in more individuals
77 who have ~~with~~ disabilities gaining pride in being an individual
78 with a disability, obtaining postsecondary education, entering
79 the workforce, and contributing to their communities.

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

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