

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 279 Public School Instruction
SPONSOR(S): Hill and others
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 252

| REFERENCE | ACTION | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF |
|--|---------------|----------------|--|
| 1) K-12 Subcommittee | 11 Y, 0 N | Brink | Ahearn |
| 2) Education Appropriations Subcommittee | 11 Y, 0 N | Seifert | Heflin |
| 3) Education Committee | | | |

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill requires public schools to provide instruction on the events surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the impact of those events on the nation.

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on the state or local governments.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation:

Section 1003.42(2), F.S., establishes components of required instruction for public school students. Instructional staff must teach the following content:

- The history and content of the Declaration of Independence, to include specific consents which include in part including national sovereignty, and natural law;
- The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States with emphasis on each of the ten amendments that make up the Bill of Rights;
- The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government, as they are embodied in the most important of the Federalist Papers;
- Flag education, including proper flag display and flag salute;
- The elements of civil government, including the primary functions of and interrelationships between the Federal Government, the state, and its counties, municipalities, school districts, and special districts;
- The history of the United States, including the period of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence, the Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the present;
- The history of the Holocaust;
- The history of African Americans;
- The elementary principles of agriculture;
- The true effects of all alcoholic beverages and narcotics upon the human body and mind;
- Kindness to animals;
- The history of the state;
- The conservation of natural resources;
- Comprehensive health education that addresses concepts of community health; consumer health; environmental health; family life, including in part, an awareness of the benefits of sexual abstinence as the expected standard and the consequences of teenage pregnancy; mental and emotional health; and dating violence and abuse;
- Such additional materials, subjects, courses, or fields in such grades as are prescribed by law or by rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board in fulfilling the requirements of law;
- The study of Hispanic contributions to the United States;
- The study of women's contributions to the United States;
- The nature and importance of free enterprise to the United States economy;
- A character-development program in kindergarten through grade 12; and
- In order to encourage patriotism, the sacrifices that veterans have made in serving our country and protecting democratic values worldwide.

The law does not establish any particular grade level or courses within which instruction on these topics must be provided. However, the Department of Education takes steps to ensure that the enumerated content is taught in public schools.

Current law does not require instruction on the impact of September 11, 2001, on our nation; however, the Department of Education's website includes multiple resources to support educators and students in researching and understanding the effects of the event.¹

Additionally, federal law designates September 11, 2001, as Patriot Day in honor of the individuals who lost their lives as a result of the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001.²

Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill requires that the events surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the impact of those events on the nation be included in the required instruction for public school students. School districts could incorporate remembrance of these events in instruction and school-related activities on Patriot Day, September 11, and throughout the year in other subjects.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Creates s. 1003.42(2)(u), F.S.; requiring that instructional staff of public schools provide instruction to students about the terrorist attacks occurring on September 11, 2001, and the impact of those events.

Section 2. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

There is no anticipated fiscal impact associated with this bill. Providing instruction as required by the bill would not necessitate expenditure of funds because free resources are available for use, such as those listed by the Department of Education on its website. If districts choose to purchase additional instructional materials, funds received pursuant to the instructional materials categorical under the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) formula can be used.

¹ See Florida Department of Education, Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance, *available at* <http://www.fldoe.org/bii/humanities/pdc.asp> (last visited Feb. 21, 2014).

² Public Law 107-89. See 36 U.S.C. s. 144.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.