

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12

BILL: CS/SB 1462

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K – 12 Committee and Senator Latvala

SUBJECT: Character-Development Instruction

DATE: February 4, 2016

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Scott	Klebacha	ED	Fav/CS
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 1462 expands the requirements for high school character-development programs to include instruction on developing life and career-related skills.

Specifically, the bill requires instruction on:

- Developing leadership skills, interpersonal skills, organization skills, and research skills.
- Creating a resume.
- Developing and practicing the skills necessary for employment interviews.
- Managing stress and expectations.
- Developing skills that enable students to become more resilient and self-motivated.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2016.

II. Present Situation:

Florida law outlines specific content area instructional requirements, in addition to required core curricular content areas,¹ for middle grades promotion and high school graduation.²

¹ Section 1003.41, F.S.

² Each district school board is required to provide all courses required for middle grades promotion, high school graduation, and appropriate instruction designed to ensure that students meet the State Board of Education adopted standards in reading and other language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, health and physical education, and the arts. Section 1003.42(1), F.S.

Required Instruction

In addition to the required core curriculum, Florida law requires public school instruction in certain specified content areas, including, but not limited to:³

- The history and content of the Declaration of Independence.
- The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.
- The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government.
- The elements of civil government.
- The history of the Holocaust.
- The history of African Americans.
- The elementary principles of agriculture.
- Kindness to animals.
- The history of the state.
- Comprehensive health education.
- A character-development program in kindergarten through grade 12.

The law encourages the State Board of Education (State Board) to adopt standards and pursue assessment relating to the required instructional content.⁴

Character-Development Program

In 1999, legislation was passed requiring a secular, character-development program, similar to Character First⁵ or Character Counts,⁶ to be incorporated into elementary school instruction.⁷

Current law requires that each school district develop or adopt a curriculum for a character-development program in kindergarten through grade 12, and submit that curriculum to the Department of Education for approval.⁸ The character-development curriculum must stress the qualities of patriotism; responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for authority, life, liberty, and personal property; honesty; charity; self-control; racial, ethnic, religious tolerance; and cooperation.⁹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

CS/SB 1462 expands the requirements for high school character-development programs to include instruction on developing life and career-related skills.

³ Section 1003.42(2), F.S.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Character First Education offers curriculum and training for public and private schools, home school families, mentoring programs, summer camps, and other educational settings. Character First Education, *About Character First*, <http://characterfirsteducation.com/c/about.php>, (last visited January 29, 2016).

⁶ Character Counts! is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit program that provides a curriculum, along with resources, based on its Six Pillars of Character®: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Character Counts!, *The Six Pillars of Character®*, <http://charactercounts.org/program-overview/six-pillars/>, (last visited January 29, 2016).

⁷ Section 1, ch. 99-347, L.O.F., *codified as s. 233.061(2)(q)*, F.S.

⁸ Section 1003.42(2)(s), F.S.

⁹ *Id.*

Specifically, the bill requires instruction on:

- Developing leadership skills, interpersonal skills, organization skills, and research skills.
- Creating a resume.
- Developing and practicing the skills necessary for employment interviews.
- Managing stress and expectations.
- Developing skills that enable students to become more resilient and self-motivated.

Current law requires each school district to develop or adopt a K-12 character-development curriculum, and specifies the character qualities that must be emphasized in such curriculum. The bill expands current law by requiring instruction on additional life and career-related skills for students in grades 9 through 12. In effect, all public high school students will receive instruction on such skills as part of each respective school district's existing character-development curriculum.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2016.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

The bill substantially amends section 1003.42 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Education Pre-K – 12 on February 2, 2016:

The committee substitute includes the following substantial changes:

- Amends s. 1003.42(2)(s), F.S., requiring K-12 character-development programs, to include instruction on life and career-related skills for students in grades 9 through 12.
- Removes a requirement that the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Articulation Coordinating Committee, develop an elective course for high school students addressing life skills and character development.
- Maintains the types of life and career-related skills on which high school students must receive instruction.

B. Amendments:

None.