

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS
FINAL BILL ANALYSIS**

BILL #: CS/HB 807 Civics Education
SPONSOR(S): Education Committee, Aloupis and others
TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** CS/SB 1480

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) PreK-12 Quality Subcommittee	14 Y, 0 N	Sleap	Guy
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee	10 Y, 0 N	Seifert	Potvin
3) Education Committee	14 Y, 1 N, As CS	Sleap	Hassell
FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION:			
111	Y's 1	N's	GOVERNOR'S ACTION: Approved

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

CS/HB 807 passed the House on April 25, 2019, and subsequently passed the Senate on May 3, 2019.

The bill requires all instructional materials for the civics education course required for middle school students be reviewed and approved by Florida's Commissioner of Education in consultation with civics organizations and stakeholders. Any errors or inaccuracies in state-adopted civics materials identified by the commissioner must be corrected pursuant to current statutory procedures.

The bill requires the commissioner to review and make recommendations for improvements to current state-adopted civics instructional materials and the test specifications for the statewide standardized civics end-of-course assessment by December 31, 2019. The Department of Education is required to review the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for the middle grades civics education course by December 31, 2020.

The bill allows participation in certain civics engagement programs to count toward service work hour requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The bill was approved by the Governor on June 26, 2019, ch. 2019-150, L.O.F., and will become effective on July 1, 2019.

I. SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION

A. EFFECT OF CHANGES:

Civics Education in Florida

Present Situation

The mission of Florida's K-20 education system is to "allow its students to increase their proficiency by allowing them the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through rigorous and relevant learning opportunities."¹ Civic literacy and preparing students to become civically engaged and knowledgeable adults who positively contribute to their communities is a priority of Florida's K-20 education system.²

Florida law requires each school board to provide instruction regarding the history, significance and principles of the Declaration of the Independence and the Constitution of the United States, flag education, and civil government.³ The law also requires districts to provide a character-development program in kindergarten through grade 12. Each school district must develop or adopt a curriculum for its K-12 character-development program and submit it to the Florida Department of Education (DOE) for approval.⁴ 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, and religious tolerance; and cooperation."⁵

A district school board may also adopt rules requiring patriotic programs in schools that encourage respect for the government of the United States and its national anthem and flag.⁶ Teachers or administrators in the schools may read or post historic material such as the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, and others.⁷

Currently, Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) for social studies include civics content in kindergarten through grade 8 and in grades 9 through 12.⁸ In the middle grades, a student must successfully complete three middle school or higher courses in social studies in order to be promoted to high school.⁹ One of the three courses must be on civics.¹⁰ The course curriculum must include the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; the meaning and significance of documents such as the Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.¹¹

Students must take the civics statewide end-of-course (EOC) assessment, which counts toward 30 percent of the student's course grade.¹² Results from the assessment are included in the school grade calculation for middle schools.¹³

¹ Section 1000.03(4), F.S.

² Section 1000.03(5)(c), F.S.

³ Section 1003.42(2)(a)-(e), F.S.

⁴ Section 1003.42(2)(s), F.S.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Section 1003.44(1), F.S.

⁷ *Id.* at (2)

⁸ See CPALMS, *Browse and Search Standards*, <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/Standard> (last visited March 1, 2019) (providing the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for each subject area, by grade level).

⁹ Section 1003.4156(1)(c), F.S.

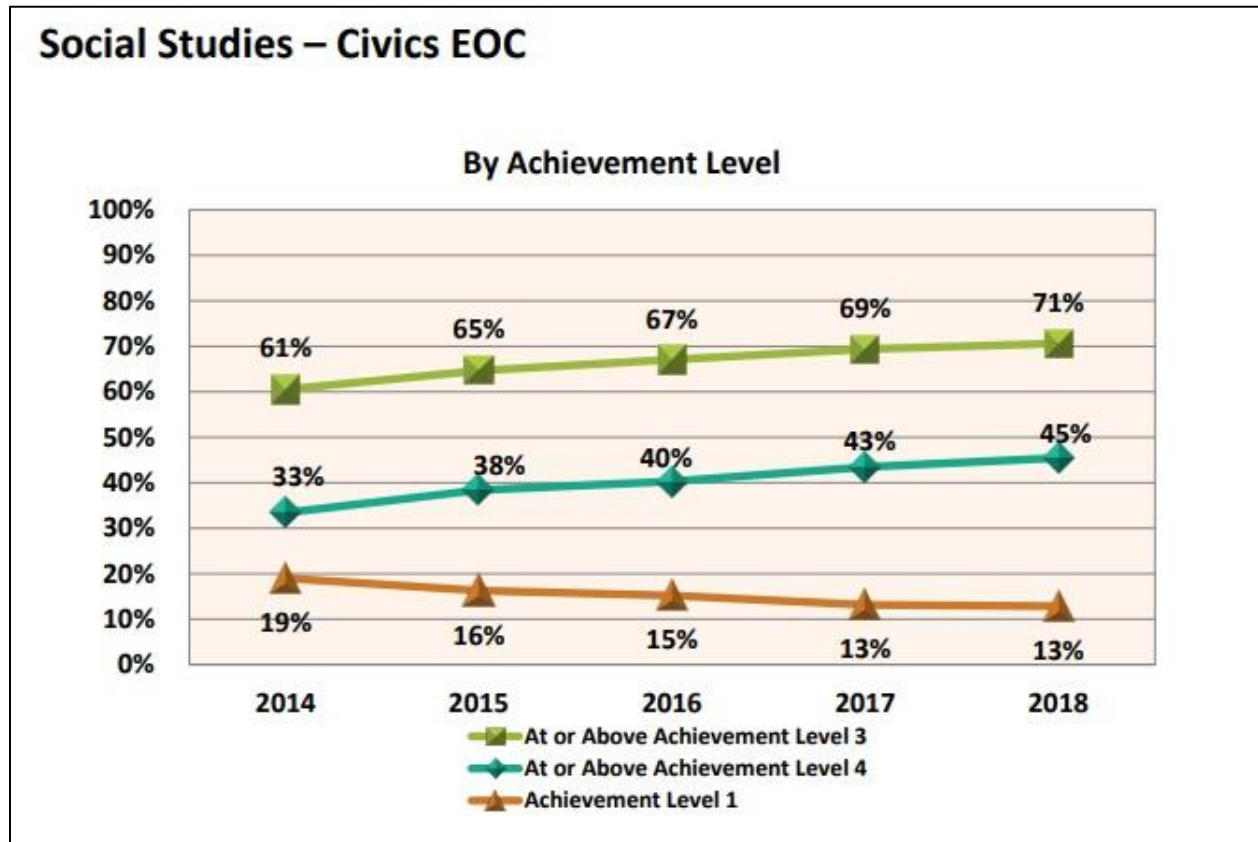
¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ See s. 1003.4156(1)(c) and s. 1008.24(3)(b)1.i., F.S.

The DOE's 2018 statewide assessment results, shown in the figure below, found that student performance on the civics EOC has increased by 2 percentage points (from 69% to 71%) from 2017 to 2018 and 10 percentage points from its inception in 2014 (from 61% to 71%).¹⁴ Achieving a Level 3 is considered a passing score on the assessment.¹⁵



To address civics education in Florida, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 19-32 in January 2019, directing the Commissioner of Education to review Florida's K-12 academic standards and identify opportunities to prepare high school graduates to be knowledgeable citizens, particularly in the principles of the United States Constitution.¹⁶ The Commissioner must report on the review by January 1, 2020.¹⁷

Instructional Materials Adoption and Accuracy

Present Situation

In Florida, specific courses within selected subject areas and grade levels are called for adoption on a rotating basis.¹⁸ Subject areas for the current adoption year and the adoption schedule are posted on the Florida Department of Education Instructional Materials (FDOEIM) website.¹⁹ The procedures for submitting and evaluating instructional materials are governed by state board rule.²⁰

¹⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Assessment Science and Social Studies* (2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5668/urlt/81PacketNGSSS18.pdf>.

¹⁵ Florida Department of Education, *2018-19 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards End-of-Course Assessment Fact Sheet* (2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5662/urlt/NGSSSEOCFS1819.pdf>.

¹⁶ Fla. Exec. Order No. 19-32 (January 31, 2019).

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Section 1006.29, F.S.

¹⁹ Florida Department of Education, Instructional Materials website, <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/instructional-materials> (last visited March 5, 2019).

²⁰ See rule 6A-7.0710, F.A.C. See s. 1006.34, F.S.

District school boards or a consortium of school boards may also implement a program to review, recommend, adopt, and purchase instructional materials.²¹ For a district school board that chooses to implement its own instructional materials program, by March 31 of each year, the district school superintendent must certify to DOE that all instructional materials for core courses used by the district are aligned with state standards.²²

To ensure the accuracy of state-adopted instructional materials, the Commissioner of Education may conduct an independent investigation of instructional materials, whereby publishers must provide corrections or the materials are removed from the state-adopted list.²³

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

Present Situation

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is a merit-based program that rewards Florida high school students for their high academic achievement and encourages them to continue their postsecondary education at eligible Florida institutions.²⁴ The scholarship program consists of the following awards:

- Florida Academic Scholars;
- Florida Medallion Scholars;
- Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars; and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars.²⁵

High school students who wish to qualify must: submit an application; complete the Florida Financial Aid Application; meet residency requirements; earn a standard high school diploma or its equivalent or complete a home education program; not have been found guilty of or pled no contest to a felony charge unless the student has been granted clemency; be accepted and enroll in a degree or program at an eligible Florida postsecondary institution; and be enrolled for at least 6 non-remedial semester credit hours or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours per term.²⁶

In addition, each scholarship program may require specific levels of student academic achievement, completion of required high school coursework, achievement of a minimum score on a college entrance exam or placement test, and completion of service work during high school.²⁷ Service work requirements for the scholarship awards include:

- Florida Academic Scholars - 100 service hours;
- Florida Medallion Scholars - 75 service hours;
- Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars - 30 service hours; and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars - 30 service hours.²⁸

Service Work Requirements

A student must complete a program of volunteer service work, as approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the DOE for home education students.²⁹ A student must identify a social or civic issue or professional area, develop a plan for personal involvement in

²¹ Section 1006.283(1), F.S.

²² *Id.*

²³ Section 1006.35, F.S.

²⁴ Section 1009.53, F.S.

²⁵ Section 1009.53(2), F.S. and s.1009.536, F.S.

²⁶ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2018-19 Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Nov. 5, 2018), available at

<https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ *See* s. 1009.534(1)(e), F.S.; s. 1009.535(1)(e), F.S.; s. 1009.536(1)(e) and (2)(b), F.S.

²⁹ *Id.*

addressing the issue or learning about the area, and through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect upon the experience. Service work may include a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office.³⁰

The required service hours must be completed during high school and before high school graduation. The hours must be documented in writing and signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization where the student volunteered. Each district school board and the administrators of a nonpublic school must establish the approved activities and the process for the documentation of service hours for students.³¹

Effect of the Bill

The bill requires all instructional materials used for the middle grades civics education course, be reviewed and approved by the commissioner in consultation with organizations that may include, but are not limited to: the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship;³² Bill of Rights Institute; Hillsdale College; Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History; iCivics; and the Constitutional Sources Project. The review must also be in consultation with stakeholders made up of educators, school administrators, postsecondary representatives, elected officials, business and industry leaders, parents, and the public.

The bill requires any errors and inaccuracies in state-adopted civics materials, identified by the commissioner, be corrected pursuant to current statutory procedures.

By December 31, 2019, the bill requires the commissioner to review current state-adopted civics instructional materials and the statewide civics EOC and provide recommendations for improvements. The bill requires the DOE to complete a review of the NGSSS for the middle grades civics education course by December 31, 2020.

The bill provides that the hours a high school student dedicates to participating in the Florida Debate Initiative, the YMCA Youth and Government program, the American Legion Boys or Girls State programs, or other similar programs approved by the commissioner count toward the service work hour requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

³⁰ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2018-19 Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements*, at 4 (Nov. 5, 2018), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

³¹ *Id.*

³² The Florida Joint Center for Citizenship is a partnership between the Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government at the University of Central Florida and the Bob Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida. The Center offers K-12 curricular resources to support effective civics instruction; provides Civics360, an online student learning tool for middle school civics; and assists teachers and students in preparing for the civics EOC assessment.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.