

By Senator Brandes

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to civic education; amending s.
3 1003.44, F.S.; requiring the Commissioner of Education
4 to develop minimum criteria for a nonpartisan civic
5 literacy practicum for high school students, beginning
6 with a specified school year; requiring the
7 commissioner to develop a certain process for use by
8 district school boards; specifying criteria for the
9 civic literacy practicum; authorizing students to
10 apply the hours they devote to practicum activities to
11 certain community service requirements; requiring the
12 State Board of Education to designate certain high
13 schools as Freedom Schools, based on criteria the
14 board establishes relating to students' civic learning
15 and civic engagement; providing an effective date.

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17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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19 Section 1. Present subsection (5) of section 1003.44,
20 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (6), and a new
21 subsection (5) is added to that section, to read:

22 1003.44 Patriotic programs; rules.—

23 (5) (a) In order to help students evaluate the roles,
24 rights, and responsibilities of United States citizens and
25 determine methods of active participation in society,
26 government, and the political system, the commissioner shall
27 develop minimum criteria for a nonpartisan civic literacy
28 practicum that may be incorporated into a school's curriculum
29 for the high school United States Government course under s.

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30 1003.4282(3)(d), beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. The
31 commissioner also shall develop a process by which a district
32 school board can verify that a student successfully completed a
33 practicum meeting the criteria.

34 1. The criteria must require a student to:

35 a. Identify a civic issue that impacts his or her
36 community.

37 b. Rigorously research the issue from multiple perspectives
38 and develop a plan for his or her personal involvement in
39 addressing the issue.

40 c. Create a portfolio to evaluate and reflect upon his or
41 her experience and the outcomes or likely outcomes of his or her
42 involvement. A portfolio must, at minimum, include research,
43 evidence, and a written plan of involvement.

44 2. A civic literacy practicum must be nonpartisan, focus on
45 addressing at least one community issue, and promote a student's
46 ability to consider differing points of view and engage in civil
47 discourse with individuals who hold an opposing opinion.

48 (b) The hours outside of classroom instruction which a
49 student devotes to the nonpartisan civic literacy practicum to
50 implement his or her plan of involvement may be counted toward
51 meeting the community service requirements of the Florida Bright
52 Futures Scholarship Program. School districts must include and
53 accept nonpartisan civic literacy practicum activities and hours
54 in requirements for academic awards, especially those awards
55 that currently include community service as a criterion or
56 selection factor.

57 (c) The State Board of Education shall annually designate
58 each public school in the state which provides students with

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59 high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills,
60 as a Freedom School. The state board shall establish the
61 criteria for a school's designation as a Freedom School. The
62 criteria must include:

63 1. The extent to which strategies to develop high-quality
64 civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, are
65 integrated into the classroom using best instructional
66 practices.

67 2. The scope of integration of high-quality civic learning,
68 including civic-engagement skills, across the school's
69 curricula.

70 3. The extent to which the school supports
71 interdisciplinary, teacher-led professional learning communities
72 to support continuous improvement in instruction and student
73 achievement.

74 4. The percentage of students graduating with a standard
75 high school diploma who successfully completed a civic literacy
76 practicum and earned community service hours as provided in this
77 subsection.

78 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.