

The Florida Senate
HOUSE MESSAGE SUMMARY

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

[2021s00146.hms]

BILL: SB 146
INTRODUCER: Senator Brandes
SUBJECT: Civic Education
DATE: April 8, 2021

I. Amendments Contained in Message:

House Amendment 1 - 100821 (body with title)

II. Summary of Amendments Contained in Message:

House Amendment 1 modifies the civic literacy practicum requirements, removes the designation of a Freedom School, and adds a Citizen Scholar Program. Specifically, the amendment:

- Retains the requirement in SB 146 for the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) to develop minimum criteria for a civic literacy practicum that may be included in a high school United States Government course, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, with modifications. The amendment:
 - Adds that the purpose of the practicum is to inspire civic engagement and help students learn about local, state, and federal governmental interactions with the public.
 - Adds that the practicum must provide students with an opportunity to be civically engaged through activities that include unpaid government internships, government simulations or observations, and observing the naturalization process.
 - Removes the requirement for the Commissioner to develop a process by which a district school board can verify that a student successfully completed a civic literacy practicum.
 - Removes the requirement that the practicum be nonpartisan and promote a student's ability to engage with different points of view, and removes the requirement that a student identify a community civic issue, develop a plan for personal involvement in the issue, and a create a portfolio. The amendment instead requires the student to complete a research paper that includes: a reflection on the student's experience participating in the civic engagement activity; an explanation of the significance of the governmental entity's role in the student's community, the state, or the nation; and an explanation of how the governmental entity is responsive to the public.
 - Changes from a requirement to an encouragement that school districts include and accept civic literacy practicum activities and hours toward requirements for academic awards, especially awards that include community service as a criterion or selection factor.
- Removes from SB 146 the requirements that the State Board of Education annually designates each public school in the state meeting specified criteria as a Freedom School.

- Adds to SB 146:
 - The creation of the Citizen Scholar program within the University of South Florida to be headquartered at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg Center for Civic Engagement.
 - That, subject to appropriation, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg contract with the YMCA to provide students participating in the Youth and Government Program the opportunity to be designated Citizen Scholars and earn undergraduate credit.
 - The requirement that the Citizen Scholar Program: combine academic instruction with implementation of concepts learned in the classroom into the local community; and provide students with opportunities to deepen their knowledge of American democracy and improve civil discourse.
 - That high school students completing the Youth and Government program must receive up to six undergraduate credit hours and be known as Citizen Scholars.