

**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.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

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BILL: SB 1316

INTRODUCER: Senator Brandes

SUBJECT: Civic Education

DATE: March 18, 2019

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Olenick	Sikes	ED	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1316 expands and enhances civics instruction in public schools. The bill creates the United States Government and Civic Engagement course and provides:

- An option for students entering grade 9, in the 2020-2021 school year, to take one-half credit in United States Government and Civic Engagement.
- A nonpartisan civic literacy project as the laboratory component of the United States Government and Civic Engagement course.

Additionally, the bill:

- Creates the Florida Seal of Civic Engagement Program.
- Provides an option for students initially enrolling in a Florida College System institution or state university to demonstrate competency in civic literacy by earning the Seal of Civic Engagement.
- Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to include nonpartisan civic literacy projects when encouraging school districts to initiate, adopt, and expand service-learning programs and policies in kindergarten through grade 12.
- Establishes Democracy Schools to recognize each public school in the state that demonstrates a commitment to integrating high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, into its academic curricula.
- Amends the school grading requirements beginning with the 2020-2021 school year to include the percentage of students who complete the United States Government and Civic Engagement course with a grade of “B” or higher in the calculation.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.

## II. Present Situation:

Florida law requires the adoption of standards for core curricula content taught in public schools and specifies the requirements that students must meet to earn a standard high school diploma.<sup>1</sup>

### Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) establish the core curricula content to be taught in Florida and specify the core content knowledge and skills that K-12 public school students are expected to acquire.<sup>2</sup> The standards must be rigorous and relevant to incrementally increase a student's core content knowledge and skills over time.<sup>3</sup> The curricular content for all subjects must integrate critical-thinking, problem-solving, and workforce-literacy skills; communication, reading, and writing skills; mathematics skills; collaboration skills; contextual and applied-learning skills; technology-literacy skills; information and media-literacy skills; and civic-engagement skills.<sup>4</sup> The standards applicable to students in grades 9 through 12 may be organized by grade clusters that include more than one grade level, except as otherwise provided for visual performing arts, physical education, health, and foreign language standards.<sup>5</sup>

The State Board of Education (SBE) is responsible for adopting the NGSSS and subsequent revisions to such standards in rule.<sup>6</sup> Currently, the NGSSS must meet the following requirements:<sup>7</sup>

- English Language Arts must establish specific curricular content for, at a minimum, reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.
- Science standards must establish specific curricular content for, at a minimum, the nature of science, earth and space science, physical science, and life science.
- Mathematics standards must establish curricular content for, at a minimum, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability, number and quantity, functions, and modeling.
- Social Studies standards must establish curricula content for, at a minimum, geography, United States and world history, government, civics, humanities, and economics, including financial literacy.
- Visual and performing arts, physical education, health, and foreign language standards must establish specific curricular content and include distinct grade level expectations for the core content knowledge and skills that a student is expected to have acquired by each individual grade level from kindergarten through grade 5. The standards for grades 6 through 12 may be organized by grade clusters of more than one grade level.

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<sup>1</sup> Sections 1003.41 and 1003.4282(3), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1003.41(1), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Section 1003.41(3)-(4), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1003.41(2), F.S.

## Credits Required to Earn a Standard High School Diploma

To graduate from high school with a standard high school diploma, a student must successfully complete 24 credits, an International Baccalaureate curriculum, or an Advanced International Certificate of Education curriculum.<sup>8</sup>

A student must successfully complete 24 credits in the following subject areas:<sup>9</sup>

- Four credits in English Language Arts (ELA) I, II, III, and IV.
- Four credits in mathematics, including one each in Algebra I and Geometry. Industry certifications earned by students may substitute for up to two mathematics credits, except for Algebra I and Geometry.
- Three credits in science, including one credit in Biology I and two credits in equally rigorous courses.<sup>10</sup> Industry certifications earned by students may substitute for one science credit, except for Biology I.
- Three credits in social studies, including one credit each in United States History and World History; one-half credit in economics, which must include financial literacy; and one-half credit in United States Government.
- One credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or practical arts that incorporates artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination.
- One credit in physical education that must include the integration of health.
- Eight credits in electives. School districts are required to develop and offer coordinated electives to enable a student to develop knowledge and skills in his or her area of interest and such electives must include opportunities for students to earn college credit.

## Service Learning

Service learning refers to a student-centered, research-based teaching and learning strategy that engages students in meaningful service activities in their schools or communities.<sup>11</sup> Service learning activities are directly tied to academic curricula, standards, and course, district, or state assessments.<sup>12</sup> The Department of Education (DOE) must encourage school districts to initiate, adopt, expand and institutionalize service-learning programs, activities, and policies in kindergarten through grade 12.

## School Grades

School grades provide an easily understandable way to measure the performance of a school.<sup>13</sup> Parents and the general public can use the school grade and its components to understand how well each school is serving its students.<sup>14</sup> A school's grade may include up to eleven

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<sup>8</sup> Section 1003.4282(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at (3).

<sup>10</sup> Two of the three science credits must have a laboratory component. Section 1003.4282(3)(c), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1003.497(1), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> Florida Department of Education, *2018 School Grades Overview* (2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18534/urlt/SchoolGradesOverview18.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

components. There are four achievement components<sup>15</sup>, four learning gains components<sup>16</sup>, a middle school acceleration component, as well as components for graduation rate and college and career acceleration. Each component is worth up to 100 points in the overall calculation.

Schools are graded using the following scale:<sup>17</sup>

- “A,” for schools making excellent progress – 62 percent or higher of total points.
- “B,” for schools making above average progress – 54 percent to 61 percent of total points.
- “C,” for schools making satisfactory progress – 41 percent to 53 percent of total points.
- “D,” for schools making less than satisfactory progress – 32 percent to 40 percent of total points.
- “F,” for schools failing to make adequate progress – 31 percent or less of total points.

The SBE must periodically review the school grading scale to determine if the scale should be adjusted upward to meet raised expectations and encourage increased student performance. The SBE must notify the public of any adjustment, and explain the reasons for such adjustment and the impact of the adjustment on school grades.<sup>18</sup>

### **Civic Literacy**

Florida law requires that students initially entering a Florida College System institution or state university in the 2018-2019 school year and thereafter, must demonstrate competency in civic literacy.<sup>19</sup> The SBE and Board of Governors (BOG) are required to adopt in regulation at least one existing assessment that measures competency and identify certain outcomes.<sup>20</sup> The chair of the SBE and the chair of the BOG, or their respective designees, were tasked to jointly appoint a committee to:

- Develop a new course in civic literacy or revise an existing general education core course in American History or American Government to include civic literacy
- Establish course competencies and identify outcomes that include, at a minimum, an understanding of the basic principles of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government, an understanding of the United States Constitution, knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance, and an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases and their impact on law and society.

In 2017, the appointed Faculty Committee was formed and met on three occasions.<sup>21</sup> The committee modified two existing courses to include approved course competencies for civic

<sup>15</sup> English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

<sup>16</sup> ELA, Mathematics, lowest performing 25% in ELA and Mathematics

<sup>17</sup> Section 1008.34(2), F.S.; Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

<sup>18</sup> Section 1008.34(3)(c)1., F.S.

<sup>19</sup> Section 1007.25(4), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> That include, at a minimum, an understanding of the basic principles of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government, an understanding of the United States Constitution, knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance, and an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases and their impact on law and society. *Id.* at (4)(b).

<sup>21</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Postsecondary Civics Literacy* (2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/postsec-civics-lit.stml>.

literacy, and added a new course, that is available statewide, which is not part of the General Education Core and includes approved course competencies for civic literacy.<sup>22</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1316 expands and enhances civics instruction in public schools. The bill creates the United States Government and Civic Engagement course and provides:

- An option for students entering grade 9, in the 2020-2021 school year, to take one-half credit in United States Government and Civic Engagement.
- A nonpartisan civic literacy project as the laboratory component of the United States Government and Civic Engagement course.

Additionally, the bill:

- Creates the Florida Seal of Civic Engagement Program.
- Provides an option for students initially enrolling in a Florida College System institution or state university to demonstrate competency in civic literacy by earning the Seal of Civic Engagement.
- Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to include nonpartisan civic literacy projects when encouraging school districts to initiate, adopt, and expand service-learning programs and policies in kindergarten through grade 12.
- Establishes Democracy Schools to recognize each public school in the state that demonstrates a commitment to integrating high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, into its academic curricula.
- Amends the school grading requirements beginning with the 2020-2021 school year to include the percentage of students who complete the United States Government and Civic Engagement course with a grade of “B” or higher in the calculation.

### Credits Required to Earn a Standard High School Diploma

The bill modifies the one-half credit requirement in United States Government to include an option for students entering grade 9, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, to take one-half credit in United States Government and Civic Engagement to fulfill this requirement. The course must include an individual or group nonpartisan civic literacy project as a laboratory component. The State Board of Education (SBE) is required to approve and identify the United States Government and Civic Engagement course in the Course Code Directory. The course may be offered as a semester course or a year-long course.

### *Non Partisan Civic Literacy Project*

The bill establishes the requirements for the nonpartisan civic literacy project, which students must complete as the laboratory component of the United States Government and Civic Engagement course. The SBE is required to develop minimum criteria for a nonpartisan civic literacy project and a process for a district school board to confirm a student’s completion of the project. The criteria for nonpartisan civic literary projects must, at a minimum, require a student to:

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<sup>22</sup> Department of Education, *Civil Literacy Recommendations from the Faculty Committee* (2017), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/CL-FCR.pdf>.

- Identify a civic issue that impacts his or her community.
- Rigorously research the issue from multiple perspectives and develop a plan for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue.
- Create a portfolio to evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience and the outcomes of his or her involvement.

In addition, the project must be:

- Nonpartisan in nature and focus on addressing at least one community issue.
- Structured to promote a student's ability to consider differing points of view and engage in civil discourse with individuals who hold an opposing opinion.

A student may not receive remuneration for his or her work related to the project; however the hours that a student devotes to the project may be counted toward meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and for participation in the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

### *Service Learning*

The bill modifies service learning requirements to require the DOE to include nonpartisan civic literacy projects when encouraging school districts to initiate, adopt, and expand service-learning programs and policies in kindergarten through grade 12.

### **Florida Seal of Civic Engagement Program**

The bill creates the Florida Seal of Civic Engagement Program (program) to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of community involvement and academic achievement in civics. The purpose of the program is to encourage students to understand the basic principles of American democracy and to foster a sense of citizenship and community involvement.

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the Seal of Civic Engagement must be awarded to a high school student who earns a standard high school diploma and who meets the requirements established by the SBE. The SBE must include all of the following in its criteria:

- Completion of the United State Government and Civic Engagement course with a grade of "B" or higher.
- Community service or extracurricular activities related to civic engagement.
- Additional academic achievement in courses that include the study of civics and the United State Government.

Additionally, the Commissioner of Education must:

- Prepare and provide to each school district an appropriate insignia to affix to a student's diploma indicating that the student has been awarded the Seal of Civic Engagement.
- Provide information necessary for school districts to successfully implement the program.

In conjunction, each school district must:

- Maintain appropriate records to identify students who have met the requirements to receive the Seal of Civic Engagement.

- Provide the commissioner with the number of students who have met the requirements to receive the Seal of Civic Engagement.
- Affix the appropriate insignia to the student's diploma and indicate on the student's transcript that the student has earned the Seal of Civic Engagement.

A school district or the DOE may not charge a fee for the Seal of Civic Engagement.

The state board is required to adopt rules to implement this program that, at a minimum, must include:

- The requirements a student must meet to be awarded the Seal of Civic Engagement.
- A process to confirm a student's successful completion of the requirements to receive the Seal of Civic Engagement.

### **Democracy Schools**

The bill establishes Democracy Schools to recognize each public school in the state that demonstrates a commitment to integrating high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, into its academic curricula.

The SBE is required to establish criteria for designation as a Democracy School and annually designate each public school in the state that meets these criteria and provides students with high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, as a Democracy School. These criteria must include:

- Offering the United State Government and Civic Engagement course as a year-long course
- Integration of strategies to develop high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, into the classroom using best instructional practices.
- Integration of high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, across the school's curricula.
- School administrators and instructional personnel making high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills, an instructional priority.
- School support for interdisciplinary, teacher-led professional learning communities to support continuous improvement in instruction and student achievement.

The SBE is required to adopt rules to administer the Democracy Schools program.

### **Designation of School Grades**

The bill amends the school grading requirements, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, to include in its calculation the percentage of students who complete the United States Government and Civic Engagement course with a grade of "B" or higher. Additionally, for a school that is designated as a Democracy School as created in this bill, the percentage of students who completed the United State Government and Civic Engagement course with a grade of "B" or higher must be multiplied by a weight of 1.2 for school grading purposes.

In effect, this may encourage more school districts to offer the United States Government and Civic Engagement course and encourage students to enroll in the course.

***Civic Literacy***

The bill amends the civic education competency requirements to allow a student initially enrolling in a Florida College System institution or state university to demonstrate competency in civic literacy by earning the Seal of Civic Engagement, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. Additionally, the bill requires the chairs of the SBE and Board of Governors to include faculty from public post-secondary educational institutions located in counties of varying size and demographic makeup to be included in their faculty committee which develops and establishes civic literacy courses, competencies and outcomes. However, this committee met in October 2017 and made recommendations.<sup>23</sup> These changes to the committee would occur should the committee reconvene.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:****A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

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<sup>23</sup> Department of Education, *Civil Literacy Recommendations from the Faculty Committee* (2017), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/CL-FCR.pdf>.



C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1003.4282, 1003.497, 1007.25, and 1008.34.

This bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1003.4321, 1003.4971, and 1003.632.

**IX. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

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

None.

B. Amendments:

None.