

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
12 school districts accept nonpartisan civic literacy
13 practicum activities and hours in requirements for
14 certain awards; requiring the State Board of Education
15 to designate certain high schools as Freedom Schools;
16 requiring the state board to establish criteria for
17 such designation; providing an effective date.

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

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

24 1003.44 Patriotic programs; rules.—

25 (5) (a) In order to help students evaluate the roles,
26 rights, and responsibilities of United States citizens and
27 determine methods of active participation in society,
28 government, and the political system, the commissioner shall
29 develop minimum criteria for a nonpartisan civic literacy

24-00351-21

2021146__

30 practicum that may be incorporated into a school's curriculum
31 for the high school United States Government course required by
32 s. 1003.4282(3)(d), beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.
33 The commissioner also shall develop a process by which a
34 district school board can verify that a student successfully
35 completed a practicum meeting those criteria.

36 1. The criteria must require a student to do all of the
37 following:

38 a. Identify a civic issue that impacts his or her
39 community.

40 b. Rigorously research the issue from multiple perspectives
41 and develop a plan for his or her personal involvement in
42 addressing the issue.

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

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

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

24-00351-21

2021146__

59 factor.

60 (c) The State Board of Education shall annually designate
61 each public school in this state which provides students with
62 high-quality civic learning, including civic-engagement skills,
63 as a Freedom School. The state board shall establish the
64 criteria for a school's designation as a Freedom School. The
65 criteria must include all of the following:

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

70 2. The scope of integration of high-quality civic learning,
71 including civic-engagement skills, across the school's
72 curricula.

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

77 4. The minimum percentage of students graduating with a
78 standard high school diploma who must successfully complete a
79 civic literacy practicum and earn community service hours as
80 provided in this subsection.

81 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.