



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Hannah K. Wann

H.B. 211

129th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. J. Adams, Newbold, Burke, Roegner, Butler, Goodwin, Mecklenborg, Thompson, Hackett, McClain, Combs, Derickson, Slaby, Uecker, Hayes, McKenney, Young, Wachtmann, Huffman, Hottinger, Maag, Grossman, Stebelton, Sears, Antonio, Amstutz, Baker, Beck, Hall, Brenner, Bubb, Rosenberger, Buchy, Kozlowski, Landis, Dovilla, Ruhl, Martin, Boose, Blessing, Gonzales

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires the State Board of Education to incorporate into the state social studies standards for grades 4 through 12 academic content regarding the original texts of the Declaration of Independence, Northwest Ordinance, U.S. Constitution, and Ohio Constitution by July 1, 2012.
- Requires the State Board to revise the state model curricula for social studies to include the new academic content by March 31, 2013, and to revise the state achievement assessments to reflect the new academic content by December 31, 2013.
- Specifies that the study of American history and American government as required in the high school curriculum must include 1/4 unit (30 hours) of study of the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, the U.S. Constitution with emphasis on the Bill of Rights, and the Ohio Constitution.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Social studies standards and model curriculum

Not later than July 1, 2012, the bill requires the State Board of Education to incorporate into the state social studies standards for grades 4 through 12 academic content regarding the original texts of the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, the Constitution of the United States with emphasis on the Bill of Rights, and the Ohio Constitution, and "the role of these documents in the development of a constitutional republic at the state and federal levels." The bill also requires the State

Board to revise the state model curricula for social studies to reflect the additional academic content not later than March 31, 2013, and to revise the social studies achievement assessments not later than December 31, 2013.¹

Under current law, the State Board must adopt statewide academic standards for grades K through 12 in English language arts, math, science, and social studies every five years. The State Board also must adopt a model curriculum for instruction in each of those subject areas that is aligned with the standards, as well as achievement tests.²

Study of the historical documents in high school

The bill requires that, beginning with students entering ninth grade on or after July 1, 2010, instruction in American history and American government in the high school curriculum must include the study of the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, the U.S. Constitution with emphasis on the Bill of Rights, and the Ohio Constitution. These documents must be studied for the cumulative equivalent of at least 1/4 unit (or 30 hours of classroom instruction). In addition, the bill requires that study of the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, and the U.S. Constitution include study of those documents in their original 18th-Century context. It also specifies that "the role of documents such as the Federalist Papers and the Anti-Federalist Papers [be studied] to firmly establish the historical background leading to the establishment of the provisions of the Constitution and Bill of Rights by the founding fathers for the purpose of safeguarding our constitutional republic."³

Social studies high school curriculum

Current law requires three units of social studies in the high school curriculum, of which 1/2 unit must be in each of the subjects of American history and American government. The bill separates the one unit of American history and American government from the other two units of required social studies instruction.⁴ Presumably, students could take additional instruction in history and government as well other social studies courses to satisfy the two-unit requirement.

The bill also prescribes that before a student may participate in *high school* courses that involve "the study of social problems, economics, foreign affairs, the United Nations, world history and government, socialism, and communism, [the student must]

¹ R.C. 3301.073(A)(1)(b).

² R.C. 3301.079.

³ R.C. 3313.603(M).

⁴ R.C. 3313.603(B)(7) and (C)(7).

first complete basic instruction in geography, United States history [and] government . . . , the government of the state of Ohio, local government in Ohio, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Constitution of the state of Ohio."⁵ This provision is essentially identical to a provision of current law generally applicable to a school district's entire K-12 curriculum. The bill eliminates this current provision.⁶

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	04-26-11

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⁵ R.C. 3313.603(N).

⁶ R.C. 3313.60(D). The current provision was enacted in 1955.

