Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

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Am. S.B. 165*

129th General Assembly
(As Re-reported by S. Education)

Sens. Obhof and Grendell, Faber, Hughes, Jones, Jordan, Schaffer, Seitz, Sawyer, Hite

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires the State Board of Education to incorporate into the state social studies standards 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 and achievement assessments in social studies to include the new academic content.
- Specifies that the study of American history and American government as required in the high school curriculum must include study of the Declaration of Independence, Northwest Ordinance, U.S. Constitution, and 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 academic content regarding the original texts and historical context 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. The bill also requires the State Board to revise the state

* This analysis was prepared before the report of the Senate Education Committee appeared in the Senate Journal. Note that the list of co-sponsors and the legislative history may be incomplete.

model curricula and achievement assessments in social studies to reflect the additional academic content.[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Study of the historical documents in high school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 states that "it is important that high school students learn and understand [U.S.] history and the governments of both the United States and . . . Ohio." Therefore, it requires that, beginning with students entering ninth grade on or after July 1, 2012, 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. In addition, the bill requires that study to include study of the documents in their historical 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."[3]

Social studies high school curriculum

Current law requires three units of social studies in the high school curriculum, of which ½ unit each must be in 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 as other social studies courses, to satisfy the two-unit requirement.

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[1] R.C. 3301.079(A)(1)(b).

[2] R.C. 3301.079.

[3] R.C. 3313.603(M).

[4] R.C. 3313.603(B) and (C).

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	05-03-11
Reported, S. Education	06-28-11
Recommitted to S. Education	06-28-11
Re-reported, S. Education	–-

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