H-3550.3

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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1896**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Dolan, Stonier, Lovick, Springer, Appleton, Bergquist, Manweller, Tarleton, Frame, Goodman, and Ormsby)

AN ACT Relating to the expansion of civics education in public schools; amending RCW 28A.230.093; adding a new section to chapter 28A.415 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that effective civics education teaches students how to be active, informed, and engaged citizens. The legislature recognizes that RCW 28A.150.210 identifies civics as one component of a basic education and that RCW 28A.230.093 requires one-half credit in civics for high school graduation. These statutes are meant to ensure that every student receives a high-quality civics education from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The legislature also recognizes, however, that two factors limit the effectiveness of civics education.

First, when the one-half civics credit is embedded in other courses rather than taught in a stand-alone civics course, the required content is easily diluted or ignored altogether. Pressure to emphasize other areas of the curriculum can relegate civics education to a lesser role.

Second, professional development opportunities for teachers in civics education are rare. In many districts, due to limited budgets and competing demands for funding, opportunities for teachers to deepen instructional and curricular practices in civics do not exist.

The legislature, therefore, intends to: Require school districts to make stand-alone civics courses available to all high school students; and support the development of an in-depth and interactive teacher professional development program to improve the ability of teachers throughout the state to provide students with an effective civics education from kindergarten through twelfth grade. This expanded civics education program seeks to ensure that students have basic knowledge about national, state, tribal, and local governments, and that they develop the skills and dispositions needed to become informed and engaged citizens.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.230.093 and 2009 c 223 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) If, after July 26, 2009, the state board of education increases the number of course credits in social studies that are required for high school graduation under RCW 28A.230.090, the board shall also require that at least one-half credit of that requirement be ((~~coursework~~)) a stand-alone course in civics.

(2) The content of the civics requirement must include, but not be limited to:

(a) Federal, state, tribal, and local government organization and procedures;

(b) Rights and responsibilities of citizens addressed in the Washington state and United States Constitutions;

(c) Current issues addressed at each level of government; ((~~and~~))

(d) Electoral issues, including elections, ballot measures, initiatives, and referenda;

(e) The study and completion of the civics component of the federally administered naturalization test required of persons seeking to become naturalized United States citizens. Nothing in this subsection (2)(e) obligates students to obtain a passing score on the civics component of the federally administered naturalization test as requirement for high school graduation; and

(f) The importance in a free society of living the basic values and character traits specified in RCW 28A.150.211.

(3) Beginning with or before the 2020-21 school year, each school district must offer a one-half credit stand-alone course in civics as an elective course to all high school students in the district. Although civics content and instruction may be embedded in other social studies courses offered to high school students, those courses do not satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.415 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, an expanded civics education teacher training program is established within the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

(2) The program must provide for the selection of a team of qualified social studies teachers, and when appropriate, civics education specialists, from across the state who will:

(a) Develop teacher training materials using existing open educational resources (OERs) that include civics information on national, state, tribal, and local government, and the civics component of the federally administered naturalization test required of persons seeking to become naturalized United States citizens;

(b) Provide teacher training across the state, consistent with provisions in this chapter, and using the tools established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction including the college, career, and civic life (C3) framework and the six proven instructional practices for enhancing civic education; and

(c) Provide professional learning opportunities as described in section 2(3), chapter 77, Laws of 2016, which states that professional learning shall incorporate differentiated, coherent, sustained, and evidence-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job-embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills into their practice.

(3) The program shall assure an increase in the number of:

(a) Teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively engage students in civics education;

(b) Students who have a basic understanding of how governments work; and

(c) Students from every demographic and socioeconomic group who know their rights and responsibilities within society and are prepared to exercise them.

(4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may accept gifts and grants to assist with the establishment and implementation of the program established in this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.300 RCW to read as follows:

Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall select two school districts that are diverse in size and in geographic and demographic makeup to serve as demonstration sites for enhanced civics education. These demonstration sites will:

(1) Implement and assess an in-depth civics education program that includes the six proven instructional practices for enhancing civic education in kindergarten through twelfth grade classrooms;

(2) Collaborate with programs and agencies in the local community in order to expand after-school and summer civics education opportunities;

(3) Monitor and report the level of penetration of civics education in school and out-of-school programs;

(4) Ensure that underserved students including rural, low-income, immigrant, and refugee students are prioritized in the implementation of programs;

(5) Develop evaluation standards and a procedure for endorsing civics education curriculum that can be recommended for use in other school districts and out-of-school programs; and

(6) Provide an annual report on the demonstration sites by December 1st each year to the governor and the committees of the legislature with oversight over K-12 education.

**--- END ---**