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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)

READ FIRST TIME 01/15/18.

1 AN ACT Relating to the expansion of civics education in public  
2 schools; amending RCW 28A.230.093; adding a new section to chapter  
3 28A.415 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and  
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that effective  
7 civics education teaches students how to be active, informed, and  
8 engaged citizens. The legislature recognizes that RCW 28A.150.210  
9 identifies civics as one component of a basic education and that RCW  
10 28A.230.093 requires one-half credit in civics for high school  
11 graduation. These statutes are meant to ensure that every student  
12 receives a high-quality civics education from kindergarten through  
13 twelfth grade. The legislature also recognizes, however, that two  
14 factors limit the effectiveness of civics education.

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

20 Second, professional development opportunities for teachers in  
21 civics education are rare. In many districts, due to limited budgets

1 and competing demands for funding, opportunities for teachers to  
2 deepen instructional and curricular practices in civics do not exist.

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

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.093 and 2009 c 223 s 3 are each amended to  
14 read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

37 (3) Beginning with or before the 2020-21 school year, each school  
38 district must offer a one-half credit stand-alone course in civics as  
39 an elective course to all high school students in the district.

1 Although civics content and instruction may be embedded in other  
2 social studies courses offered to high school students, those courses  
3 do not satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.415  
5 RCW to read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
5 RCW to read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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