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**HOUSE BILL 2147**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Kraft, Young, and Shea

AN ACT Relating to ensuring that public school students have access to foundational texts; adding a new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) As established by the legislature, the goal of the state's program of basic education is to provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet graduation requirements and to graduate with a meaningful diploma that prepares them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship. In establishing this goal, the legislature has recognized that basic education is a program of instruction that is intended to equip students for their role as productive citizens.

(2) Although the program of basic education changes, the legislature recognizes that certain concepts and principles are steadfast components of the society and culture that our education system prepares students to succeed in. Examples of those concepts and principles were adopted in RCW 28A.150.211 through chapter 245, Laws of 1994, and include: (a) Honesty, integrity, and trust; (b) respect for self and others; (c) responsibility for personal actions and commitments; (d) diligence and a positive work ethic; (e) respect for law and authority; and (f) family as the basis of society.

(3) The legislature further recognizes that each school district has the legislatively established goal of providing opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to, in part, know and apply the core concepts and principles of civics and history. As further acknowledgment of the importance of civics and history, the legislature requires students earning a high school diploma from both public and private high schools to study the Constitutions of the United States and the state of Washington.

(4) The legislature finds that to understand the history and founding documents of our nation and Washington state, one must recognize and understand the context in which actions to establish our nation and state were taken. Similarly, to understand the enduring concepts and principles upon which the architecture of our society rests, a person must recognize and understand the context in which those concepts and principles were developed and are maintained.

(5) The legislature, therefore, in seeking to provide students with the full canon of materials needed to promote independent, engaged, and successful citizens, intends to provide all public school students with access to texts that contextualize the establishment of our nation and state, and the concepts and principles of our society. These texts include, but are not limited to, the bible and other enduring texts that may be of a religious, moral, or historical nature.

(6) The legislature intends for actions taken to implement section 2 of this act to be consistent with the Constitution of the United States and the Washington state Constitution; including noting provisions that prohibit public money or property from being appropriated for or applied to any religious worship.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The board of directors of every school district and each charter public school shall ensure that students have access, either electronically or in printed form, to texts that contextualize the establishment of our nation and state, and the concepts and principles of our society. These texts include, but are not limited to, the bible, the Constitution of the United States and the Washington state Constitution, and other enduring texts that may be of a religious, moral, or historical nature.

(2) Each board of directors and each charter school may receive gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources for the purposes of complying with the requirements of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the access to foundational texts act of 2019.

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