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Short Title: N.C. History Taught/Student Citizen Act of 2001.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 21, 2001

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE COURSES OF INSTRUCTION ON NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY TO STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND TO STUDENTS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND TO ENACT THE STUDENT CITIZEN ACT OF 2001.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(b1) Both the standard course of study and the Basic Education Program shall include the requirement that the public schools provide to all students two yearlong courses of instruction on North Carolina history and geography. One yearlong course of instruction shall be provided in elementary school, and one yearlong course of instruction shall be provided in middle school. Each course of instruction shall include contributions to the history and geography of the State by the racial and ethnic groups that have contributed to the development and diversity of the State. Each course of instruction may include up to four weeks of instruction relating to the local area in which the students reside."

SECTION 2.(a) This section shall be known as the "Student Citizenship Act of 2001".

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 115C-81 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-81. **Basic Education Program.**

...

(g1) Modifications to the social studies curriculum to instruct students on participation in the democratic process and to give them hands-on experience in participating in the democratic process:

(1) The State Board of Education shall modify the high school social studies curriculum to include instruction in civic and citizenship education. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to

1 include, at a minimum, the following components in the high school
2 civic and citizenship education curriculum:

- 3 a. That students write to a local, State, or federal elected official
4 about an issue that is important to them;
5 b. Instruction on the importance of voting and otherwise
6 participating in the democratic process;
7 c. Information about current events and governmental structure;
8 and
9 d. Information about the democratic process and how laws are
10 made.

11 (2) The State Board of Education shall modify the middle school social
12 studies curriculum to include instruction in civic and citizenship
13 education. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to
14 include, at a minimum, the following components in the middle school
15 civic and citizenship education curriculum:

- 16 a. A tour of representative local government facilities such as the
17 local jail, the courthouse, or a town hall, to help students
18 understand the way their community is governed;
19 b. That students choose and analyze a community problem and
20 offer public policy recommendations on the problem to local
21 officials; and
22 c. Information about getting involved in community groups.

23 (h) Character Education. – ~~Local boards of education may require the teaching~~
24 ~~of the following character traits in the public schools:~~Each local board of education
25 shall develop and implement character education instruction with input from the local
26 community. The instruction shall be incorporated into the standard curriculum and
27 should address the following traits:

- 28 (1) Courage. – Having the determination to do the right thing even when
29 others don't and the strength to follow your conscience rather than the
30 crowd; and attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.
31 (2) Good judgment. – Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities;
32 thinking through the consequences of your actions; and basing
33 decisions on practical wisdom and good sense.
34 (3) Integrity. – Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and
35 honest in all things; acting justly and honorably.
36 (4) Kindness. – Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding
37 of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and
38 treating others as you would like to be treated.
39 (5) Perseverance. – Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in
40 spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; and exhibiting
41 patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with
42 delays, mistakes, or failures.

- 1 (6) Respect. – Showing high regard for authority, for other people, for
2 self, for property, and for country; and understanding that all people
3 have value as human beings.
- 4 (7) Responsibility. – Being dependable in carrying out obligations and
5 duties; showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct;
6 being accountable for your own actions; and being committed to active
7 involvement in your community.
- 8 (8) Self-Discipline. – Demonstrating hard work and commitment to
9 purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from
10 inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words,
11 actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital
12 sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful substances and behaviors; and
13 doing your best in all situations.

14 (h1) In addition to the instruction under subsection (h) of this section, local boards
15 of education are encouraged to include instruction on the following responsibilities:

- 16 (1) Respect for school personnel. – In the school environment, respect
17 includes holding teachers, school administrators, and all school
18 personnel in high esteem and demonstrating in words and deeds that
19 all school personnel deserve to be treated with courtesy and proper
20 deference.
- 21 (2) Responsibility for school safety. – Helping to create a harmonious
22 school atmosphere that is free from threats, weapons, and violent or
23 disruptive behavior; cultivate an orderly learning environment in
24 which students and school personnel feel safe and secure; and
25 encourage the resolution of conflicts and disagreements through
26 peaceful means including peer mediation.
- 27 (3) Service to others. – Engaging in meaningful service to their schools
28 and their communities. Schools may teach service-learning by (i)
29 incorporating it into their standard curriculum, or (ii) involving a
30 classroom of students or some other group of students in one or more
31 hands-on community-service projects.
- 32 (4) Good citizenship. – Obeying the laws of the nation and this State;
33 abiding by school rules; and understanding the rights and
34 responsibilities of a member of a republic."

35 **SECTION 2.(c)** G.S. 115C-391(a) reads as rewritten:

36 "(a) Local boards of education shall adopt policies not inconsistent with the
37 provisions of the Constitutions of the United States and North Carolina, governing the
38 conduct of students and establishing procedures to be followed by school officials in
39 suspending or expelling any student, or in disciplining any student if the offensive
40 behavior could result in suspension, expulsion, or the administration of corporal
41 punishment. Local boards of education shall include a reasonable dress code in these
42 policies.

1 The policies that shall be adopted for the administration of corporal punishment shall
2 include at a minimum the following conditions:

- 3 (1) Corporal punishment shall not be administered in a classroom with
4 other children present;
- 5 (2) The student body shall be informed beforehand what general types of
6 misconduct could result in corporal punishment;
- 7 (3) Only a teacher, substitute teacher, principal, or assistant principal may
8 administer corporal punishment and may do so only in the presence of
9 a principal, assistant principal, teacher, substitute teacher, teacher
10 assistant, or student teacher, who shall be informed beforehand and in
11 the student's presence of the reason for the punishment; and
- 12 (4) An appropriate school official shall provide the child's parent or
13 guardian with notification that corporal punishment has been
14 administered, and upon request, the official who administered the
15 corporal punishment shall provide the child's parent or guardian a
16 written explanation of the reasons and the name of the second school
17 official who was present.

18 Each local board shall publish all the policies mandated by this subsection and make
19 them available to each student and his parent or guardian at the beginning of each
20 school year.

21 Notwithstanding any policy adopted pursuant to this section, school personnel may
22 use reasonable force, including corporal punishment, to control behavior or to remove a
23 person from the scene in those situations when necessary:

- 24 (1) To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others;
- 25 (2) To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the
26 person, or within the control, of a student;
- 27 (3) For self-defense;
- 28 (4) For the protection of persons or property; or
- 29 (5) To maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a
30 school-related activity on or off school property."

31 **SECTION 2.(d)** G.S. 115C-81(g) is amended by adding a new subdivision
32 to read:

33 "(3b) A local school administrative unit may display on real property owned
34 by that local school administrative unit documents and objects of
35 historical significance that have formed and influenced the United
36 States legal or governmental system and that exemplify the
37 development of the rule of law. These displays may include documents
38 that contain words associated with a religion, such as the words of the
39 Ten Commandments. However, no display shall seek to establish or
40 promote a religion or to persuade any person to embrace a particular
41 religion, denomination of a religion, or other philosophy. The display
42 of a document containing words associated with a religion shall be in
43 the same manner and appearance generally as other documents and

1 objects displayed and shall not be presented or displayed in any
2 fashion that results in calling attention to it apart from the other
3 displayed documents and objects. The display also shall be
4 accompanied by a sign that reads as follows: `The First Amendment of
5 the United States Constitution protects and guarantees to each citizen
6 the free exercise of religion. No government shall establish a religion
7 or encourage one religion or denomination of a religion over another.`"

8 **SECTION 3.** If any provision of this act is declared unconstitutional or
9 invalid by the courts, it does not affect the validity of this act as a whole or any part
10 other than the part so declared to be unconstitutional or invalid.

11 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to all
12 school years beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, except that:

- 13 (1) The State Board of Education shall complete the modifications to the
14 social studies curriculum required by G.S. 115C-81(g1), as enacted in
15 Section 2(b) of this act, by October 1, 2001. The modified curriculum
16 shall be implemented beginning with the 2002-2003 school year.
- 17 (2) Local boards of education shall develop character education
18 instruction in accordance with G.S. 115C-81(h), as rewritten by
19 Section 2(b) of this act, by January 1, 2002, and shall implement this
20 instruction beginning with the 2002-2003 school year. If a local board
21 determines that it would be an economic hardship to begin to
22 implement character education instruction by the beginning of the
23 2002-2003 school year, the board may request an extension of time
24 from the State Board of Education. The local board shall submit the
25 request for an extension to the State Board on or before April 1, 2002.
26 Local boards are encouraged to include in their character education
27 instruction the responsibilities listed in G.S. 115C-81(h1) of Section
28 2(b) of this act.