

**The Florida Senate**  
**PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

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BILL: CS/SB 1234

INTRODUCER: Committee on Education Pre-K-12 and Senator Gaetz

SUBJECT: Civics Education

DATE: March 21, 2007

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Carrouth</u>	<u>Matthews</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>EA</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

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**I. Summary:**

The bill requires that the scheduled review and revision of social studies Sunshine State Standards for grades K-12 include an emphasis on civics education and government, incorporating higher order thinking skills and student application proficiencies beyond the knowledge-only skills currently embedded within the social studies standards.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Education to develop and administer an annual statewide assessment of social studies, at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

Finally, the bill establishes, contingent upon an appropriation from the Legislature, the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship (Center) between the Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida and the Lou Frey Institute for Politics and Government at the University of Central Florida. The goal of the Center is to promote civic learning and engagement among Florida citizens, primarily young people. As provided in the bill, the Center would operate under the leadership of a board of directors whose membership would include, among others, the Governor, Senator Bob Graham, Congressman Lou Frey, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or their designees.

This bill substantially amends sections 1001.03 and 1008.22 and creates section 1004.65 of the Florida Statutes.

## II. Present Situation:

The 2006 Legislature established provisions for the review and revision of Florida's Sunshine State Standards (standards)<sup>1</sup> based on the schedule adopted by the State Board of Education.<sup>2</sup> The revision of the K-12 social studies standards is scheduled to begin in June 2007, to be completed by February 2009, and result in the adoption of updated instructional materials no later than April 2011. Current statutory provisions require the standards revision and implementation process to include and engage shareholders from throughout the state's education and business communities.<sup>3</sup>

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the nation's report card on which Florida's education system is assessed, categorizes skills that are essential for informed and responsible citizenship that include student application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills.<sup>4</sup> Several studies have been conducted to review and evaluate state social studies curriculum standards.<sup>5</sup> Some studies have suggested that although 25 percent of Florida's standards address civics education, the standards were developed at a basic knowledge level, with little or no emphasis on the development of higher order thinking skills or student application, analysis and evaluation of social studies knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

Florida currently assesses public school students on the state adopted standards in reading, writing, science and math. Because the social studies standards are not assessed through Florida's current accountability system, social studies instruction may lack the necessary attention to the alignment and application of the standards that would be instrumental in developing an informed and engaged citizenry.<sup>7</sup>

## III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill requires that the scheduled review and revision of social studies standards for grades K-12 include an emphasis on civics education and government with integration of higher order thinking skills and relevant application proficiencies for students. The bill requires that the revision process be based on the framework provided by the National Standards for Civics and Government,<sup>8</sup> which incorporate the attainment of intellectual and participatory skills on the part of K-12 students beyond the rote memorization of dates and facts.<sup>9</sup>

The bill also requires the Commissioner of Education to develop and administer an annual statewide assessment of social studies at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

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<sup>1</sup> s. 6 ch. 2006-74, L.O.F., as codified in s. 1001.03, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> State Board of Education - August, 16, 2005 - [www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/pdf/sss\\_revision.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/pdf/sss_revision.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> s. 1001.03(1), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> [www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_mb2001.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_mb2001.html)

<sup>5</sup> Tolo, K.W. – The Civic Education of American Youth, 1999; Borroughs, Groce & Webeck, 2005; <http://www.civicyouth.org/practioners/index.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Enlisting a New Generation of Florida Citizens, D. Dobson, Lou Frey Institute, University of Central Florida, January 2007

<sup>7</sup> D. Dobson, Lou Frey Institute, University of Central Florida, January 2007

<sup>8</sup> National Standards for Civics and Government – [http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=stds\\_toc\\_intro](http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=stds_toc_intro)

<sup>9</sup> Butts, F. - The Morality of Democratic Citizenship - [www.civiced.org/papers/morality/morality\\_ch1a&b.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/morality/morality_ch1a&b.html)

Finally, the bill establishes the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship between the Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida and the Lou Frey Institute for Politics and Government at the University of Central Florida. The Center would be established, contingent upon an appropriation from the Legislature, to promote civic learning and engagement among Florida citizens, primarily young people. The goals of the Center are to:

- Coordinate efforts and provide support to Florida civics education organizations;
- Provide leadership and encourage civics education through professional development programs for Florida's teachers;
- Facilitate the development of Florida-focused civics instructional materials programs;
- Offer civic education programs for community groups, primarily new residents and recent immigrants; and
- Collaborate with local school districts to strengthen civic learning through real-world experiences and encourage civic leadership among Florida's young people.<sup>10</sup>

As provided in the bill, the Center would operate under the leadership of a board of directors whose membership would include, among others, the Governor, Senator Bob Graham, Congressman Lou Frey, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or their designees.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

#### **V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Publishers of K-12 instructional materials would be required to develop and deliver instructional programs aligned to the new standards and test development companies would be required to develop a valid instrument to assess students' understanding and application of the standards.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The Legislature has previously appropriated funds to the Department of Education for the purpose of reviewing and revising the Sunshine State Standards.<sup>11</sup> The amount of funding necessary to establish and deploy efforts of the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship is indeterminate.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

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This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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<sup>11</sup> State Board of Education Legislative Request, August 16, 2005 - \$700,000

## **VIII. Summary of Amendments:**

None.

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