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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

1           education. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to  
2           include, at a minimum, the following components in the high school  
3           civic and citizenship education curriculum:

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

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

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

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

- 29               (1)   Courage. – Having the determination to do the right thing even when  
30               others don't and the strength to follow your conscience rather than the  
31               crowd; and attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.  
32               (2)   Good judgment. – Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities;  
33               thinking through the consequences of your actions; and basing  
34               decisions on practical wisdom and good sense.  
35               (3)   Integrity. – Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and  
36               honest in all things; acting justly and honorably.  
37               (4)   Kindness. – Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding  
38               of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and  
39               treating others as you would like to be treated.  
40               (5)   Perseverance. – Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in  
41               spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; and exhibiting  
42               patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with  
43               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 for  
42 students in these 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  
34 controlled by that local school administrative unit documents and  
35 objects of historical significance that have formed and influenced the  
36 United States legal or governmental system and that exemplify the  
37 development of the rule of law, such as the Magna Carta, the  
38 Mecklenburg Declaration, the Ten Commandments, the Justinian  
39 Code, and documents set out in subdivision (3a) of this subsection.  
40 This display may include, but shall not be limited to, documents that  
41 contain words associated with a religion; provided however, no display  
42 shall seek to establish or promote religion or to persuade any person to  
43 embrace a particular religion, denomination of a religion, or other

1                    philosophy. The display of a document containing words associated  
2                    with a religion shall be in the same manner and appearance generally  
3                    as other documents and objects displayed and shall not be presented or  
4                    displayed in any fashion that results in calling attention to it apart from  
5                    the other displayed documents and objects. The display also shall be  
6                    accompanied by a prominent sign quoting the First Amendment of the  
7                    United States Constitution as follows: 'Congress shall make no law  
8                    respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise  
9                    thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the  
10                   right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the  
11                   government for a redress of grievances.' "

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

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

- 17                   (1)        The State Board of Education shall complete the modifications to the  
18                   social studies curriculum required by G.S. 115C-81(g1), as enacted in  
19                   Section 2(b) of this act, by December 15, 2001. The modified  
20                   curriculum shall begin to be implemented during the 2002-2003 school  
21                   year.
- 22                   (2)        Local boards of education shall develop character education  
23                   instruction in accordance with G.S. 115C-81(h), as rewritten by  
24                   Section 2(b) of this act, by January 1, 2002, and shall implement this  
25                   instruction beginning with the 2002-2003 school year. If a local board  
26                   determines that it would be an economic hardship to begin to  
27                   implement character education instruction by the beginning of the  
28                   2002-2003 school year, the board may request an extension of time  
29                   from the State Board of Education. The local board shall submit the  
30                   request for an extension to the State Board on or before April 1, 2002.  
31                   Local boards are encouraged to include in their character education  
32                   instruction the responsibilities listed in G.S. 115C-81(h1) of Section  
33                   2(b) of this act.