



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 278

January Session, 2023

Substitute House Bill No. 6760

House of Representatives, March 28, 2023

The Committee on Education reported through REP. CURREY of the 11th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING CIVICS EDUCATION AND MEDIA LITERACY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established the
2 Connecticut Civics Education and Media Literacy Task Force to study
3 and develop strategies to improve how public schools provide
4 instruction on civics, citizenship, media literacy and American
5 government to students. Such study shall include, but need not be
6 limited to (1) reviewing existing curricula and the high school
7 graduation requirements, (2) receiving recommendations from
8 educators, administrators and the public, (3) a review of best practices,
9 and (4) exploring the feasibility of establishing public and private
10 partnerships to fund and support enhancements to such instruction.

11 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
13 one of whom shall be a certified teacher or school administrator;

14 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
15 whom shall be a certified teacher or school administrator;

16 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
17 Representatives;

18 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

19 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of
20 Representatives, one of whom shall be a certified teacher or school
21 administrator;

22 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom
23 shall be a certified teacher or school administrator;

24 (7) One appointed by the chairperson of the Black and Puerto Rican
25 Caucus of the General Assembly;

26 (8) One appointed by the Governor;

27 (9) The Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee;

28 (10) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

29 (11) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or the chief justice's
30 designee; and

31 (12) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,
32 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee.

33 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),
34 (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
35 of the General Assembly.

36 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
37 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall
38 be filled by the appointing authority.

39 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro
40 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from

41 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule
42 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty
43 days after the effective date of this section.

44 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
45 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education
46 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

47 (g) Not later than January 1, 2024, the task force shall submit a report
48 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of
49 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
50 education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
51 general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it
52 submits such report or January 1, 2024, whichever is later.

53 Sec. 2. Section 10-16b of the general statutes, as amended by section
54 32 of public act 22-80, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
55 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

56 (a) In the public schools the program of instruction offered shall
57 include at least the following subject matter, as taught by legally
58 qualified teachers, the arts; career education; consumer education;
59 health and safety, including, but not limited to, human growth and
60 development, nutrition, first aid, including cardiopulmonary
61 resuscitation training in accordance with the provisions of section 10-
62 16qq, disease prevention and cancer awareness, including, but not
63 limited to, age and developmentally appropriate instruction in
64 performing self-examinations for the purposes of screening for breast
65 cancer and testicular cancer, community and consumer health, physical,
66 mental and emotional health, including youth suicide prevention,
67 substance abuse prevention, including instruction relating to opioid use
68 and related disorders, safety, which shall include the safe use of social
69 media, as defined in section 9-601, and may include the dangers of gang
70 membership, and accident prevention; language arts, including reading,
71 writing, grammar, speaking and spelling; mathematics; physical
72 education; science, which may include the climate change curriculum
73 described in subsection (d) of this section; social studies, including, but

74 not limited to, civics and media literacy, citizenship, economics,
75 geography, government, history and Holocaust and genocide education
76 and awareness in accordance with the provisions of section 10-18f;
77 African-American and black studies in accordance with the provisions
78 of section 10-16ss; Puerto Rican and Latino studies in accordance with
79 the provisions of section 10-16ss; Native American studies, in
80 accordance with the provisions of section 10-16vv; Asian American and
81 Pacific Islander studies, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-
82 66ww; computer programming instruction; and in addition, on at least
83 the secondary level, one or more world languages; vocational education;
84 and the black and Latino studies course in accordance with the
85 provisions of sections 10-16tt and 10-16uu. For purposes of this
86 subsection, world languages shall include American Sign Language,
87 provided such subject matter is taught by a qualified instructor under
88 the supervision of a teacher who holds a certificate issued by the State
89 Board of Education. For purposes of this subsection, the "arts" means
90 any form of visual or performing arts, which may include, but not be
91 limited to, dance, music, art and theatre.

92 (b) If a local or regional board of education requires its pupils to take
93 a course in a world language, the parent or guardian of a pupil
94 identified as deaf or hard of hearing may request in writing that such
95 pupil be exempted from such requirement and, if such a request is
96 made, such pupil shall be exempt from such requirement.

97 (c) Each local and regional board of education shall on September 1,
98 1982, and annually thereafter at such time and in such manner as the
99 Commissioner of Education shall request, attest to the State Board of
100 Education that such local or regional board of education offers at least
101 the program of instruction required pursuant to this section, and that
102 such program of instruction is planned, ongoing and systematic.

103 (d) The State Board of Education shall make available curriculum
104 materials and such other materials as may assist local and regional
105 boards of education in developing instructional programs pursuant to
106 this section. The State Board of Education, within available

107 appropriations and utilizing available resource materials, shall assist
 108 and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (1)
 109 Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; (2) the historical
 110 events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (3) African-American
 111 and black studies; (4) Puerto Rican and Latino studies; (5) Native
 112 American studies; (6) Asian American and Pacific Islander studies; (7)
 113 personal financial management, including, but not limited to, financial
 114 literacy as developed in the plan provided under section 10-16pp; (8)
 115 training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automatic
 116 external defibrillators; (9) labor history and law, including organized
 117 labor, the collective bargaining process, existing legal protections in the
 118 workplace, the history and economics of free market capitalism and
 119 entrepreneurialism, and the role of labor and capitalism in the
 120 development of the American and world economies; (10) climate change
 121 consistent with the Next Generation Science Standards; (11) topics
 122 approved by the state board upon the request of local or regional boards
 123 of education as part of the program of instruction offered pursuant to
 124 subsection (a) of this section; and (12) instruction relating to the Safe
 125 Haven Act, sections 17a-57 to 17a-61, inclusive. The Department of
 126 Energy and Environmental Protection shall be available to each local
 127 and regional board of education for the development of curriculum on
 128 climate change as described in this subsection.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-16b

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1, "who" was changed to "whom" in subsection (b)(1), (2), (5) and (6), for proper form, and "(5) or (6) of" was changed to "(5), (6) or (7) of", for consistency.

ED *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$	The Out Years \$
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE ¹ - Cost	None	None	Minimal

Explanation

The bill, which expands the required program of study for public schools by specifying that social studies must include civics and media literacy, results in a potential minimal cost to local and regional school districts beginning in FY 26.

Social studies is a required part of the public school program of study under current law. To the extent that a district's social studies curriculum does not currently include civics and media literacy, there is a potential cost associated with purchasing materials to cover the topic, if free materials are unavailable. Any cost will vary based on the number of materials that must be purchased.

The bill also establishes a Connecticut Civics Education and Media Literacy Task Force to study strategies to improve instruction on civics resulting in no fiscal impact to the state because the task force has the expertise to meet the requirements of the bill.

¹ State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6760

AN ACT CONCERNING CIVICS EDUCATION AND MEDIA LITERACY.

SUMMARY

This bill adds the topics of civics and media literacy to the required social studies program of instruction in public schools, beginning on July 1, 2025 (i.e., the 2025-26 school year). By law, the State Board of Education (SBE) must make available curriculum and materials to help school boards develop their curriculum, including the required program of instruction.

Additionally, the bill creates the 16-member Connecticut Civics Education and Media Literacy Task Force to study how schools provide civics, citizenship, media literacy, and American government instruction to students. The bill charges the task force with the following duties at a minimum:

1. reviewing existing curricula and the high school graduation requirements;
2. receiving recommendations from educators, administrators, and the public and reviewing best practices; and
3. exploring the feasibility of establishing public and private partnerships to fund and support instruction enhancement in these subject areas.

The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2024. It terminates on the date it submits its report to the Education Committee or on January 1, 2024, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the task force provisions take effect upon passage.

CIVICS EDUCATION AND MEDIA LITERACY TASK FORCE

Membership and Leadership Appointments

The table below lists the task force membership qualifications under the bill and the appointing authorities.

Table: Task Force Membership

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Number of Appointments and Qualifications</i>
House speaker	One certified teacher or school administrator One other appointment
Senate president pro tempore	One certified teacher or school administrator One other appointment
House majority leader	One appointment
Senate majority leader	One appointment
House minority leader	One certified teacher or school administrator One other appointment
Senate minority leader	One certified teacher or school administrator One other appointment
Black and Puerto Rican Caucus chairperson	One appointment
Governor	One appointment
N/A	Secretary of the state or her designee
N/A	Education commissioner or her designee
N/A	Connecticut Supreme Court chief justice or his designee
N/A	Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity executive director or his designee

The bill specifies that any legislative appointee may be a member of the General Assembly. It also requires the appointing authorities in the table above to make their initial task force appointments within 30 days after the bill's passage. Should a vacancy arise, the appointing authority must fill it.

The bill requires the House speaker and Senate president pro tempore to choose the task force chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule the task force's first meeting to be held within 60 days after the bill's passage.

Under the bill, the Education Committee's administrative staff must serve as the task force's administrative staff.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 33 Nay 8 (03/10/2023)