

Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 365

An act relating to public school curricula; amending s. 233.061, F.S.; including a secular character-development program in required public school instruction in the elementary schools; amending s. 233.0612, F.S.; including ethics in authorized public school instruction; deleting a provision encouraging school boards to institute such programs; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (q) is added to subsection (2) of section 233.061, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, to read:

233.061 Required instruction.—

(2) Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules and regulations of the commissioner, the state board, and the school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following:

(q) A character-development program in the elementary schools, similar to Character First or Character Counts. Such a program must be secular in nature and must stress such character qualities as attentiveness, patience, and initiative.

Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 233.0612, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to read:

233.0612 Authorized instruction.—Each school district may provide students with programs and instruction at the appropriate grade levels in areas including, but not limited to, the following:

~~(1) Character development, ethics, and law education. Each school board shall be encouraged to install in the elementary schools of the district a program in character development which is the same as or similar to the Character Counts or Character First! Education Series. The programs must be secular in nature and stress such character qualities as attentiveness, patience, and initiative.~~

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.

Approved by the Governor June 11, 1999.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 11, 1999.