

Effective 5/13/2014

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53A-13-109 Civic and character education -- Definitions -- Legislative finding -- Elements -- Reporting requirements.

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Character education" means reaffirming values and qualities of character which promote an upright and desirable citizenry.
- (b) "Civic education" means the cultivation of informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of representative democracy in Utah and the United States.
- (c) "Values" means time-established principles or standards of worth.

(2) The Legislature recognizes that:

- (a) Civic and character education are fundamental elements of the public education system's core mission as originally intended and established under Article X of the Utah Constitution;
- (b) Civic and character education are fundamental elements of the constitutional responsibility of public education and shall be a continuing emphasis and focus in public schools;
- (c) the cultivation of a continuing understanding and appreciation of a constitutional republic and principles of representative democracy in Utah and the United States among succeeding generations of educated and responsible citizens is important to the nation and state;
- (d) the primary responsibility for the education of children within the state resides with their parents or guardians and that the role of state and local governments is to support and assist parents in fulfilling that responsibility;
- (e) public schools fulfill a vital purpose in the preparation of succeeding generations of informed and responsible citizens who are deeply attached to essential democratic values and institutions; and
- (f) the happiness and security of American society relies upon the public virtue of its citizens which requires a united commitment to a moral social order where self-interests are willingly subordinated to the greater common good.

(3) Through an integrated curriculum, students shall be taught in connection with regular school work:

- (a) honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service, and obedience to law;
- (b) respect for and an understanding of the Declaration of Independence and the constitutions of the United States and of the state of Utah;
- (c) Utah history, including territorial and preterritorial development to the present;
- (d) the essentials and benefits of the free enterprise system;
- (e) respect for parents, home, and family;
- (f) the dignity and necessity of honest labor; and
- (g) other skills, habits, and qualities of character which will promote an upright and desirable citizenry and better prepare students to recognize and accept responsibility for preserving and defending the blessings of liberty inherited from prior generations and secured by the constitution.

(4) Local school boards and school administrators may provide training, direction, and encouragement, as needed, to accomplish the intent and requirements of this section and to effectively emphasize civic and character education in the course of regular instruction in the public schools.

(5) Civic and character education in public schools are:

- (a) not intended to be separate programs in need of special funding or added specialists to be accomplished; and

- (b) core principles which reflect the shared values of the citizens of Utah and the founding principles upon which representative democracy in the United States and the state of Utah are based.
- (6) To assist the Commission on Civic and Character Education in fulfilling the commission's duties under Section 67-1a-11, by December 30 of each year, each school district and the State Charter School Board shall submit to the lieutenant governor and the commission a report summarizing how civic and character education are achieved in the school district or charter schools through an integrated school curriculum and in the regular course of school work as provided in this section.
- (7) Each year, the State Board of Education shall report to the Education Interim Committee, on or before the October meeting, the methods used, and the results being achieved, to instruct and prepare students to become informed and responsible citizens through an integrated curriculum taught in connection with regular school work as required in this section.