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53G-10-204 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) "Civics engagement pilot program" means the pilot program described in Subsection (7).
- (d) "Civics engagement project" means the civics engagement project described in Subsection (7), which a student enrolled in a participating LEA may complete.
- (e) "Participating LEA" means an LEA that meets the eligibility criteria, and is selected by the state board, to participate in the civics engagement pilot program.
- (f) "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 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) In accordance with Section 53E-1-203, the state board shall report to the Education Interim Committee 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.
- (7)
 - (a) In accordance with this section, subject to appropriations by the Legislature for this purpose, beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the state board shall administer a three-year civics engagement pilot program to assess the benefits of, and methods for, implementing a requirement to complete a civics engagement project as a condition for receiving a high school diploma.
 - (b) The state board shall:
 - (i) make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act:
 - (A) to create a civics engagement project that complies with core standards for Utah public education for social studies and prepares students for lifelong civic motivation and participation through applied learning of civics content;
 - (B) to establish eligibility requirements for participating LEAs;
 - (C) to create an application process for LEAs to apply to participate in the pilot program; and
 - (D) for a report that a participating LEA is required to submit to the state board at the end of the pilot program;
 - (ii) select participating LEAs:
 - (A) from diverse geographic areas within the state; and
 - (B) with a range of student population sizes; and
 - (iii) subject to appropriations by the Legislature for this purpose, in cooperation with school districts, charter schools, and interested private and nonprofit entities, provide training that prepares teachers in a participating LEA to assist students to successfully complete the civics engagement project.
 - (c) A participating LEA shall submit a report to the state board in accordance with the rules described in Subsection (7)(b)(i)(D).