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Bill Analysis

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Primary Sponsors: Reps. Ritter and Newman

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SUMMARY

Success sequence and character education curriculum

- Requires each school district to include developmentally appropriate instruction in the success sequence and character education in its prescribed curriculum for grades 7-12.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to develop a model success sequence and character education curriculum.
- Requires the Department to prepare an annual report on the impact of success sequence and character education curricula on student discipline and academic achievement, as reported by districts, and any other relevant data, as determined by the Department.

Success sequence and character education after-school programs

- Permits each public school to adopt a policy to make the school's premises available for third-party, after-school programs that instruct students in the justifications for the success sequence and character education curriculum.
- Permits a public school to deny approval of a third party that proposes instruction in subject matter that is inconsistent with the justification of the success sequence and character traits, but prohibits discrimination based on religious or political expression in the proposed instruction.
- Requires parental permission for a student to participate in an after-school success sequence and character education program and prohibits a student from being required to participate.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Success sequence and character education curriculum

Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, the bill requires each school district to include developmentally appropriate instruction in the success sequence and character education in its prescribed curriculum for grades 7-12. Each district must develop its own success sequence and character education curriculum, which may be the model curriculum created by the Department of Education and Workforce under the bill (see “**Model curriculum**” below). In developing its curriculum, the district must consult with a committee it selects that consists of:

- Parents of students enrolled in the district;
- Educators with experience in teaching character education and content deeply rooted in United States history and tradition; and
- Other members of the community, including community leaders with specific knowledge of fundamental values deeply rooted in United States history and tradition.

Once developed, the district must submit its curriculum to the Department for approval.¹ In addition to approving each district’s curriculum, the Department must also establish a protocol to be used by districts that provides continuity in teaching the approved curriculum in a manner that is age, grade, and developmentally appropriate. The bill requires the Department to maintain a list of success sequence and character education curricula implemented by school districts.²

Model curriculum

As referenced above, the bill requires the Department, by January 1, 2026, to develop a model success sequence and character education curriculum for developmentally appropriate instruction for grades 7-12. The model curriculum must include the value of finishing high school, working full time, and getting married before having children. The curriculum also must include instruction in the following character traits and fundamental values deeply rooted in the history and tradition of the United States:

- Trustworthiness, including honesty, reliability, punctuality, and loyalty;
- Responsibility, including hard work, accountability, diligence, good judgment, perseverance, and self-control;
- Care for family, including parents, siblings, and future spouses and children;
- Kindness and generosity toward others;
- Respect and care for human life;

¹ R.C. 3313.60(A)(9).

² R.C. 3301.0171(B) and (C).

- Respect for parental authority;
- Respect for parents' obligations to children;
- Respect for the property of other people;
- Respect for legitimate authority and law;
- Respect for patriotism, service to the community, and concern for the common good;
- Respect for religious faith, morality, wisdom, and knowledge;
- Respect for lifelong marriage, sexual fidelity within marriage, and sexual abstinence outside of marriage;
- Gratitude;
- Charity; and
- Courage.

The bill permits the Department to accept federal or private funds to assist school districts in implementing success sequence and character education curricula and to adopt rules as necessary to implement the bill's requirements related to the curricula.³

Annual report

The bill requires the Department to annually report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and chairpersons of the education committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives, both of the following:

- The impact of success sequence and character education curricula on student discipline and academic achievement based on data reported by districts;
- Other reported data relating to success sequence and character education curricula the department considers appropriate for inclusion.

The Department's report must be made available to the public in a clearly accessible manner on the Department's website.⁴

After-school programs

The bill permits each school district board of education, community school governing authority, STEM school governing body, and college-preparatory boarding school board of trustees to adopt a policy to make the district's or school's premises available for third-party, after-school programs that instruct students in the justifications for the success sequence and character education curriculum. This instruction may consist of any philosophical, historical, traditional, or religious justification for the success sequence and character traits.

³ R.C. 3301.0717(A), (E), and (F).

⁴ R.C. 3301.0717(D).

The bill permits a district or school to deny approval to any group that proposes instruction in subject matter that is inconsistent with justification of the success sequence and character traits. Otherwise, the district or school may not discriminate against any after-school program based on its viewpoint or on the grounds that the instruction contains religious or political expression.

The bill requires a student to have parental permission to participate in such an after-school program. A student or the student's parent may terminate the student's participation in the program at any time by notifying the district or school. Further, no student may be required to participate in an after-school program.

Lastly, the bill requires a district or school that adopts a policy to make a list of approved after-school programs available to parents and to adopt a process, in cooperation with the third-party providers, to obtain the consent of a student and the student's parent or guardian for the student's participation.⁵

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	05-13-25

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⁵ R.C. 3313.6031, 3314.03(A)(11)(d), 3326.11, and 3328.24.