

CHAPTER 276

EDUCATION - PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HOUSE BILL 01-1292

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Williams S., Bacon, Cloer, Tapia, Mace, Johnson, Groff, Grossman, Hefley, Weddig, Alexander, Boyd, Coleman, Garcia, Jahn, Lawrence, Lee, Romanoff, Scott, Smith, Snook, Stafford, and Vigil;
also SENATOR(S) Matsunaka, Evans, Windels, Chlouber, Gordon, Hagedorn, Hanna, Hernandez, Hillman, Linkhart, and Tate.

AN ACT

CONCERNING CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Title 22, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW ARTICLE to read:

ARTICLE 29
Character Education

22-29-101. Legislative declaration. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT, WHILE PARENTS ARE THE PRIMARY AND MOST IMPORTANT MORAL EDUCATORS OF THEIR CHILDREN, SUCH EFFORTS SHOULD BE REINFORCED IN THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER FINDS THAT RESEARCH INDICATING THAT CORE CHARACTER QUALITIES SUCH AS FAMILY SUPPORT, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE, MOTIVATION TO ACHIEVE, RESPECT FOR PERSON AND PROPERTY, COMMON COURTESY, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, INTEGRITY, HONESTY, FAIRNESS, A SENSE OF CIVIL AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, PURPOSE, AND SELF-RESPECT HELP GIVE YOUTH THE BASIC INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES THAT ARE CRITICAL BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT'S AUTHORITY TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS, YET ALSO RECOGNIZES AND HEREBY ASSERTS A SIGNIFICANT STATEWIDE INTEREST IN PROVIDING DIRECTION TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH REGARD TO THE CHARACTER EDUCATION OF COLORADO'S YOUTH. THEREFORE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY ENCOURAGES SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN CHARACTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTION TO STUDENTS. BY ENACTING THIS ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

DEVELOPMENT AND ENCOURAGES SCHOOL DISTRICTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITIES TO WORK TOGETHER TO PREPARE YOUTH FOR POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN TODAY'S SOCIETY.

22-29-102. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(1) "BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES" SHALL HAVE THE SAME MEANING AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 22-5-103 (2).

(2) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CREATED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-115, C.R.S.

(3) "SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS ANY SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO LAW, BUT DOES NOT INCLUDE A JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT.

(4) "STATE BOARD" MEANS THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION CREATED PURSUANT TO SECTION 1 OF ARTICLE IX OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION.

22-29-103. Character education - development - resource. (1) EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT, EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR THROUGH A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES, IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ESTABLISH A CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM DESIGNED TO HELP STUDENTS CULTIVATE HONESTY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, COURTESY, RESPECT FOR AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW, INTEGRITY, RESPECT FOR PARENTS, HOME, AND COMMUNITY, AND THE DIGNITY AND NECESSITY OF A STRONG WORK ETHIC, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, AND OTHER SKILLS, HABITS, AND QUALITIES OF CHARACTER THAT WILL PROMOTE AN UPRIGHT, MORAL, AND DESIRABLE CITIZENRY AND BETTER PREPARE STUDENTS TO BECOME POSITIVE CONTRIBUTORS TO SOCIETY. THE PROGRAM MAY INCLUDE INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS COUNTRY'S FOUNDING DOCUMENTS AND CONCERNING RELIGION IN AMERICAN HISTORY. SUCH CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE THAT EACH TEACHER MODEL AND PROMOTE THE GUIDELINES OF BEHAVIOR ESTABLISHED IN THE CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR YOUTH TO FOLLOW AT ALL TIMES, IN EVERY CLASS.

(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENCOURAGES EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO WORK WITH PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT MAY COLLECT INFORMATION RELATED TO CHARACTER EDUCATION AND SHALL SERVE AS A CHARACTER EDUCATION RESOURCE FOR ALL INTERESTED PARENTS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND BOARDS OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES.

22-29-104. Reports - school districts - department. (1) EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT CONCERNING ANY CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPED. SUCH REPORT SHALL INCLUDE SUCH INFORMATION AND DATA AS MAY BE SPECIFIED BY RULE OF THE STATE BOARD AND SHALL BE FILED ON OR BEFORE A DATE SPECIFIED BY RULE OF THE STATE BOARD.

(2) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 15, 2002, AND ON OR BEFORE EACH JANUARY 15 THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ANY REPORTS SUBMITTED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

22-29-105. Electronic transmission and storage of data. TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THE DEPARTMENT MAY STORE ELECTRONICALLY ALL DATA COLLECTED PURSUANT TO THIS ARTICLE. FURTHER, EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY SUBMIT INFORMATION TO THE DEPARTMENT ELECTRONICALLY, CONSISTENT WITH RULES PROMULGATED BY THE STATE BOARD PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-29-104 (1).

22-29-106. Character education fund - creation - contributions. THE DEPARTMENT IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE GRANTS, GIFTS, DONATIONS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ANY SOURCE, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTING THIS ARTICLE. ANY MONEYS RECEIVED SHALL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE STATE TREASURER WHO SHALL CREDIT THE SAME TO THE CHARACTER EDUCATION FUND, WHICH FUND IS HEREBY CREATED. MONEYS IN THE FUND SHALL BE CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ARTICLE CONSISTENT WITH THE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 22-29-103 (1). AT THE END OF ANY FISCAL YEAR, ALL UNEXPENDED AND UNENCUMBERED MONEYS IN THE CHARACTER EDUCATION FUND SHALL REMAIN THEREIN AND SHALL NOT BE CREDITED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL FUND OR ANY OTHER FUND. ANY INTEREST DERIVED FROM THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF SUCH MONEYS SHALL REMAIN IN THE FUND AND MAY NOT BE CREDITED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL FUND OR ANY OTHER FUND.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: June 5, 2001