

Date of Hearing: July 12, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Patrick O'Donnell, Chair

SB 135 (Dodd) – As Amended July 3, 2017

**SENATE VOTE:** 27-12

**SUBJECT:** Pupil instruction: media literacy: model curriculum

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to develop, and the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt, reject, or modify, a model curriculum in media literacy.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Makes findings and declarations regarding the importance of media literacy education for students.
- 2) States that “digital citizenship” and “media literacy” are broad terms that encompass consumption and use of media and digital products.
- 3) Defines “digital citizenship” to mean a diverse set of skills related to current technology and social media, including the norms of appropriate, responsible, and healthy behavior.
- 4) Defines “media literacy” to mean the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and use media, and encompasses the foundational skills that lead to digital citizenship.
- 5) Requires the IQC to develop, and the SBE to adopt, reject, or modify, a model curriculum in media literacy for Kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, for voluntary use by educators.
- 6) Requires that the model curriculum be designed for the purpose of providing instruction in the safe and responsible uses of media and support students’ use of critical-thinking skills when consuming media.
- 7) Requires the model curriculum to address, but not be limited to, the instruction of students in how to:
  - a) safely and responsibly use and consume media
  - b) access relevant and accurate information through media
  - c) analyze media content in a critical way
  - d) evaluate the comprehensiveness, currency, relevance, credibility, authority, and accuracy of media content
- 8) States that the model curriculum may be designed to promote the development of students’ skills in:
  - a) creativity and innovation
  - b) communication and collaboration

- c) research and information fluency
  - d) critical thinking and problem solving
  - e) digital citizenship
  - f) technology operations and concepts
  - g) information, media, and technological literacy
  - h) concepts of media representation and stereotyping
- 9) Requires that the model curriculum provide model lessons and activities for each grade level, and identify supporting instructional materials for use in its implementation.
- 10) Requires that the model curriculum identify the ways in which it aligns with, and is supportive of, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.
- 11) Requires the IQC, in developing the model curriculum in media literacy, to convene an advisory group comprised of experts in media literacy education, and requires that a majority of this group be current public school elementary or secondary classroom teachers who have a professional teaching credential that is valid under state law and who have experience or expertise in media literacy education.
- 12) Requires the IQC to hold a minimum of two public hearings in order for the public to provide input on the model curriculum, and requires that the meetings be held pursuant to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.
- 13) Requires that, on or before January 1, 2019, the IQC submit to the SBE the model curriculum.
- 14) Requires that, on or before March 31, 2019, the SBE adopt, reject, or modify the model curriculum, at a subsequent public meeting.
- 15) Requires that, if the SBE modifies the model curriculum, the SBE explain, in writing, the reasons for the modifications to the Governor and the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature.
- 16) Requires that, if the SBE modifies the model curriculum, the SBE, in a meeting conducted pursuant to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, provide written reasons for its revisions. Requires that the SBE not adopt the model curriculum at the same meeting it provides its written reasons, but, instead, adopt these revisions at a subsequent meeting conducted no later than July 31, 2019.
- 17) Requires that, if the SBE rejects the model curriculum, the SBE transmit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), the Governor, and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature a specific written explanation of the reasons for the rejection of the model curriculum.

- 18) Requires the SPI, following the adoption of the model curriculum, to post the curriculum on its website for use on a voluntary basis by educators.
- 19) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to, on or before July 1, 2018, make available to school districts on its website a list of resources and instructional materials on media literacy, including media literacy professional development programs for teachers.
- 20) Requires that the website have a mechanism accessible to school districts and teachers to provide feedback on the model curriculum.
- 21) States that private resources may be used as funding sources to supplement the development of the model curriculum.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires the development of model curricula in human rights and genocide, the life of Cesar Chavez, and ethnic studies.
- 2) Requires the ethnic studies model curriculum to be developed with participation from faculty of ethnic studies programs at universities and colleges with ethnic studies programs and a group of representatives of local educational agencies.
- 3) Requires that the ethnic studies model curriculum be written as a guide to allow school districts to adapt their courses to reflect the student demographics in their communities, and include examples of courses offered by LEAs that have been approved as meeting A-G admissions requirements including, to the extent possible, course outlines for those courses.
- 4) Requires that, by December 31, 2019, the IQC to submit the ethnic studies model curriculum to the SBE for adoption, and the SBE to adopt the model curriculum by March 31, 2020.
- 5) Requires the IQC to provide a minimum of 45 days for public comment before submitting the ethnic studies model curriculum to the SBE.
- 6) Requires a school district or charter school that elects to offer a course of study in ethnic studies pursuant to this subdivision to offer the course as an elective in the social sciences or English language arts and to make the course available in at least one year during a student's enrollment in grades 9 to 12.
- 7) States the intent of the Legislature that local educational agencies submit course outlines for ethnic studies for approval as A-G courses. (EC 51226.7)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a prior version of this bill:

- The California Department of Education estimates a cost of about \$788,000 General Fund to develop the model curriculum as prescribed by this bill. These costs would support 2.7 positions, a model curriculum writer contract, and curriculum advisory committee meetings.

- Local cost pressure to provide media literacy courses based on the model curriculum required by the bill. To implement a new media literacy course, school districts would have to purchase instructional materials and either hire appropriate teachers or provide professional development to existing teachers. These costs would not be reimbursable by the state.

#### COMMENTS:

***Need for the bill.*** The author states: “There have been numerous research reports published recently that highlight the need for media literacy education. Such research includes ‘Many Americans Believe Fake News is Sowing Confusion’ by the Pew Research Center (2016); and ‘Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning’ by the Stanford History Education Group (2016). A recent Stanford study shows 82 percent of middle school students struggle to distinguish advertisements from news stories.

It is important that California’s educational standards reflect the need for increased media literacy, so that young adults have the ability to analyze and evaluate information consumed from countless media outlets.

Access to technology literacy and digital media skills education for all young students is a challenge, especially for underrepresented and economically disadvantaged communities. With over 90 percent of young adults present on social media, it is important to ensure young adults are prepared with technology literacy and computer skills in order to utilize social media sites responsibly.”

***Curriculum, standards, frameworks, and model curricula.*** California’s public school curriculum is based on content standards in various subjects, including English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, History-Social Science, Physical Education, English Language Development, Career Technical Education, Health Education, World Languages, and Visual and Performing Arts. These standards are developed by the IQC through a public process, and are adopted by the SBE.

These standards form the basis of California’s curriculum frameworks. The frameworks guide the implementation of these standards, and are used to establish criteria for the evaluation of instructional materials for state adoption for grades kindergarten through grade eight. They also guide district selection of instructional materials for grades nine through twelve.

In addition to developing standards in the above subject areas, the SPI is has been directed by law to develop model curricula on different topics, such as those on the life of Cesar Chavez, human rights and genocide, and ethnic studies, for voluntary use by educators.

***What is media literacy?*** According to the National Association for Media Literacy Education, media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms.

The Center for Media Literacy offers another definition: “Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language, and sound. It is the skillful application of literacy skills to media and technology messages.”

***What does media literacy education look like?*** Three examples of media literacy lessons which were developed for different grades are shown below:

Through the Media Smarts curriculum (in use in Canada) students in Kindergarten to third grade can learn how to identify advertising through a lesson titled “Can you spot the ad?” with the objective of teaching students about the concept of branded content, and differences between branded and non-branded images and videos in online and offline contexts.

Through the Cyber Civics curriculum for middle school students, students learn the difference between “consuming” and “producing” media, how to read and create visual media and become less susceptible to visual manipulations, receive safety training related to the consequences of “sexting,” and learn how misinformation can spread via the Internet and social media and even find its way into the news.

Through the Facing History and Ourselves media literacy unit titled “Facing Ferguson: News Literacy in a Digital Age,” high school students investigate the choices and challenges facing journalists as they report on a story, explore the impact of social media on the traditional news cycle and understand the role it can play in influencing public opinion and the press, develop critical thinking and news literacy skills to help students find reliable information to make decisions, take action, and responsibly share news through social media, and consider their role as citizens in a democracy and their responsibilities as civic participants and citizen watchdogs.

***Information literacy in California Model School Library standards.*** The California Model School Library Standards for California Schools, adopted by the SBE in 2011, incorporate “information literacy” skills, in which students “learn to access, evaluate, use, and integrate information and ideas found in print, media, and digital resources, enabling them to function in a knowledge-based economy and technologically oriented society.” “Information” is defined broadly to include words (whether printed or spoken), visual images (including photographs and artwork), and music.

The standards are organized into four concepts (accessing, evaluating, using, and integrating information) which contain standards spanning all of the grades. In the area of evaluating information, students are expected to be able to determine the relevance of information; assess the comprehensiveness, currency, credibility, authority, and accuracy of resources; and consider the need for additional information.

The state’s content standards for English Language Arts students also include at least one reference to media literacy. In grades 9 -12 students are expected to learn to “Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.”

The model curriculum proposed by this bill would serve as a resource for educators wishing to focus on media literacy instruction, at any grade level. It would also bring more focus to media literacy as an important set of skills for students to acquire.

***Media literacy legislation in other states.*** According to the organization Media Literacy Now, a number of states have or are in the process of adopting legislation to address the education of students in media literacy, digital citizenship, internet safety. They include: Arizona, New Mexico, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Rhode Island, Washing

ton, New Jersey, Utah, Florida, Ohio, Illinois. States are adopting a variety of strategies, from incorporating media literacy content into state health or safety curricula, to creating elective courses, to making digital citizenship instruction a responsibility of school librarians.

***Related and prior legislation.*** SB 155 (Gomez) of this Session would have required the IQC to develop a model curriculum in media literacy, and requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop an online professional development module to support the model curriculum. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 203 (Jackson) of this Session would have required the CDE to identify best practices and recommendations for instruction in digital citizenship, Internet safety, and media literacy, and requires, beginning in the 2019–20 school year, school districts to annually review their policies on those topics. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 738 (Limon) of this Session would require the development of a model curriculum in Native American studies, and requires school districts which elect to offer one course in Native American studies to make the course available in at least one year during a student’s enrollment in grades 9-12.

AB 2016 (Alejo) Chapter 327, Statutes of 2016 requires the development of a model curriculum in ethnic studies, and requires school districts which elect to offer one course in ethnic studies to make the course available in at least one year during a student’s enrollment in grades 9-12.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom (sponsor)  
 Alliance for Boys and Men of Color  
 American Academy of Pediatrics, California  
 California Cable and Telecommunications Association  
 California Federation of Teachers  
 California Newspaper Publishers Association  
 California School Library Association  
 California State PTA  
 California Teachers Association  
 Center for Media Literacy  
 Common Sense Kids Action  
 Congressman Mike Thompson  
 Los Angeles County Democratic Party Board Members  
 Mount Saint Mary's University Elementary Teacher Preparation Program  
 Napa County Board of Supervisors  
 National Association for Media Literacy Education  
 Representation Project  
 San Francisco Unified School District  
 University of California, Los Angeles Teacher Education Program  
 Yolo County Office of Education

**Opposition**

None on file

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