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EDUCATION

HOUSE FILE 6

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WHITEAD, LYKAM, THOMAS, and
QUIRK

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

HF
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1 An Act relating to character education, service learning, and the
2 educational program, and providing for related matters.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 256.9, Code 2003, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 52. Develop and maintain an internet site
4 outlining exceptional character education and service learning
5 programs. The department and the area education agencies
6 shall collaborate to develop and provide in-service and
7 preservice training programs through the area education
8 agencies and practitioner preparation institutions for the
9 establishment of character education and service learning
10 programs in school districts and accredited nonpublic schools.
11 The department shall also collaborate with nonprofit
12 organizations that promote character education and with the
13 business community to recognize schools with exemplary
14 character education and service learning programs.

15 Sec. 2. Section 256.11, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2003,
16 is amended to read as follows:

17 The state board shall adopt rules under chapter 17A and a
18 procedure for accrediting all public and nonpublic schools in
19 Iowa offering instruction at any or all levels from the
20 prekindergarten level through grade twelve. The rules of the
21 state board shall require that a multicultural, gender fair
22 approach is used by schools and school districts. The
23 educational program shall be taught from a multicultural,
24 gender fair approach. Global perspectives and character
25 education shall be incorporated into all levels of the
26 educational program.

27 Sec. 3. Section 256.11, subsection 5, Code 2003, is
28 amended by adding the following new paragraph:

29 NEW PARAGRAPH. k. Participation in service learning
30 projects. The board of directors of a school district or the
31 authorities in charge of a nonpublic school may require a
32 certain number of service learning units as a condition of
33 graduation from the district or school. For purposes of this
34 paragraph, "service learning" means the purposeful and
35 seamless integration of academic content, skills, and civic

1 values with service to the community into the curriculum.

2 Sec. 4. Section 280.12, subsection 2, Code 2003, is
3 amended by adding the following new paragraph:

4 NEW PARAGRAPH. f. Core character education values that
5 will assist students to develop socially, ethically, and
6 academically.

7 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 280.28 CHARACTER EDUCATION.

8 1. The board of directors of each public school district
9 and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school shall
10 establish a character education plan for incorporating
11 character education into its educational program. The plan
12 shall include the core character education values developed by
13 the school improvement advisory committee appointed by the
14 board or the authorities pursuant to section 280.12.

15 2. The board and the authorities shall include the
16 character education plan, and any subsequent changes to a
17 plan, in the school district or school's comprehensive school
18 improvement plan submitted pursuant to section 256.7,
19 subsection 21.

20 3. The plan shall include performance measures and
21 performance goals. Public school districts and nonpublic
22 schools shall utilize the performance measures and performance
23 targets to annually assess the effectiveness of the plan, and
24 shall report districtwide and schoolwide progress made in
25 attaining character education performance goals and the effect
26 on school climate to the department of education and to the
27 local community. The report to the local community shall
28 include results and evaluation by individual attendance
29 center.

30 Sec. 6. STATE MANDATE FUNDING SPECIFIED. In accordance
31 with section 25B.2, subsection 3, the state cost of requiring
32 compliance with any state mandate included in this Act shall
33 be paid by a school district from state school foundation aid
34 received by the school district under section 257.16. This
35 specification of the payment of the state cost shall be deemed

1 to meet all the state funding-related requirements of section
2 25B.2, subsection 3, and no additional state funding shall be
3 necessary for the full implementation of this Act by and
4 enforcement of this Act against all affected school districts.

5 EXPLANATION

6 This bill requires school districts and accredited
7 nonpublic schools to incorporate character education in their
8 educational programs and requires that educational programs
9 for students in grades 9 through 12 include participation in
10 service learning projects. The bill permits districts and
11 nonpublic schools to require a certain number of service
12 learning units as a condition of high school graduation.

13 The bill requires school districts and accredited nonpublic
14 schools to establish character education plans, which must
15 include performance measures, performance goals, and core
16 character education values developed by existing school
17 improvement advisory committees composed of practitioners,
18 students, and members of the local community.

19 Plans must be annually assessed for effectiveness and
20 effect on school climate and submitted to the department and
21 the local community.

22 The bill requires the director of the department of
23 education to develop and maintain an internet site outlining
24 exceptional character education and service learning programs.
25 The bill also directs that the department and the area
26 education agencies (AEAs) collaborate to develop and provide
27 in-service and preservice training programs through the AEAs
28 and practitioner preparation institutions for the
29 establishment of character education and service learning
30 programs. The department is further directed to collaborate
31 with nonprofit organizations and the business community to
32 recognize schools with exemplary character education and
33 service learning programs.

34 The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code
35 section 25B.3. The bill requires that the state cost of any

1 state mandate included in the bill be paid by a school
2 district from state school foundation aid received by the
3 school district under Code section 257.16. The specification
4 is deemed to constitute state compliance with any state
5 mandate funding-related requirements of Code section 25B.2.
6 The inclusion of this specification is intended to reinstate
7 the requirement of political subdivisions to comply with any
8 state mandates included in the bill.

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