

**CHAPTER 141****(HJR 145)**

A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Board of Education, in partnership with the Secretary of the State and other education entities, to develop strategies and a timeline for improving Kentucky students' knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States and the democratic processes.

WHEREAS, there is growing evidence that a large number of students exit secondary and postsecondary education without an in-depth understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens under the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, education for citizenship is important to help all students evolve into active participants in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the United States was founded on the principle of "government by the people"; and

WHEREAS, evidence of apathy and decline in confidence that government can solve important national problems appears to be on the rise; and

WHEREAS, having comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States is fundamental to leadership in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, knowledge and understanding is critical to developing "communication skills necessary to function in a complex and changing civilization," specified in KRS 158.645 as one of the capacities needed by all Kentucky students; and

WHEREAS, "understanding of governmental processes as they affect the community, state, and the nation" is also identified by the General Assembly in KRS 158.645 as an essential capacity for all Kentucky students; and

WHEREAS, students must have a core of basic knowledge about social and cultural issues and institutions in an ever-increasing diverse world to allow them to put their understanding of democracy in perspective; and

WHEREAS, the governing boards for P-16 schooling are ultimately responsible for providing the leadership to ensure Kentucky students leave school with the essential skills and knowledge for responsible citizenship;

NOW, THEREFORE,

*Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

Section 1. During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, and the Kentucky Board of Education, in partnership with the Secretary of State and other education entities shall examine the current level of skills and knowledge of Kentucky students relating to the Constitution of the United States and the democratic processes. They shall examine the curriculum requirements at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels for all Kentucky students; assessments of student knowledge at these levels and results of these assessments; requirements for teacher competencies in these areas; and other relevant data and information that would inform the study.

Section 2. The entities identified in Section 1 of this Resolution shall devise implementation strategies, including a specific timeline to improve Kentucky students' knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States, the democratic processes, and the students' civic engagement. In the development of these strategies, current state efforts to promote civic literacy shall be incorporated where appropriate.

Section 3. The Commissioner of Education, the Executive Director of the Education Professional Standards Board, and the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education shall provide a preliminary report of their findings to the P-16 Council and a final report to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by August 1, 2007, and shall present the draft implementation plan required under Section 2 of this Resolution by December 1, 2007, to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

**Approved April 4, 2006.**