

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 55

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 145

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 55—Relative to character education in public schools.

[Filed with Secretary of State October 2, 2007.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 55, Mullin. Public schools: character education.

This measure would urge the State Board of Education, county offices of education, and local school governing bodies to examine their current practices and to increase emphasis on character, citizenship, and ethics.

WHEREAS, California's interest in character education has been progressing from the 1980s, when Senator Albert Rodda initiated a select bipartisan committee on character education. Interest has since been advanced by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, presidents of the United States, and more recently, by state legislative and congressional leaders; and

WHEREAS, Section 233.5 of the Education Code authorizes the provisions of character education; and

WHEREAS, Good character, citizenship, and ethics are essential to developing an inclusive society, restoring public confidence in our institutions, and preparing literate, skilled, and responsible participants in our schools, government, workplaces, and local communities; and

WHEREAS, Character education addresses common virtues and behaviors that support respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, justice, fairness, caring, giving, service, leadership, initiative, and teamwork; and

WHEREAS, Good character, citizenship, and ethics also relate to the closing of the academic achievement and participation gaps that currently exist between pupils in our public schools; and

WHEREAS, Implementing California's standards for core subject matter areas may be enhanced by character education, which may increase commitment to instructional priorities, academic rigor, and discipline, and may improve school performance and provide the opportunity for full citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Good character, citizenship, and ethics begin with good role models and leadership in our homes, communities, and schools; and

WHEREAS, The character, citizenship, and ethics that are expected in our society and government, and the rights, responsibilities, and participation of citizens should be a continual and meaningful part of character education for every pupil in prekindergarten through grade 12; and

WHEREAS, The importance of character, citizenship, and ethics cannot be underestimated in establishing a positive school climate for pupils, and is the shared responsibility of the entire education community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature urges the State Board of Education, county offices of education, and local school governing bodies to examine current practices, to increase emphasis on character, citizenship, and ethics in order to close the achievement and participation gaps so that all pupils are successful, and to have the highest ethical standards and practices demonstrated by school officials; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, boards of education and administrators of county offices and school districts, and to the author for distribution.