

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

SENATOR BEN ALLEN, CHAIR

2017-18 SESSION

Committee Policy On: BILLS RELATING TO CURRICULAR FRAMEWORKS

Policy: Measures which propose to require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum must comply with requirements set forth in this policy.

The Committee strongly discourages the introduction of measures which require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum through changes to the curriculum frameworks.

The Committee encourages Members to engage in the existing administrative processes for modifying state curricula. Members may wish, for example, to provide written comments or public testimony to the Instructional Quality Commission, the State Board of Education, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Members may also wish to engage in the Legislature's oversight or appointment processes for this purpose.

If, after exhausting all administrative processes, a Member wishes to introduce such a measure, the measure must meet all of the following requirements:

- 1) Measures should be in the form of a resolution.
- 2) Measures should be introduced only after a Member has tried, unsuccessfully, to use administrative routes to address the issue. Evidence of efforts to engage in the existing process must be described on the Committee background sheet.
- 3) Measures must request consideration only of content not already included in the existing or draft curriculum standards or frameworks.

- 4) The committee background sheet must include a specific explanation of content requested for inclusion, including grade levels, location in the sequence of instruction, and an estimate of the amount of instructional time required.

This policy does not apply to legislation which proposes the development of model curricula, the revision of existing standards, curriculum mandates, or the establishment of new subjects or new sets of standards.

Rationale:

The Committee supports the active involvement of Members of the Legislature and all members of the public in the development of the state's curriculum. The existing administrative processes offer many opportunities to do so.

The Legislature has vested the Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum. The Instructional Quality Commission develops curriculum frameworks by convening expert panels, developing drafts, and holding public hearings to solicit input. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The frameworks are then adopted by the State Board of Education in a public meeting. The State Board of Education also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional materials aligned to these standards and frameworks. This process generally occurs on a regular schedule which gives schools a predictable timetable to plan for changes to the curriculum.

The existing processes involve practitioners and experts who have in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, the constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress. This Committee does not have the capacity or mandate to conduct this kind of review.

It is therefore the policy of the Committee to discourage the introduction of legislation which requires, or requires consideration of, modifications to state curriculum through changes to the curriculum frameworks, and instead encourage Members to engage in existing administrative processes as delineated above.

Adopted by the Senate Education Committee on April 5, 2017.