2021 SENATE BILL 459

July 21, 2021 – Introduced by Senators ROYS, SMITH, AGARD, LARSON, RINGHAND and L. TAYLOR, cosponsored by Representatives HINTZ, SNODGRASS, SHELTON, ANDERSON, ANDRACA, BALDEH, BROSTOFF, CABRERA, CONLEY, DRAKE, EMERSON, Hebl, HESSELBEIN, B. MEYERS, NEUBAUER, POPE, SINICKI, SPREITZER, STUBBS, SUBECK and VRUWINK. Referred to Committee on Education.

AN ACT to create 115.28 (55s), 118.40 (2r) (b) 2. m., 118.40 (2x) (b) 2. m. and 121.02 (1) (L) 9. of the statutes; relating to: requiring voter education instruction in the elementary and high school grades and incorporating voter education instruction into the state model social studies standards.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires school boards and operators of independent charter schools to include, as part of the social studies curriculum, at least one hour of voter education instruction in each elementary and high school grade. The bill specifies specific information that must be provided to pupils in the elementary grades, middle school grades, and high school grades. The bill also requires the state superintendent of public instruction to incorporate voter education instruction into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curriculum on the same subject.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 115.28 (55s) of the statutes is created to read:
115.28 (55s) VOTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTION; MODEL STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM.

(a) Incorporate voter education instruction into the model academic standards for social studies.

(b) Develop a model curriculum for pupils in grades kindergarten to 12 on voter education instruction.

SECTION 2. 118.40 (2r) (b) 2. m. of the statutes is created to read:

118.40 (2r) (b) 2. m. A requirement that the charter school’s curriculum include the instruction required under s. 121.02 (1) (L) 9.

SECTION 3. 118.40 (2x) (b) 2. m. of the statutes is created to read:

118.40 (2x) (b) 2. m. A requirement that the charter school’s curriculum include the instruction required under s. 121.02 (1) (L) 9.

SECTION 4. 121.02 (1) (L) 9. of the statutes is created to read:

121.02 (1) (L) 9. Beginning July 1, 2022, as part of the social studies curriculum, include at least one hour of voter education instruction in each elementary and high school grade. The instruction shall include all of the following:

a. In the elementary grades, information on how the electoral process works, information on the importance of voting, mock elections, and information on who is eligible to vote.

b. In the middle school and high school grades, in addition to the information required under subd. 9. a. or 9. c., so far as applicable, information on the requirements and procedures for voting in-person and absentee, information on how pupils may locate reliable information about political candidates and issues, and the Internet site addresses for official state government voting resources, including the elections commission’s Internet site.
c. In the high school grades, information on the importance of voting, information on how to register to vote, information on how to obtain and cast an absentee ballot, information on the use of paper ballots and voting systems, and information regarding how and where military electors and students attending postsecondary educational institutions may vote.

SECTION 5. Initial applicability.

(1) INDEPENDENT CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACTS. The treatment of s. 118.40 (2r) (b) 2. m. and (2x) (b) 2. m. first applies to a contract that is entered into, renewed, or modified on the effective date of this subsection.

(END)