

**NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE**

**BILL NUMBER:** Senate Bill 898 (Third Edition as Amended by Amendments 2, 10 & 11)

**SHORT TITLE:** The Student Citizen Act of 2001

**SPONSOR(S):** Senator Dalton

**FISCAL IMPACT**

**Yes (X)      No ( )      No Estimate Available ( X)**

**FY 2001-02    FY 2002-03    FY 2003-04    FY 2004-05    FY 2005-06**

**REVENUES  
EXPENDITURES  
POSITIONS:**

**PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) &**

**PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:** State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Local Boards of Education

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2001, with curriculum revisions to be implemented for the 2002-03 school year and the dress code provision effective for the 2001-02 school year.

**BILL SUMMARY:** Modifies GS 115C-81 regarding the Basic Education Program to require the high school and middle school social studies curricula to include instruction in civic and citizenship education (at the high school level to be offered as a one-week unit or throughout the year). Specifies items encouraged to be included within the curricula. Amends character education curriculum requirements to include items on responsibility for school safety, service to others, and good citizenship. Clarifies that local boards of education must develop and implement character education with input from the local community. Amends GS 115C-391(a) to direct local boards of education to adopt reasonable dress codes. House committee substitute makes the following changes to 2nd edition. Deletes provision in GS 115C-81 permitting local boards of education to offer instruction in civic and citizenship education in one-week unit or by inserting key points on subject throughout year. Moves proposed revisions to definition of term "respect" in GS 115C-81(h)(6) to new GS 115C-81(h1)(1) and makes other conforming changes. Delays requirement that local boards of education develop character education instruction from Oct. 1, 2001, to Jan. 1, 2002, and adds provision for delay of implementation of program with approval of State Board of Education if local board determines that it would be an economic hardship to implement instruction by 2002-2003 school year.

June 6, 2001

**S 898. THE STUDENT CITIZEN ACT OF 2001.** Intro. 4/5/01. House amends bill to make the following changes to 3rd edition. Adds character trait of value to the character education requirements in GS 115C-81(h). Defines value as understanding the moral laws, as exemplified in the Ten Commandments, upon which the civil laws are based. Requires display of Ten Commandments and other writings exemplifying the teachings of world religions in specific manner described in H 681, Sec. 1. Adds new GS 115C-47(39) to authorize local school boards to adopt dress code and appearance policies for students and public school employees. New section is identical to H 645, Sec. 1. Amends new GS 115C-81(h1)(3) (concerning service to others) to specify that schools teaching service-learning through hands-on community projects must involve students on a voluntary basis (underlined words added). Adds severability clause.

*Bill Digest, April 5, 2001, April 12, 2001, and June 6, 2001*

**ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:**

- The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction are currently going through the revision process for the social studies curriculum. If SB 898 passes, the required revisions could be included in the current process.
- Local boards of education are required to develop and implement character education instruction and dress codes; these are currently at the discretion of the local board. Some time and expense would accrue to the local education agencies in developing these items, but the cost should primarily be a one-time expense and would more than likely be absorbed within existing resources. Currently 47 local school systems have a character education program; approximately 20 more are in some stage of developing a program. This implies that 50 local boards would have to develop a character education program.
- House amendment 10 *requires* the display of writings such as the Ten Commandments and other documents that exemplify teachings of major world religions. The requirement to display these writings and to rotate them on a monthly basis will require at least some one-time costs for production of these writings. There is no specificity as to where these writings are displayed other than on real property owned by the local school administrative unit. If this requirement is interpreted to mean in every classroom, costs will be significantly higher than one display in every school. For this reason, no cost estimate is available.

**FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION 733-4910**

**PREPARED BY:** Jim Newlin

**APPROVED BY:** James D. Johnson

**DATE:** June 11, 2001



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