

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 144

Introduced by Assembly Member Mullin

February 24, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 144—Relative to character education in public schools.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 144, as introduced, Mullin. Public schools: character education.

This measure would urge the State Board of Education, county offices of education, and local school governing bodies to increase emphasis on character, citizenship, ethics, and the humane treatment of living creatures in order to promote a humane and compassionate society.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, California's interest in character education has
2 been progressing since the 1980s, when Senator Albert Rodda
3 initiated a select bipartisan committee on character education, and
4 interest has since been further advanced by the Superintendent of
5 Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, presidents of the
6 United States, and, more recently, by state legislative and
7 congressional leaders; and
8 WHEREAS, Section 233.5 of the Education Code authorizes
9 the provisions of character education, and requires each teacher,
10 among other things, to endeavor to promote kindness toward
11 domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures; and
12 WHEREAS, Increasingly, the need for kindness toward animals,
13 whether they are pets, farm animals, or creatures in the wild, has

1 come to play a guiding role in the broader movement for a healthy
2 and humane world; and

3 WHEREAS, All children deserve the privilege of learning about
4 animals, which fosters a sense of caring and is crucial in developing
5 a sense of civic responsibility and a more humane community; and

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

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

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

18 WHEREAS, Implementing California's Common Core academic
19 content standards may be enhanced by character education by
20 increasing commitment to instructional priorities, academic rigor,
21 and discipline, and may improve school performance and provide
22 the opportunity for full citizenship; and

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

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

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

35 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
36 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature urges the State Board of
37 Education, county offices of education, and local school governing
38 bodies to increase emphasis on character, citizenship, ethics, and
39 the humane treatment of living creatures in order to promote a
40 humane and compassionate society; and be it further

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

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