

Information about California Assembly Bill 155

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Title: Pupil Instruction: civic online reasoning

Sponsor: Jimmy Gomez

Introduced: 1/11/2017

Status: may be heard in committee February 11.

Summary

Existing law requires the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to include, among other subjects, English, the social sciences, science, and mathematics. Existing law establishes the Instructional Quality Commission and requires the commission to, among other things, recommend curriculum frameworks to the State Board of Education.

This bill would require the Instructional Quality Commission to develop, and the state board to adopt, revised curriculum standards and frameworks for English language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science that incorporate civic online reasoning, as defined.

Bill Text

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) For every challenge facing this nation, there are numerous Internet sources pretending to be something they are not. With so much information shared on the Internet, it can be difficult to tell the difference between real news and fake news.
- (b) Ordinary people once relied on publishers, editors, and subject matter experts to vet the information they consumed, but information shared on the Internet is disseminated rapidly and often without editorial oversight, making it easier for fake news to reach a large audience.
- (c) A recent study has shown that the inability to distinguish between real news and fake news is particularly pronounced among young people.
- (d) Young people tend to accept information as presented, even without supporting evidence or citations, and rarely ask where it came from or try to verify it.
- (e) Young people also struggle to tell the difference between native advertising, an increasingly common type of advertising that tries to sell or promote a product while posing as a news article, and real news stories.
- (f) The inability of young people to distinguish between real news and fake news makes them less informed about important civic issues and poses a direct threat to our democracy.

SEC. 2. Section 51226.8 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51226.8. (a) The Instructional Quality Commission shall develop, and the state board shall adopt, revised curriculum standards and frameworks for English language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science that incorporate civic online reasoning.

(b) For purposes of this section, “civic online reasoning” means the ability to judge the credibility and quality of information found on Internet Web sites, including social media.