

SENATE BILL No. 401

By Committee on Federal and State Affairs

1-25

1 AN ACT concerning education; relating to instruction; requiring critical
2 thinking to be integrated into elementary and secondary instruction.

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4 WHEREAS, Critical thinking is a powerful tool that enables students to
5 be aware of and sensitive to internal illusions and external deceptions; and

6 WHEREAS, Critical thinking has two important components: (1)
7 Information processing skills; and (2) the habit of continually using those
8 skills to positively influence perspectives and actions; and

9 WHEREAS, Critical thinking relies on facts and should be applied
10 when viewing media, in conversation, in employment, engaging in civic
11 responsibilities and choosing friends and other social contacts; and

12 WHEREAS, Proper critical thinking can lead to improved decision-
13 making, better self-management and more interpersonal awareness; and

14 WHEREAS, Once instilled, critical thinking is a life-long endeavor that
15 can become a skill that is instinctive, pervasive, empowering and
16 enjoyable.

17 Now, therefore:

18 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

19 Section 1. (a) As used in this section, "critical thinking" means the
20 intellectually disciplined process of skillfully synthesizing,
21 conceptualizing and evaluating information as a guide to belief and
22 behavior.

23 (b) Critical thinking shall be integrated into instruction of all subject
24 areas for students in kindergarten and grades one through 12, including
25 academic and social and emotional learning applications.

26 (c) The state board of education shall:

27 (1) Develop and maintain a list of recommended critical thinking
28 educational instruction materials;

29 (2) develop standards and resources for school districts to utilize in
30 integrating critical thinking into each school district's curriculum and
31 instruction;

32 (3) provide professional development materials and teacher training
33 resources on critical thinking instruction; and

34 (4) periodically review and update critical thinking materials,
35 resources and strategies as necessary.

36 (d) Any critical thinking educational instruction materials developed,

1 provided or maintained by the state board shall be age-appropriate for the
2 grade level such instruction is to be utilized, be clear and consistent, reflect
3 up-to-date research and include interactive or participatory learning
4 experiences.

5 (e) Each board of education of a school district shall:

6 (1) Integrate critical thinking instruction into all subject areas for
7 students in kindergarten and grades one through 12;

8 (2) evaluate critical thinking resources and tools periodically; and

9 (3) use critical thinking educational instruction materials developed
10 by such school district or from the list maintained by the state board.

11 (f) The state department of education shall annually provide a report
12 to the house of representatives standing committee on education and the
13 senate standing committee on education or any successor committees on
14 the implementation of critical thinking instruction in school districts.

15 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
16 publication in the statute book.