

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

# HOUSE BILL NO. 1249

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE BROWN (87).

2545H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

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## AN ACT

To amend chapter 161, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to a pilot program for media literacy and critical thinking.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapter 161, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 161.355, to read as follows:

**161.355. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking Act".**

**2. As used in this section, "media literacy" means the following:**

**(1) An individual's ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and participate with all forms of media, such as:**

**(a) News in print; and**

**(b) Social media content, such as images, text, video, and other media content;**

**(2) An individual's ability to recognize bias and stereotypes in media messages;**

**(3) The foundational skills of digital citizenship and internet safety; and**

**(4) In the classroom, media literacy includes integrating the process of critical analysis of media messages into the daily classroom curricula.**

**3. The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish the "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking" pilot program. Such pilot program shall be implemented and administered during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.**

**4. Under the media literacy and critical thinking pilot program, the department of elementary and secondary education shall select five to seven school districts in**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in bold-face type in the above bill is proposed language.

17 **diverse parts of the state to participate in the pilot program and from which to study**  
18 **data related to the outcomes of the pilot program in such school districts.**

19 **5. A pilot program site shall:**

20 **(1) Address each component of media literacy;**

21 **(2) Develop successful strategies for student learning within the daily classroom**  
22 **curricula in all grades or for a selected preschool to grade twelve level;**

23 **(3) Identify high-quality resources for such pilot program; and**

24 **(4) Demonstrate and report how such site addresses the following in the**  
25 **classroom:**

26 **(a) News content literacy, which is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and**  
27 **distinguish verified information from opinion and propaganda and the opportunity to**  
28 **practice verification;**

29 **(b) Visual literacy, which is the ability to find, interpret, and evaluate images and**  
30 **visual media such as photographs, videos, illustrations, drawings, maps, diagrams, and**  
31 **advertisements;**

32 **(c) Digital fluency, which is the ability to understand and follow the norms of**  
33 **safe and responsible technology use and how media influences attitudes and behaviors;**  
34 **and**

35 **(d) Digital literacy, which is the ability to be technically fluent and able to make**  
36 **informed decisions about content encountered online, recognize how networked**  
37 **technology affects behavior and perception, and create and effectively communicate**  
38 **with digital media tools.**

39 **6. Before August 1, 2026, each pilot program site shall submit a report to the**  
40 **department of elementary and secondary education describing the implementation of and**  
41 **the information gained from the pilot program.**

42 **7. Before January 1, 2027, the department of elementary and secondary**  
43 **education shall compile the reports submitted from the pilot program sites and submit a**  
44 **summary report to the general assembly containing at least the following information:**

45 **(1) Qualitative and quantitative insights on how the pilot program sites**  
46 **addressed media literacy;**

47 **(2) A compendium of high-quality strategies and resources used by educators;**

48 **(3) Any professional development used or required;**

49 **(4) Recommendations about which facilities, instructional materials, and**  
50 **technologies are needed to implement a media literacy and critical thinking program**  
51 **statewide;**

52 **(5) Exploration of additional policy, administrative mechanisms, and legislative**  
53 **recommendations for implementing best practices and standards statewide; and**

54           **(6) A draft of proposed clear, inclusive media literacy and critical thinking state**  
55 **standards for preschool to grade twelve, compiled by drawing from key media literacy**  
56 **skills and competencies in existing state standards and from the pilot program results.**

57           **8. Standards developed under this section shall be included for consideration by**  
58 **the department of elementary and secondary education during the state standards**  
59 **review immediately following the termination of the pilot program.**

60           **9. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Media Literacy and**  
61 **Critical Thinking Pilot Program Fund", which shall consist of an appropriation by the**  
62 **general assembly of two hundred ten thousand dollars and any other moneys collected**  
63 **or appropriated for the media literacy and critical thinking pilot program. The state**  
64 **treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180,**  
65 **the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a dedicated fund and,**  
66 **upon appropriation, moneys in this fund shall be used solely for the purposes of this**  
67 **section.**

68           **(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys**  
69 **remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the**  
70 **general revenue fund.**

71           **(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as**  
72 **other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be**  
73 **credited to the fund.**

74           **10. The media literacy and critical thinking pilot program shall terminate on**  
75 **June 30, 2026.**

76           **11. This section shall expire on December 31, 2026.**

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