

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-2450
LAA.Legal@akleg.gov
120 4th Street, Room 3

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

April 3, 2026

SUBJECT: Graduation requirements
(HCS CSSB 23(); Work Order No. 34-LS0259\T)

TO: Representative Andi Story
Attn: Tammy Smith

FROM: Margret Bergerud *Margret Bergerud*
Legislative Counsel

You asked if SB 23 (Work Order No. 34-LS0259\T) creates a new high school graduation requirement. If enacted, SB 23 would create in statute a new high school graduation requirement. Section 14.03.076(c) provides that a secondary school diploma may not be issued until the student has received instruction on the topics listed in sec. 14.03.076(b) of the bill, and also has passed a one-semester course of comparative government and civics and received a passing grade or passed either a civics assessment or civics project-based assessment. Under sec. 14.03.076(d) of the bill, this requirement may be waived: if a student has transferred into public school after grade 10 or after already passing a similar course out-of-state; if, within the past 5 years has passed a test or project-based assessment similar to those required under sec. 14.03.076(c); or receives a disability waiver from the school's governing body. This requirement is also reflected in the bill's title, which provides, in part, that the Act relates to "secondary school graduation requirements. . . ." Section 3 of the bill provides this requirement would begin with the ninth grade class that enters secondary school in the fall of 2027.

However, the enactment of sec. 14.03.076 would likely not result in a student being required to obtain additional social studies credits. Under 4 AAC 06.075(b)(2), a student is currently required to earn three units of credit in social studies before the student may graduate from high school. A course on comparative government and civics education is likely considered a social studies credit. Therefore, SB 23 does not necessarily require a student to obtain more credits to graduate than the number currently required under existing regulations. I recommend reaching out to the Department of Education and Early Development for more specific information about how the requirements in SB 23 would be implemented and integrated into existing regulations.

Please let us know if you have further questions.

MAB:mis
26-142.mis