



## CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

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*100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know*

Restoring civics education and  
ensuring that all High School graduates  
are ready for active, engaged citizenship.

# The Goal: Preparing for Active & Engaged Citizenship

## The Strategy: The Civics Education Initiative



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**The Joe Foss Institute** was established:

To educate our youth on the importance of America's unique freedoms, and  
To to inspire them to public service.

**The Civics Education Initiative** is a project of the Joe Foss Institute, with the goal of passing legislation in all 50 states by September 17, 2017 – the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

**The Civics Education Initiative** is simple in concept. It requires high school students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of US history and civics, from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – *the test all new US citizens must pass*.

**The Civics Education Initiative** is a first step to ensure all students are taught basic civics about how our government works, and who we are as a nation...things every student should know to be ready for active, engaged citizenship.

# Nationwide Voter Survey

## Polling Methodology



The Joe Foss Institute commissioned a nationwide survey conducted by Wilson Perkins Allen Opinion Research (WPA)

- Fielded April 22-24, 2014
- N= 804 Likely Voters
- MoE=+/- 3.5% in 95 out of 100 cases.

WPA selected a random sample of likely voters nationwide using Random Digit Dialing. The sample for this survey was stratified based on geography, age, gender, ethnicity, and education.

The exact language for the two questions highlighted in this presentation were:

*“Some have proposed that high school students must pass a civics test in order to graduate. Would you vote yes or no on an initiative to require high school students to pass the same civics exam that all immigrants must pass to become US citizens, in order to graduate?”*

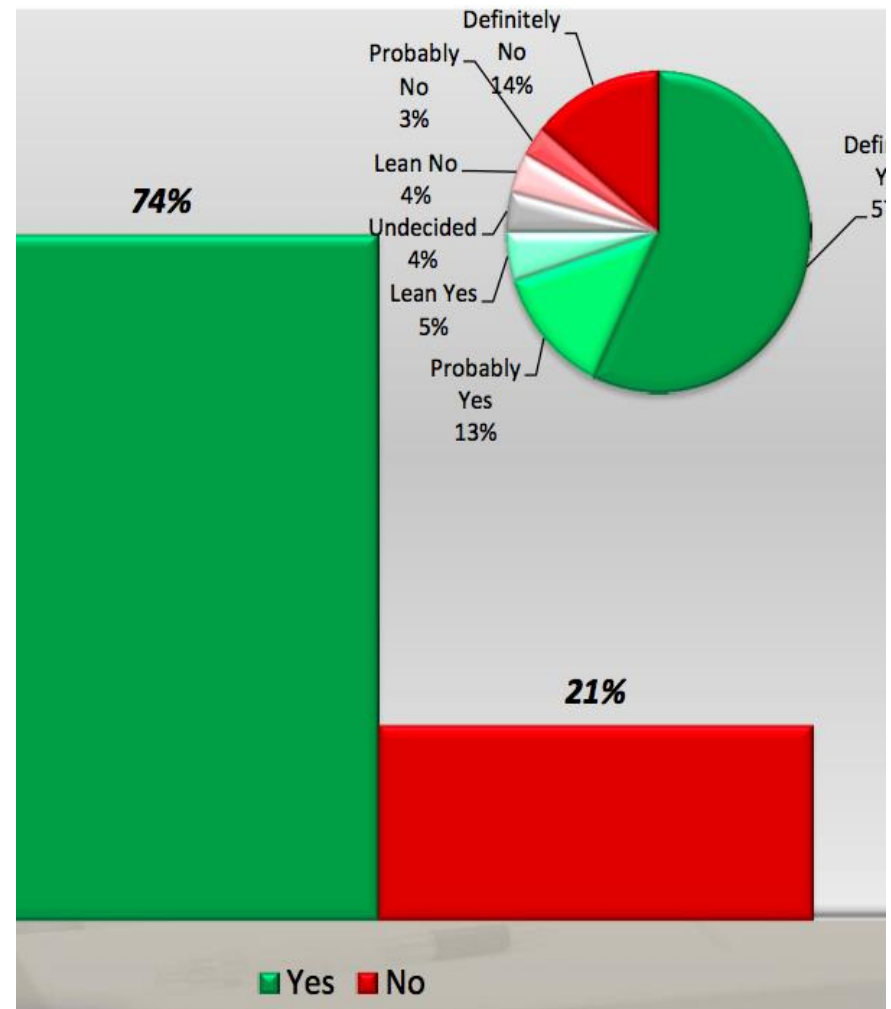
*“If you knew that a legislator from your state supported a proposal like this, would you be ROTATE more likely or less likely to vote for them?”*

# The Civics Education Initiative

## *Overwhelmingly Supported by Voters*

Overall 74% of voters support the Civics Education Initiative. Every demographic group tested shows support at or above 60%, with 57% of all voters saying “Definitely Yes.” Yes/No differential is +53!

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Diff</b>
All	74%	21%	+53
Men	78%	19%	+59
Women	71%	24%	+47
Republican	84%	13%	+71
Independent	75%	21%	+54
Democrat	68%	27%	+41
Romney Voters	81%	16%	+65
Obama Voters	69%	25%	+44
White	76%	20%	+56
Hispanic	76%	22%	+54
African American	60%	32%	+28
West	81%	14%	+67
South	73%	22%	+51
Midwest	74%	22%	+52
North East	68%	28%	+40

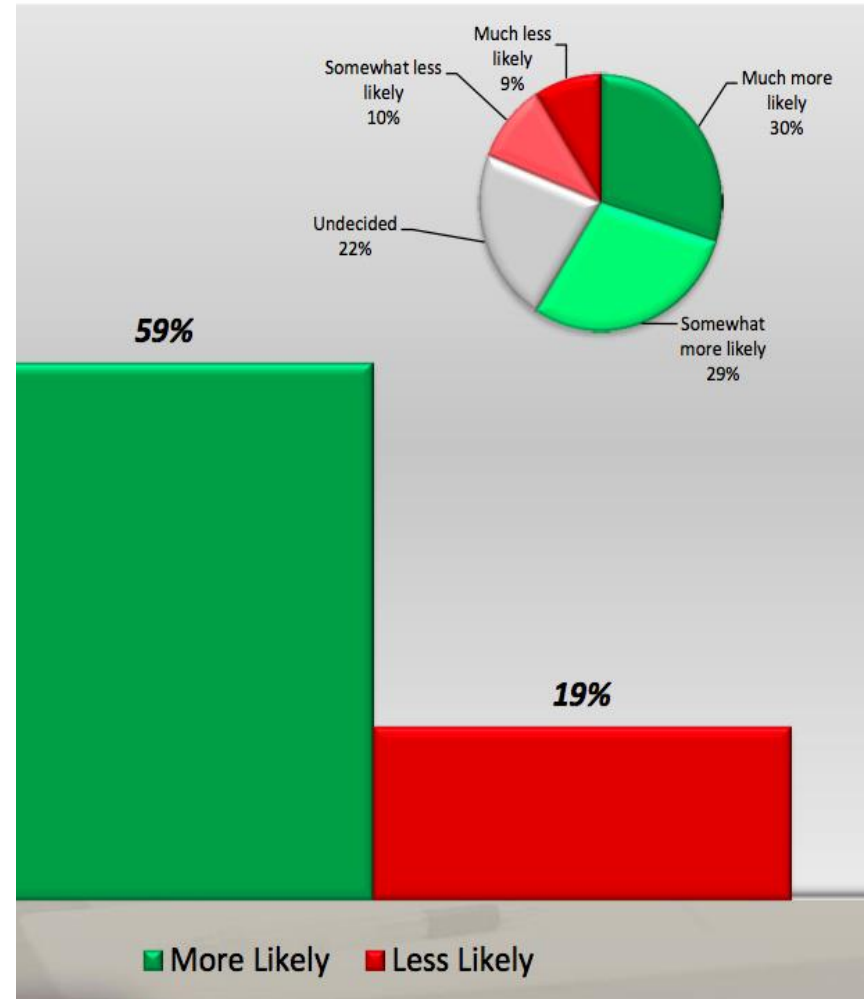


# The Civics Education Initiative

## *Voters Much More Likely to Vote for Supportive Legislators*

Voters are overwhelmingly much more likely to support a Legislator that backs the Civics Education Initiative. Overall, the support/oppose factor is nearly 4-to-1.

	<b>More Likely</b>	<b>Less Likely</b>	<b>Diff</b>
All	60%	16%	+44
Men	62%	15%	+47
Women	59%	18%	+41
Republican	71%	8%	+63
Independent	62%	17%	+45
Democrat	53%	21%	+32
Romney Voters	68%	12%	+56
Obama Voters	55%	19%	+36
White	64%	15%	+49
Hispanic	57%	16%	+41
African American	49%	28%	+21
West	60%	12%	+48
South	64%	17%	+47
Midwest	57%	17%	+40
North East	59%	19%	+40



# The Civics Education Initiative

*Targeting 15 States, with a Goal of Passage in 10 in 2015*

Our goal is passage in all 50 States by September 17, 2017 – the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

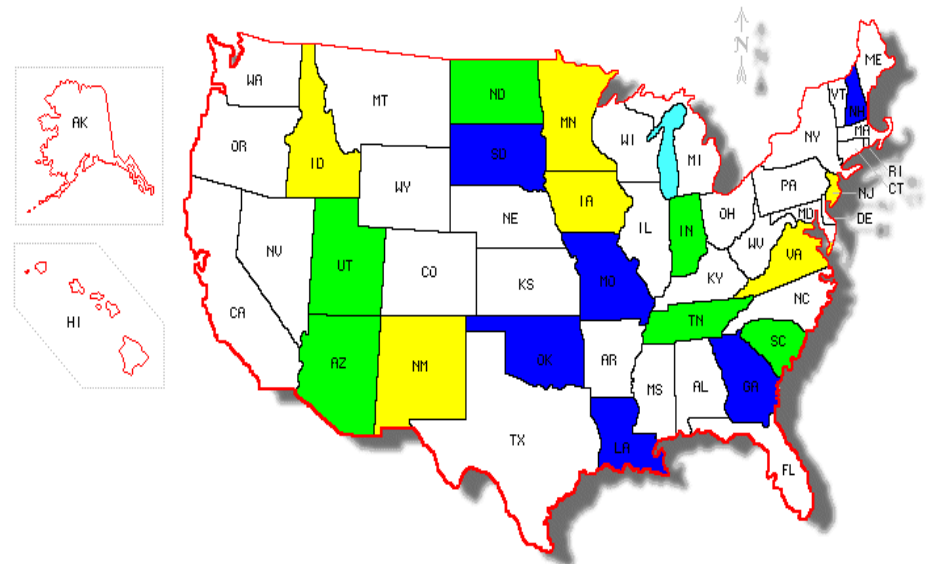
For 2015, we will target 15 states with the goal of passage in 10 states by legislative enactment.

For 2016, we will target 25 states with the goal of passage in 20 states, including passage at the ballot box in at least one state, by initiative or legislative referral.

For 2017, we will target the remaining states for legislative enactment.

Civics Education Initiative 2015

- - Go (6)
- - Good (6)
- - Reach (6)



Source: dymaps.net (c)



JOE FOSS INSTITUTE



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*100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know*

8925 E. Pima Center Parkway, Suite 100 Scottsdale, AZ 85258 887.Joe.Foss

(563.3677) 480.348.0316

Frank Riggs, President & CEO

Sam Stone, Executive Director



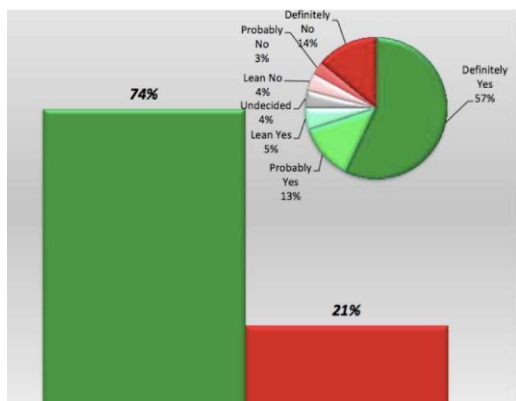
## CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

*100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know*

### ***Restoring civics education and ensuring that all High School graduates are ready for active, engaged citizenship.***

**The Civics Education Initiative** is simple in concept. It requires High School students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of U.S. history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – **the test all immigrants applying for U.S. citizenship must pass**. Yet, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 24 percent of U.S. high school students are proficient in civics, and studies by the Annenberg Foundation show that a third of U.S. citizens can't name even one branch of our federal government. That's why the **Joe Foss Institute** created **The Civics Education Initiative**.

**The Civics Education Initiative** legislation allows individual schools to administer the test in a way the school deems as adequate to ensure the requirements are followed. Students may take the test any time during their high school careers and may take the test as many times as necessary to pass. By using this well---established test and the study materials that are already easily available online and for free, CEI legislation has next to no implementation costs.



Overall, 74% of voters support the **Civics Education Initiative**. Every demographic group tested shows support at or above 60%, with 57% of all voters saying “**Definitely Yes!**”

	YES	NO	+/- Difference
All	74%	21%	+53
Men	78%	19%	+59
Women	71%	24%	+47
Republican	84%	13%	+71
Independent	75%	21%	+54
Democrat	68%	27%	+41
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**The Civics Education Initiative** is a first step to ensure all students are taught basic civics about how our government works, and who we are as a nation...things every student should know to be ready for active, engaged citizenship.



**The Civics Education Initiative National Board of Advisors** includes former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Pulitzer winning journalist Carl Bernstein and award winning actor Joe Mantegna.

**The Civics Education Initiative** is a project of the Joe Foss Institute, with the goal of passing legislation in all 50 states by September 17, 2017 – the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

**For further information please contact:**

Executive Director Sam Stone at 480-745-8237 or [Sam@CivicsEducationInitiative.com](mailto:Sam@CivicsEducationInitiative.com)

[www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com](http://www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com)





# CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. What problem is addressed by the Civics Education Initiative?**

A. *Too few citizens know and understand basic American civics - how our government works and who we are as a nation. By example, according to the Pew Research Center, only about one-third of Americans can name the three branches of government, much less say what each does.*

**Q. What is the impact of this lack of civics knowledge?**

A. *If you don't know how our government works, you're not likely to be an active and engaged citizen. It's no wonder so few citizens vote, given this lack of basic civics knowledge.*

**Q. Why isn't civics being better taught in our schools today?**

A. *Education funding is increasingly tied to high-stakes testing on reading, math and science, with a particular focus on STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering, math. While important, this emphasis is leaving civics as a secondary subject or in some cases, not being taught all together.*

**Q. How does the Civics Education Initiative address this problem?**

A. *The Civics Education Initiative is simple in concept. It requires High School students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of US history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – the test all immigrants applying for US citizenship must pass.*

**Q. How do immigrants taking the test compare to our own High School students?**

A. *According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), 92% of immigrants who take the required civics test for citizenship pass. Yet studies by the Annenberg Foundation show that a third of all U.S. citizens can't name even one branch of our federal government.*

**Q. Why use this specific USCIS US Citizenship Civics test?**

A. *We already require by Federal law that new citizens must learn these 100 facts so they can be prepared to be active and engaged citizens. By using this well-established test, there is no cost to develop a new test, next to no cost involved to administer the test, and a myriad of study materials for this test already exist.*

**Q. What does the Civics Education Initiative legislative language specifically say?**

A. *All (State) High School students, attending any public or charter school, or a student seeking a general educational development (GED) equivalency, shall, as a condition of High School graduation or its equivalency, take and receive a passing grade on the United States Citizenship Civics Test, produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The test shall be the specific 100-questions used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and administered to all applicants for US citizenship. High School students shall be tested on all 100 questions, with a minimum score of 60% being required for passage. High School Students may take the test as many times as necessary for passage, but must pass the test prior to receiving a certificate of High School graduation or a GED equivalency. All (State) schools shall certify that a student has taken the test and received a passing grade on the test, in a way it deems as adequate to ensure the requirements of this Act are followed.*

**Q. Is the Civics Education Initiative a popular idea?**

A. *Overwhelmingly so! A recent national survey showed 74 percent of likely voters support or strongly support the Civics Education Initiative, including overwhelming support among Men – 78%, Women – 71%, Republicans – 84%, Independents – 75%, Democrats – 68%, Anglos – 76%, Hispanics – 76%, and African American – 60%.*

**Q. Who is promoting the Civics Education Initiative effort?**

A. *The Civics Initiative [www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com](http://www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com) is project of the Joe Foss Institute [www.JoeFossInstitute.org](http://www.JoeFossInstitute.org) as part of its continuing efforts to promote an appreciation for America's freedoms, public service, patriotism and integrity. The Civics Education Initiative National Board of Advisors includes former US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Pulitzer winning journalist Carl Bernstein and award winning actor Joe Mantegna.*

**Q. What are the goals and timing of the Civics Education Initiative?**

A. *The Civics Education Initiative has as its goal the enactment of legislation in all 50 states by September 17<sup>th</sup> 2017 – the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.*



The Civics Proficiency Initiative will set as a requirement for High School graduation that students must pass the United States Citizenship Civics Test. Passage of this test – *in English* – is required for all new American Citizens. A score of 60% or greater is required for passage.

As of December 2013, 92% of immigrants applying for United States citizenship passed the test.

But a study conducted in Arizona by the Goldwater Institute showed only 4% of High School students passing the test. In Oklahoma, a study conducted by the Oklahoma Council for Public Affairs showed less than 3% of High School students passing the test.

Shouldn't our High School graduates know as much about basic American civics as we require immigrants applying for United States citizenship to know about America?

Can you pass the test?

Take the test below and see how well you know basic American civics.

## United States Citizenship Civics Test

### 100 Questions in Three Parts

#### **PART ONE: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

##### **A: Principles of American Democracy**

1. What is the supreme law of the land?
2. What does the Constitution do?
3. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?
4. What is an amendment?
5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?
9. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
10. What is freedom of religion?
11. What is the economic system in the United States?
12. What is the "rule of law"?

##### **B: System of Government**

13. Name one branch or part of the government.
14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?
15. Who is in charge of the executive branch?
16. Who makes federal laws?
17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?

18. How many U.S. Senators are there?
19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
20. Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now?
21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
23. Name your U.S. Representative.
24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
26. We elect a President for how many years?
27. In what month do we vote for President?
28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?
29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?
30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
32. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?
33. Who signs bills to become laws?
34. Who vetoes bills?
35. What does the President's Cabinet do?
36. What are two Cabinet-level positions?
37. What does the judicial branch do?
38. What is the highest court in the United States?
39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?
40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?
41. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to

the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?

42. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?
43. Who is the Governor of your state now?
44. What is the capital of your state?
45. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
46. What is the political party of the President now?
47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

### **C: Rights and Responsibilities**

48. There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.
49. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?
50. Name one right only for United States citizens.
51. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?
52. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?
53. What is one promise you make when you become a United States citizen?
54. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?
55. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?
56. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?
57. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

## **PART TWO: AMERICAN HISTORY**

### **A: Colonial Period and Independence**

58. What is one reason colonists came to America?
59. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?
60. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?
61. Why did the colonists fight the British?
62. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
63. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
64. There were 13 original states. Name three.
65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?
66. When was the Constitution written?
67. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.
68. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?
69. Who is the "Father of Our Country?"
70. Who was the first President?

### **B. The 1800's**

71. What territory did the United States buy from

France in 1803?

72. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1800s.
73. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South.
74. Name one problem that led to the Civil War.
75. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?
76. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
77. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

### **C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information**

78. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
79. Who was President during World War I?
80. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?
81. Who did the United States fight in World War II?
82. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?
83. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?
84. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?
85. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?
86. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?
87. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.

## **PART THREE: INTEGRATED CIVICS**

### **A: Geography**

88. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
89. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?
90. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?
91. Name one U.S. territory.
92. Name one state that borders Canada.
93. Name one state that borders Mexico.
94. What is the capital of the United States?
95. Where is the Statue of Liberty?

### **B: Symbols**

96. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?
97. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
98. What is the name of the national anthem?

### **C: Holidays**

99. When do we celebrate Independence Day?
100. Name two national U.S. holidays.