

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Gary Stevens

SENATE BILL 72 *Civics Education in Alaska Schools*

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SB 72 is intended to improve awareness of the importance of civics education in Alaska.

While most Americans agree on the importance of preparing young people for citizenship in a democracy, civics education has received diminishing attention in schools over the past couple of decades. There has been a gradual paradigm shift in preparing students first for college and jobs, responding to increasing accountability demands, and heavy emphasis on mathematics, reading, and writing. Experts believe a decline in civic engagement, such as the decline in voting rates among young voters since 18-year-olds were given the right to vote in 1972, may be a direct result of the decrease in emphasis placed on civics. Coupled with the present day political climate we are observing, many are calling for a return to civility.

One response to this decline in civic engagement, has been for states to develop content standards in civics or government, which occurred in the 1990s and early 2000s. This was an effort to ensure students have a basic understanding of the fundamentals of how our government works, of the documents on which American democracy is based, and of basic democratic values. Notwithstanding state efforts to improve instruction in the core academic disciplines, states should also establish statewide assessments aligned with their civics standards.

While many individuals and organizations have sought to address the poor condition of civics education, the problem remains acute. Strong state policies are needed to establish and reinforce the fact that preparation for civic life is equally as important for preparation for higher education and careers. In fact, preparation for active citizenship was a foundational principle of public education in America from its beginning, and it is a principle that must be reaffirmed by each generation.

By passing SB 72, Alaska will join with other states in an effort to restore attention to the importance of civics education in our schools, and ultimately in steadying civic engagement within our country.

I appreciate your consideration of this legislation.

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 72(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/9/22

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Begich, Hughes, Micciche, Myers, Revak, Stedman, Kawasaki, Costello, von Imhof, Hoffman, Bishop, Shower

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Civics curriculum and assessment requirement.** (a) The
6 board shall develop and periodically review a statewide civics education curriculum
7 and assessment that are based on the civics portion of the naturalization examination
8 used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of
9 Homeland Security and primary source documents. The curriculum and assessment
10 must also include systems of government used by Alaska Natives. A district may use
11 the curriculum to educate students in civics.

12 (b) A school may not issue a secondary school diploma to a student unless the
13 student

14 (1) has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment developed

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Senator Gary Stevens

SENATE BILL 72 *Civics Education in Alaska Schools*

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS *(Version D)*

- Sec. 1: AS 14.03.076, relating to public schools, adds a new section
- a. directing the State Board of Education & Early Development (SBOE) to develop curriculum and a related assessment based on the civics portion of the naturalization examination administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship. The curriculum and assessment must also include systems of Alaska Tribal government;
 - b. requiring students to pass the assessment established in (a) above in order to receive a high school diploma, with exceptions for students with a disability and who receive a waiver from their local school board;
 - c. schools are to document on student transcripts when a student has passed the assessment, with the option for the student to retake the assessment;
 - d. districts are required to report annually on their respective civics course offerings and overall average student score on the assessment; and
 - e. a passing score is defined as correctly answering 70% or more on the civics assessment.
- Section 2: AS 14.07.168, relating to reporting requirements of the SBOE, to include in their annual report to the legislature a description of civics education curriculum in the state, of civics-related course offerings in respective districts, and of student performance on the assessment described in section 1, by district.
- Section 3: Provides for an effective date of July 1, 2023.

1 under (a) of this section; or

2 (2) is a student with a disability and receives a waiver from the
3 governing body.

4 (c) If a student has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment
5 developed under (a) of this section, the school shall document on the student's
6 transcript that the student achieved a passing score. A student may retake the
7 assessment as needed to achieve a passing score.

8 (d) A district shall annually provide to the department a report that includes a
9 description of the civics courses offered in the district, average student performance on
10 the civics assessment, and other civics curriculum information as required by the
11 department in regulation.

12 (e) In this section, "passing score" means a student correctly answers 70
13 percent or more of the questions on the civics assessment.

14 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

15 **Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature.** Not later than the 30th legislative
16 day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present [IN
17 PERSON] to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual
18 report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously
19 improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the
20 bylaws of the board. The report must include

21 (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of
22 policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

23 (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or
24 recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

25 (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and
26 maintain the public education system;

27 **(4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state**
28 **public school system, civics courses offered in each district, and student**
29 **performance by district on the civics assessment developed under AS 14.03.076.**

30 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2023.

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2022 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	CSSB 72(FIN)
Fiscal Note Number:	2
(S) Publish Date:	2/9/2022

Identifier: SB072CS(CRA)-EED-SSA-1-4-22
 Title: SEC. SCHOOL CIVICS EDUCATION
 Sponsor: STEVENS
 Requester: Senate Finance

Department: Department of Education and Early Development
 Appropriation: Education Support and Admin Services
 Allocation: Student and School Achievement
 OMB Component Number: 2796

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2023 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2023 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services	9.5							
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits	43.0							
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	52.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	52.5						
Total	52.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2022) cost: 0.0 (separate supplemental appropriation required)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2023) cost: 0.0 (separate capital appropriation required)

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
 (Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? Yes
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? 06/30/23

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Updated analysis to reflect the latest committee substitute, which now includes a passing score requirement in order for a student to receive a diploma. There are no expenditure changes to the fiscal note.

Prepared By:	Susan McKenzie, Director	Phone:	(907)269-4583
Division:	Innovation and Education Excellence	Date:	01/04/2022 10:30 AM
Approved By:	Lacey Sanders, Administrative Services Director	Date:	01/12/22
Agency:	Department of Education & Early Development		

REPORTED OUT OF
SFC 02/08/2022

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**Analysis**

This bill adds civics education to the list of graduation requirements and requires students take a civics assessment and receive a passing score of 60% in order to receive a diploma. A student's passing score shall be noted on the student's official transcript.

This bill adds a reporting requirement for the State Board of Education and Early Development (board). The board will include in their annual report to the legislature a description of the civics education curriculum in the state, civics courses offered in each district, and student performance on the civics assessment.

This Act will take effect July 1, 2022 (FY2023).

The revision and adoption of social studies standards is currently underway at the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). This work specifically includes civics standards for K-12. These standards will drive the development of a secondary school civics course/curriculum that will be made available to districts at no cost, and housed in the online Canvas Learning Management System.

The fiscal impact to DEED is four one-time expenses: (1) \$3.5 to setup additional data collection elements from school districts in the existing Online Alaska School Information System (OASIS) data collection, (2) \$40.0 for \$2.0 stipends for 20 educators and qualified stakeholders for their participation in the development of a civics assessment and corresponding secondary school semester long civics course/curriculum, (3) \$3.0 for \$1.0 stipends for three educators to build the civics course/curriculum in the Canvas Learning Management System, and (4) \$6.0 for legal fees to implement the necessary regulation changes.

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2022 Legislative Session

Bill Version: SB 72
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: SB072CS(FIN)-EED-SSA-2-9-22
Title: SEC. SCHOOL CIVICS EDUCATION
Sponsor: STEVENS
Requester: House Education

Department: Department of Education and Early Development
Appropriation: Education Support and Admin Services
Allocation: Student and School Achievement
OMB Component Number: 2796

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2023	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2023 Request	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2023	FY 2023						
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services	9.5							
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits	43.0							
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	52.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	52.5							
Total	52.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

Change in Revenues

None								
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2022) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2023) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? Yes
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? 06/30/23

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Updated analysis to reflect the latest committee substitute, which changed the passing score from 60% to 70% and amended the effective date from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023. There are no expenditure changes to the fiscal note.

Prepared By: Susan McKenzie, Director	Phone: (907)269-4583
Division: Innovation and Education Excellence	Date: 02/09/2022 02:30 PM
Approved By: Lacey Sanders, Administrative Services Director	Date: 02/09/22
Agency: Department of Education & Early Development	

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CSSB 72(FIN)

Analysis

This bill adds civics education to the list of graduation requirements and requires students take a civics assessment and receive a passing score of 70% in order to receive a diploma. A student's passing score shall be noted on the student's official transcript.

This bill adds a reporting requirement for the State Board of Education and Early Development (board). The board will include in their annual report to the legislature a description of the civics education curriculum in the state, civics courses offered in each district, and student performance on the civics assessment.

This Act will take effect July 1, 2023 (FY2024).

The revision and adoption of social studies standards is currently underway at the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). This work specifically includes civics standards for K-12. These standards will drive the development of a secondary school civics course/curriculum that will be made available to districts at no cost, and housed in the online Canvas Learning Management System.

The fiscal impact to DEED is four one-time expenses: (1) \$3.5 to setup additional data collection elements from school districts in the existing Online Alaska School Information System (OASIS) data collection, (2) \$40.0 for \$2.0 stipends for 20 educators and qualified stakeholders for their participation in the development of a civics assessment and corresponding secondary school semester long civics course/curriculum, (3) \$3.0 for \$1.0 stipends for three educators to build the civics course/curriculum in the Canvas Learning Management System, and (4) \$6.0 for legal fees to implement the necessary regulation changes.

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 72(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/9/22

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Begich, Hughes, Micciche, Myers, Revak, Stedman, Kawasaki, Costello, von Imhof, Hoffman, Bishop, Shower

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Civics curriculum and assessment requirement.** (a) The
6 board shall develop and periodically review a statewide civics education curriculum
7 and assessment that are based on the civics portion of the naturalization examination
8 used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of
9 Homeland Security and primary source documents. The curriculum and assessment
10 must also include systems of government used by Alaska Natives. A district may use
11 the curriculum to educate students in civics.

12 (b) A school may not issue a secondary school diploma to a student unless the
13 student

14 (1) has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment developed

1 under (a) of this section; or

2 (2) is a student with a disability and receives a waiver from the
3 governing body.

4 (c) If a student has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment
5 developed under (a) of this section, the school shall document on the student's
6 transcript that the student achieved a passing score. A student may retake the
7 assessment as needed to achieve a passing score.

8 (d) A district shall annually provide to the department a report that includes a
9 description of the civics courses offered in the district, average student performance on
10 the civics assessment, and other civics curriculum information as required by the
11 department in regulation.

12 (e) In this section, "passing score" means a student correctly answers 70
13 percent or more of the questions on the civics assessment.

14 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

15 **Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature.** Not later than the 30th legislative
16 day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present [IN
17 PERSON] to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual
18 report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously
19 improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the
20 bylaws of the board. The report must include

21 (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of
22 policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

23 (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or
24 recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

25 (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and
26 maintain the public education system;

27 **(4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state**
28 **public school system, civics courses offered in each district, and student**
29 **performance by district on the civics assessment developed under AS 14.03.076.**

30 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2023.

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 72(CRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/21/21

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Begich, Hughes, Micciche, Myers, Revak, Stedman, Kawasaki, Costello, von Imhof, Hoffman, Bishop, Shower

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Civics curriculum and assessment requirement.** (a) The
6 board shall develop and periodically review a statewide civics education curriculum
7 and assessment that are based on the civics portion of the naturalization examination
8 used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of
9 Homeland Security and primary source documents. The curriculum and assessment
10 must also include systems of government used by Alaska Natives. A district may use
11 the curriculum to educate students in civics.

12 (b) A school may not issue a secondary school diploma to a student unless the
13 student

14 (1) has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment developed

1 under (a) of this section; or

2 (2) is a student with a disability and receives a waiver from the
3 governing body.

4 (c) If a student has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment
5 developed under (a) of this section, the school shall document on the student's
6 transcript that the student achieved a passing score. A student may retake the
7 assessment as needed to achieve a passing score.

8 (d) A district shall annually provide to the department a report that includes a
9 description of the civics courses offered in the district, average student performance on
10 the civics assessment, and other civics curriculum information as required by the
11 department in regulation.

12 (e) In this section, "passing score" means a student correctly answers 60
13 percent or more of the questions on the civics assessment.

14 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

15 **Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature.** Not later than the 30th legislative
16 day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present [IN
17 PERSON] to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual
18 report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously
19 improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the
20 bylaws of the board. The report must include

21 (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of
22 policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

23 (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or
24 recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

25 (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and
26 maintain the public education system;

27 **(4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state**
28 **public school system, civics courses offered in each district, and student**
29 **performance by district on the civics assessment developed under AS 14.03.076.**

30 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2022.

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 72(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/24/21

Referred: Community & Regional Affairs

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Begich, Hughes, Micciche, Myers, Revak, Stedman, Kawasaki, Costello, von Imhof, Hoffman, Bishop, Shower

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Civics curriculum and assessment requirement.** (a) The
6 board shall develop and periodically review a statewide civics education curriculum
7 and assessment that include government, citizenship, and the history of systems of
8 government used in the United States and the state. The curriculum and assessment
9 must include systems of government used by Alaska Natives. Districts may use the
10 curriculum to educate students in civics.

11 (b) A school may not issue a secondary school diploma to a student unless the
12 student

13 (1) has taken the civics assessment developed under (a) of this section;

14 or

1 (2) is a student with a disability and receives a waiver from the
2 governing body.

3 (c) If a student has taken the assessment developed under (a) of this section, a
4 school shall document on the student's transcript that the student has taken the
5 assessment.

6 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

7 **Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature.** Not later than the 30th legislative
8 day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in
9 person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual
10 report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously
11 improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the
12 bylaws of the board. The report must include

13 (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of
14 policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

15 (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or
16 recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

17 (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and
18 maintain the public education system;

19 **(4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state**
20 **public school system, civics courses offered in each district, and student**
21 **performance by district on the assessment required by AS 14.03.076.**

22 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2022.

SENATE BILL NO. 72

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATORS STEVENS, Begich, Hughes, Micciche, Myers, Revak, Stedman, Kawasaki, Costello, von Imhof, Hoffman, Bishop, Shower

Introduced: 2/5/21

Referred: Education, Community & Regional Affairs

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics examinations, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Civics examination requirement.** (a) A school may not issue
6 a secondary school diploma to a student unless the student

7 (1) receives a score of at least 60 percent on an examination consisting
8 of, at a minimum, the 128 questions of the civics portion of the naturalization test used
9 by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of
10 Homeland Security under 8 U.S.C. 1446(b); or

11 (2) is a student with a disability and receives a waiver from the
12 governing body.

13 (b) If a student meets the examination requirement in (a)(1) of this section, a
14 school shall document on the student's transcript that the student has received a

1 passing score on the examination.

2 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

3 **Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature.** Not later than the 30th legislative
4 day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in
5 person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual
6 report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously
7 improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the
8 bylaws of the board. The report must include

9 (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of
10 policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

11 (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or
12 recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

13 (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and
14 maintain the public education system;

15 **(4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state**
16 **public school system and the passage rate of the examination required by**
17 **AS 14.03.076.**

18 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2022.

From: christine.hutchison@cosaction.com
To: [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Harriet Drummond](#)
Cc: [House Education](#); [Tim Lamkin](#)
Subject: CSSB 72 Civic Curriculum
Date: Monday, February 28, 2022 7:15:12 PM

Representative Story and Representative Drummond: As an Alaskan resident for quite some time, I am very interested in seeing this bill CSSB 72

SEC. SCHOOL CIVICS EDUCATION scheduled for discussion in your education committee.

I believe it is critical to the future of our country and our population that our high school students leave school with some serious degree of the foundation of this country's government. The principles that will be brought into the civic curriculum will go a long way to provide stability in the long term thinking of the population.

Putting this legislation on the education committee hearing schedule and having a hearing on the merits will do more for the education of our current population in their formative years that we can ever realize today.

I very much appreciate your consideration of this request. Thank you, Christine

--

Christine Hutchison
Designone@gci.net
907/252-7442

From: [Aileen Cotter](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HS Diploma
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 6:57:55 AM

That's the most stupid thing yet! It's like telling you all that unless you know detail about the First Nations who you govern as well! You cannot sit in any governmental seat!
Use your brain! Bet you couldn't pass the test if it was given you either!
No! Let's test on things that matter like the Constitution of the United States of America! Bet you couldn't pass that one either!

Ella Cotter
NP
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Laurie Clark](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: SB 72
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 8:17:33 AM

I am against basing high school graduation on a test based on the US Citizenship test and government related to Alaska natives! (They already take Government and Alaska history!) A high school diploma should be based on the entire academic experience. Why would future students mess with taking 4 years of classes and the hassle of passing them if they can just take ONE test?? If a student passes all the credit requirements but not YOUR TEST what will happen then?? Who knows what will be on it... oh, I know—the teachers are going to have to teach to the test so the first year students have a clue. This is ridiculous!!! Are you saying the diploma is worth nothing (after all these years) so you need to require one more test?

The more I think about this, the more it angers me. Our children have enough change in their lives right now. Leave them alone!

Laurie Clark
North Pole, Alaska

Sent from my iPad

From: [ArtDuncan](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: SB72
Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:59:07 PM

I am against this bill.

Sent from ProtonMail mobile



128 Civics Questions and Answers (2020 version)

Listed below are the 128 civics questions and answers for the 2020 version of the civics test. These questions cover important topics about American government and history. The civics test is an oral test and the USCIS officer will ask you to answer 20 out of the 128 civics test questions. You must answer at least 12 questions (or 60%) correctly to pass the 2020 version of the civics test.

On the civics test, some answers may change because of elections or appointments. Visit www.uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates to find any answers that may have changed on the civics test. You must answer the question with the name of the official serving at the time of your naturalization interview.

65/20 Special Consideration:

If you are 65 years old or older and have been living in the United States as a lawful permanent resident of the United States for 20 or more years, you may study just the 20 questions that have been marked with an asterisk (*) found at the end of each question. You may also take the civics test in the language of your choice. The USCIS officer will ask you to answer 10 out of the 20 civics test questions with an asterisk. You must answer at least 6 out of 10 questions (or 60%) correctly to pass the 2020 version of the civics test.

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

A: Principles of American Government

1. What is the form of government of the United States?
2. What is the supreme law of the land? *
3. Name one thing the U.S. Constitution does.
4. The U.S. Constitution starts with the words “We the People.” What does “We the People” mean?
5. How are changes made to the U.S. Constitution?
6. What does the Bill of Rights protect?
7. How many amendments does the U.S. Constitution have? *
8. Why is the Declaration of Independence important?
9. What founding document said the American colonies were free from Britain?
10. Name two important ideas from the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
11. The words “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” are in what founding document?
12. What is the economic system of the United States? *
13. What is the rule of law?

128 Civics Questions and Answers (2020 version – continued)

14. Many documents influenced the U.S. Constitution. Name one.
15. There are three branches of government. Why?

B: System of Government

16. Name the three branches of government.
17. The President of the United States is in charge of which branch of government?
18. What part of the federal government writes laws?
19. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
20. Name one power of the U.S. Congress. *
21. How many U.S. senators are there?
22. How long is a term for a U.S. senator?
23. Who is one of your state's U.S. senators now?
24. How many voting members are in the House of Representatives?
25. How long is a term for a member of the House of Representatives?
26. Why do U.S. representatives serve shorter terms than U.S. senators?
27. How many senators does each state have?
28. Why does each state have two senators?
29. Name your U.S. representative.
30. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now? *
31. Who does a U.S. senator represent?
32. Who elects U.S. senators?
33. Who does a member of the House of Representatives represent?
34. Who elects members of the House of Representatives?
35. Some states have more representatives than other states. Why?
36. The President of the United States is elected for how many years? *
37. The President of the United States can serve only two terms. Why?
38. What is the name of the President of the United States now? *
39. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now? *
40. If the president can no longer serve, who becomes president?

128 Civics Questions and Answers (2020 version – continued)

41. Name one power of the president.
42. Who is Commander in Chief of the U.S. military?
43. Who signs bills to become laws?
44. Who vetoes bills? *
45. Who appoints federal judges?
46. The executive branch has many parts. Name one.
47. What does the President's Cabinet do?
48. What are two Cabinet-level positions?
49. Why is the Electoral College important?
50. What is one part of the judicial branch?
51. What does the judicial branch do?
52. What is the highest court in the United States? *
53. How many seats are on the Supreme Court?
54. How many Supreme Court justices are usually needed to decide a case?
55. How long do Supreme Court justices serve?
56. Supreme Court justices serve for life. Why?
57. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?
58. Name one power that is only for the federal government.
59. Name one power that is only for the states.
60. What is the purpose of the 10th Amendment?
61. Who is the governor of your state now? *
62. What is the capital of your state?

C: Rights and Responsibilities

63. There are four amendments to the U.S. Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.
64. Who can vote in federal elections, run for federal office, and serve on a jury in the United States?
65. What are three rights of everyone living in the United States?
66. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance? *
67. Name two promises that new citizens make in the Oath of Allegiance.

128 Civics Questions and Answers (2020 version – continued)

68. How can people become United States citizens?
69. What are two examples of civic participation in the United States?
70. What is one way Americans can serve their country?
71. Why is it important to pay federal taxes?
72. It is important for all men age 18 through 25 to register for the Selective Service. Name one reason why.

AMERICAN HISTORY

A: Colonial Period and Independence

73. The colonists came to America for many reasons. Name one.
74. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived? *
75. What group of people was taken and sold as slaves?
76. What war did the Americans fight to win independence from Britain?
77. Name one reason why the Americans declared independence from Britain.
78. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence? *
79. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
80. The American Revolution had many important events. Name one.
81. There were 13 original states. Name five.
82. What founding document was written in 1787?
83. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.
84. Why were the Federalist Papers important?
85. Benjamin Franklin is famous for many things. Name one.
86. George Washington is famous for many things. Name one. *
87. Thomas Jefferson is famous for many things. Name one.
88. James Madison is famous for many things. Name one.
89. Alexander Hamilton is famous for many things. Name one.

B: 1800s

90. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?
91. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1800s.
92. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South.

128 Civics Questions and Answers (2020 version – continued)

93. The Civil War had many important events. Name one.
94. Abraham Lincoln is famous for many things. Name one. *
95. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
96. What U.S. war ended slavery?
97. What amendment gives citizenship to all persons born in the United States?
98. When did all men get the right to vote?
99. Name one leader of the women’s rights movement in the 1800s.

C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

100. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
101. Why did the United States enter World War I?
102. When did all women get the right to vote?
103. What was the Great Depression?
104. When did the Great Depression start?
105. Who was president during the Great Depression and World War II?
106. Why did the United States enter World War II?
107. Dwight Eisenhower is famous for many things. Name one.
108. Who was the United States’ main rival during the Cold War?
109. During the Cold War, what was one main concern of the United States?
110. Why did the United States enter the Korean War?
111. Why did the United States enter the Vietnam War?
112. What did the civil rights movement do?
113. Martin Luther King, Jr. is famous for many things. Name one. *
114. Why did the United States enter the Persian Gulf War?
115. What major event happened on September 11, 2001 in the United States? *
116. Name one U.S. military conflict after the September 11, 2001 attacks.
117. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.
118. Name one example of an American innovation.

SYMBOLS AND HOLIDAYS

A: Symbols

119. What is the capital of the United States?
120. Where is the Statue of Liberty?
121. Why does the flag have 13 stripes? *
122. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
123. What is the name of the national anthem?
124. The Nation's first motto was "E Pluribus Unum." What does that mean?

B: Holidays

125. What is Independence Day?
126. Name three national U.S. holidays. *
127. What is Memorial Day?
128. What is Veterans Day?

Will U.S. Education Remedy A Half-Century Of Neglecting Civics Education?

Tom Lindsay Contributor

Civics education in the United States is in a state of crisis, which, if not addressed, will doom our constitutional democracy.

If the above assertion sounds unduly apocalyptic, consider these facts: Recent polling of Americans' civic literacy, conducted by the [Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation](#), should shame all of us involved in education: While 90% of immigrants to this country pass the USCIS Citizenship Test (passage of which requires answering correctly six of ten multiple-choice questions), *only a third of native-born Americans* can pass the test.

Digging deeper into the numbers reveals even more alarming news. Seventy-four percent of senior citizens can pass the test, *but only 19% of Americans under the age of 45* can answer even six of the ten questions correctly.

Our country's Founders knew that our citizens cannot be expected to uphold and defend what they barely understand. What can be done to reverse this toxic trend?

Last year, a bipartisan group of eight U.S. senators introduced the [USA Civics Act of 2019](#), which would amend the American History for Freedom program. As I [wrote here](#), it has been 12 years since the Federal Higher Education Act was last reauthorized. Its latest reauthorization (2008) added a new provision—"American History for Freedom" (AHF)—which would award government funds to academic programs that focus on the political, philosophic, moral, and economic conditions of democratic freedom. The initiative included funding to hire philosophically unorthodox faculty—meaning those professors who believe the American experiment in self-government is still worth studying and defending.

It has been 18 years (2002) since the nonpartisan higher-education organization, the [National Association of Scholars](#) (NAS) launched the idea for this federal program. NAS hoped to start a movement to restore intellectual pluralism in higher education through supporting programs that focused on free institutions, Western civilization, the American Founding, and constitutional history (i.e., *genuine* American history). Six years later, this concept was concretized into congressional law.

Though passed in 2008, AHF still lacked any congressional funding. Moreover, all efforts to obtain funding were put on hold after Barack Obama's election in 2008, for fear that the intentions behind the legislation would be dashed and/or distorted if initial implementation was left in the hands of his administration.

This fear was well founded. The Obama White House would come to endorse *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*. According to *A Crucible Moment*, the chief ends of American civic education at the postsecondary level ought to be the promotion of sweeping egalitarianism, progressive activism, and citizenship of the world. This is what Obama's promised "fundamental transformation of America" meant regarding civics education—sweeping away our Founders and their devotion to limited government and individual liberty, and ushering in a post-American regime, where government's purposes and powers grow exponentially, and where individual liberty shrinks proportionally. As a result, AHF remained on the statute books as an unfunded program.

Pressing for adoption this year of the USA Civics Act is the Bipartisan Policy Center's (BPC) [Campus Free Expression Project](#), which champions intellectual diversity and free speech on college campuses. BPC's director, Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, was recently [interviewed about her efforts by Shannon Watkins](#) of the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal. Asked for more specifics about the true extent of our civic literacy crisis, Pfeffer Merrill responded, "A [survey](#) by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni found that less than 40 percent of respondents—and only a little more than half of college graduates—could correctly answer a multiple-choice question about the length of terms for members of Congress. More than half of respondents—and a third of college graduates—did not know that the Bill of Rights is the name given to a group of Constitutional amendments."

These statistics should convince all fair-minded individuals that our civic literacy crisis is real. Nonetheless, some still worry whether taxpayer dollars should be spent on an effort to resuscitate serious civics education.

I earlier responded [to this question here](#), where I asked readers to recall Abraham Lincoln's 1838 speech to Young Men's Lyceum. There, Lincoln urges his countrymen to practice as well as teach their children "reverence for the Constitution and its laws," lest American democracy degenerate into what he called "mobocratic" rule. Note that Lincoln counsels teaching not simply the Constitution and its laws, but also *reverence* for them. President Ronald Reagan's Farewell Address (1989) echoed Lincoln in its call for "informed patriotism."

Unfortunately, such notions as constitutional reverence and informed patriotism are viewed as anathema by too many colleges and universities, despite the fact that these schools' very existence depends on the protections provided by the Constitution. As a result, too many of our campuses have become among the least tolerant places in the country.

In an effort to do the job that our schools used to do, and should still be doing, the USA Civics Act [amends the AHF](#) to "authorize grants to colleges or university-nonprofit partnerships that promote knowledge of American political thought and history, free institutions, democracy, or means of participation in political and civic life." Funds provided under the Act are to be "used to support centers or programs pursuing that work, teacher preparation initiatives aligned to those topics, and other outreach activities."

Moreover, the Act seeks to ensure that those instructors funded through the grant enjoy “the academic freedom necessary to the robust study of American history and political life.” Given the oppressive atmosphere on too many campuses, such protection is, sad to say, very much needed.

Although the Act has received a degree of bipartisan support, there is in reality but a slim chance that it will pass in this highly partisan congressional session. Nevertheless, the fact that there is growing bipartisan support is a positive development, for it reflects rising national awareness that something is broken in civics education today.

This admission, long overdue in coming, could prove to be the first, indispensable step in reclaiming our history—and with it, our freedom.

Tom Lindsay

I am a former college professor of political science and political philosophy and former college administrator whose on-campus experience taught me that American universities are in a three-fold crisis: (1) declining affordability; (2) declining education quality; and (3) anemic board governance (which serves to enable the first two). During President George W. Bush’s second term, I was appointed Deputy Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, where I saw firsthand the too-often harmful, unintended consequences of otherwise well-intentioned federal intervention into higher education. I recently published an American government textbook, *Investigating American Democracy: Readings on Core Questions* (with Gary D. Glenn, published by Oxford University Press). I am Editor-in-Chief of the higher-education website, SeeThruEdu.com. Since 2011, I have served as director of the Center for Higher Education at the Texas Public Policy Foundation in Austin, Texas

SB 72, Promoting Civics Education in Alaska

Small Sampling of Resources

The U.S. Naturalization Interview and Test, U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship/the-naturalization-interview-and-test>

iCivics | Free Lesson Plans and Games for Learning Civics

www.iCivics.org

The State of Civics Education - Center for American Progress

www.americanprogress.org

Center for Civic Education

www.civiced.org

Tackling the American Civics Education Crisis

www.NCSL.org

Where Left and Right Agree on Civics Education, and Where They Don't

www.EducationNext.org

Educating For American Democracy

www.EducatingForAmericanDemocracy.org/

RAND Corp. – Preparing Children and Youth for Civic Life in the Era of Truth Decay

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR112-6.html

LINCS – Teaching Skills that Matter Civics Education

<https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/teaching-skills-matter-adult-education/civics-education>

Edutopia – Civics Education and Student-Driven Civic Action

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/civics-education-and-student-driven-civic-action>

Alaska Legislative Task Force on Civics Education, Final Report (April 2017)

www.AKLEG.gov (BASIS publications)

Source: [RAND Corporation](#)

Want to Rebuild Public Trust? Focus on Civic Education

Maria Gardner | December 8, 2020

The United States is grappling with an intangible yet existential threat: an increasing unwillingness to accept basic facts. Education must play a pivotal role in rebuilding our civic infrastructure and restoring public trust. RAND researchers identified four opportunities to help educators and policymakers reenergize civic development in American classrooms.

In 1957, the Soviet Union catapulted a metallic orb the size of a basketball beyond Earth's atmosphere. Sputnik, Russian for “fellow traveler,” became the first artificial satellite, collecting data for three weeks before its batteries died—and the Space Race sprang to life.

Soviets celebrated. Sputnik was both a monumental scientific achievement and a political victory over their Cold War rival, the United States.

Meanwhile, many Americans perceived the launch as a crisis. Leaders in Washington worried about the decline of the United States as a global superpower. The director of the American Institute of Physics even warned that, unless the nation's scientific capabilities expanded, the American way of life would be “doomed to rapid extinction.”

Policymakers, scientists, and engineers rallied to meet the moment. Part of this push was a new focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. To address widespread concern that U.S. schools were failing to prepare students in STEM, funding shifted to support new curricula, fellowships, and scholarships designed to build a competitive science workforce for the future.

It worked. In the years and decades that followed, Americans went on to contribute to countless technological and scientific innovations that would augment human capabilities and fundamentally change the world—the proliferation of renewable energy, the sequencing of the human genome, and the invention of the smartphone, to name a few.

But today, nearly 30 years after the Cold War came to an end, the United States faces another fundamental challenge that will require an education overhaul.

This time, the threat is the diminishing role of facts and analysis in American public life.

This phenomenon, called [Truth Decay](#) by RAND researchers, has led to political paralysis, the erosion of civil discourse, and widespread uncertainty. If Americans can't even agree about basic facts, then they will be hamstrung in efforts to address today's most severe challenges.

For example, many people in the United States believe that genetically modified foods are unsafe to eat, contradicting scientific consensus that genetically modified organisms (GMOs) typically pose no adverse health effects. And despite an overwhelming body of evidence that shows vaccines are safe, there is an increasing number of individuals who issue baseless warnings about side effects—a troubling trend, given the COVID-19 pandemic.

Investments in education must once again be part of the solution. A new [RAND report](#) examines the state of civic education and media literacy in schools and considers how civics could play a promising role in the effort to mitigate Truth Decay.

“We’ve traditionally thought of schooling as a way to prepare youth for college and a career,” said [Julia Kaufman](#), a senior policy researcher at RAND and an author of the study. “But schools can also help students become good, responsible citizens. And yet civic education is often edged out by other subjects that we deem important for college and career readiness.”

Preparing Children for Civic Life in the Era of Truth Decay

To identify steps that could help the United States meet this challenge, Kaufman and her colleagues surveyed principals and social studies teachers about their perspectives on the state of civic education and about their beliefs about the government, the media, and other institutions.

“As we’ve seen throughout history, policies are shaped by the events that precede them,” Kaufman said. “Education policy could help us address the Truth Decay crisis, but it’s going to take changes that scale across the country.”

These are just a few of the researchers’ recommendations to [help teachers promote civic development](#), help policymakers and administrators support those teachers, and, hopefully, slow the spread of Truth Decay.

Help Students Think Outside the Textbook Through Hands-On Learning

“Our data suggest that [simulations \(PDF\)](#) that engage students in real, authentic democratic processes are underutilized,” Kaufman said.

School-based elections, mock trials, and other hands-on experiences could help children feel more connected with democracy.

The virtual reality platform [HistoryMaker VR](#) allows students to embody important figures from American history. One student might become Abraham Lincoln, delivering the Gettysburg Address during a lesson about the Civil War. Another might help her classmates learn about the judiciary by telling the story of Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s appointment to the Supreme Court.

Granted, simulations could be challenging, with many schools currently teaching remotely. But teachers could turn to [several internet-based simulations](#), such as [iCivics](#), which provides free, nonpartisan lesson plans, games, and activities and includes a remote-learning toolkit. Students can virtually run their own [law firm to learn about constitutional rights](#) or play a [game that guides them through the path to American citizenship](#).

Incorporate Civics into Other Subjects

More than 70 percent of elementary school teachers and 40 percent of middle and high school teachers pointed to pressure to cover other content, such as reading and math, as an obstacle to supporting students’ civic development.

But civic education does not have to compete with other subjects. In fact, it can complement them.

Language arts students could study Maya Angelou as an activist as well as a poet—or Martin Luther King, Jr., as a writer as well as a civil rights leader. Art students could learn about color theory by examining campaign posters and yard signs and discussing their intended meanings. Math classes could demystify such concepts as margins of error in polling data, how congressional seats are apportioned, or what arithmetic a campaign adviser might need to know as she navigates the Electoral College.

“It makes sense to integrate civics education with other subjects because civics skills are so intertwined with other skills in real-life contexts,” Kaufman said. “It becomes a more authentic way of learning.”

Embrace Controversy, Emphasize Social and Emotional Competencies

Many Americans avoid discussing politics with friends and family members to avoid conflict. But they may be missing an opportunity. Discussing controversial topics in a safe environment with trusted individuals could be good practice for engaging in productive conversations in public settings.

Teachers could create such an environment in the classroom through [social and emotional learning \(SEL\)](#) and school guidance programs. Most teachers across the United States agree that SEL is important and have adopted practices to promote it. Instruction and school environments that encourage respect, empathy, and relationship-building could pave the way for students to engage in discussions about important issues that might otherwise be prickly.

“Counseling, mental health checks, conflict resolution programs, and supports for students' social and emotional learning—these are all necessary for civic development,” Kaufman said. “They're also an important part of cultivating well-rounded individuals and can be the key to navigating difficult discussions successfully.”

Of course, this is not something teachers can take lightly, given that conversations about controversial issues could become heated or lead to outcomes teachers would like to avoid. For example, RAND researchers found that students who were vocal about their political views were more likely to be targets of bullying and exclusion. But instead of avoiding conflict, teachers should be proactive and help manage controversial conversations as they arise.

“Many teachers might be unwilling to do this. They might be afraid that it will lead to a difficult discussion or anger their students or their students' families,” Kaufman said. “But it's really important to help students grapple with these issues in a safe and respectful way. It can help them learn how to have healthy, constructive discussions.”

Support Initiatives That Help Teachers Deliver Equitable and Inclusive Civic Education

Policymakers may need to target civic development policies and programs to specific populations, especially those that lack resources. The RAND study found that teachers in schools that serve more students of color and low-income students put less emphasis on discussing controversial

civics issues than their counterparts at less diverse schools in more affluent areas. Their students also tend to have fewer opportunities to engage in civic activities, such as debates or school elections.

In addition, growing awareness of racial injustice has led some to question whether civics materials provide an accurate representation of history, particularly in terms of colonization, slavery, and the Civil Rights movement. Districts, schools, teachers, and parents should advocate for access to instructional materials that have been vetted for their accuracy and quality, including textbooks, worksheets, and performance assessments.

Policy could also help increase awareness of and adherence to standards to ensure that students receive a comprehensive, high-quality civic education.

“Suggesting high-quality standards and guidelines is a good start, but we need to go further,” Kaufman said. “Civics is poised to address tensions within our democracy, and we need to give teachers the resources they need if we expect to see meaningful change.”

March 2, 2021

America Needs History and Civics Education to Promote Unity

A plan to help teachers instill an understanding that is complete and honest but not cynical.

Editor's note: This article is signed by six former U.S. education secretaries: Lamar Alexander, Arne Duncan, John King, Rod Paige, Richard Riley and Margaret Spellings.

Following years of polarization and the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, the world's oldest constitutional democracy is in grave danger. We stand at a crossroads, called to protect this democracy and to work toward unity. Current and future generations will look back to examine how we chose to act, and why.

A key part of our task is to reinvigorate teaching and learning of American history and civics in our nation's schools. A constitutional democracy requires a citizenry that has a desire to participate, and an understanding of how to do so constructively, as well as the knowledge and skills to act for the common good. Yet a history and civics education for the 21st century must also grapple with the difficult and often painful parts of our history—including enslavement, segregation and racism, indigenous removals, Japanese-American internment, denials of religious liberty and free speech, and other injustices.

We need teaching and learning that pursues an account of U.S. constitutional democracy that is honest about the wrongs of the past without falling into cynicism, and appreciative of the American founding without tipping into adulation. To turn pluribus into unum, we need curriculums that achieve a more plural and complete story of U.S. history, while also forging a common story, the shared inheritance of all Americans.

Regrettably, civics, which teaches skills of participation and the knowledge that sustains it, and history, which provides a frame of reference for the present, have been sorely neglected over the past half-century in U.S. schools. This cannot continue to be the case.

Right now, we collectively spend about 1,000 times more per student on science, technology, engineering, and math education than we do on history and civics. Where civics education is taught, it is often hampered by a lack of consensus about what to teach and how.

But there is a way forward that will let us rebuild civics and history alongside STEM education.

Despite our differences on policy and priorities, we believe that the Roadmap to Educating for American Democracy provides a promising path. The project is the result of a 19-month collaboration among more than 300 scholars, educators, practitioners and students from diverse backgrounds. The ambition of this plan is to re-establish civics and American history as essential components of education.

The Roadmap aims to renew the study of history and to rebuild civic education from the ground up, by providing guiding principles for states, local school districts and educators across the U.S. They, in turn, can establish their own standards and tailor curricular materials to their local communities. For example, using the plan, Texas may choose to devote more attention to the war between the U.S. and Mexico in the 1840s, while Massachusetts may choose to look more closely than others at the early phases of the colonial

conflict with Great Britain, in which Boston played a dominant role. The plan recommends key content and instructional strategies for history and civics at every grade level. And it does so with an eye toward meeting the wide-ranging needs of today's students.

The Educating for American Democracy Initiative offers a new vision for history and civics that supports educators in dealing effectively with fundamental tensions inherent in civic learning, integrates a diversity of experiences and perspectives throughout, and cultivates civil disagreement and reflective patriotism. As an example, the Roadmap can help teachers guide conversations among students about how we can integrate the perspectives of Americans from all backgrounds when analyzing the content of the philosophical foundations of American constitutional democracy. The recommendations of the Roadmap weave history and civics together and inspire students to learn by asking difficult questions, such as “What does our history reveal about the aspirations and tensions captured by the motto E pluribus unum?” then seeking answers in the classroom through facts and discussion.

Importantly, the Roadmap is not a set of national standards or a national curriculum. It is instead a call to action to invest in strengthening history and civic learning. It lays a foundation to deliver opportunities for excellence in civic learning equitably to all students.

The American K-12 education system has always worked to respond to the needs of the nation. The early republic emphasized history, reading and math. In the mid-20th century, the launch of the Soviet satellite Sputnik and the dawn of an era of global economic competition drove a turn toward investment in STEM education. And during the early part of this century, our attention has turned to preparing students from marginalized communities to succeed in high school and college.

Now the fragility of our democratic institutions is in plain sight. This is the time to give priority to history and civics education for American children.