

**SENATE BILL NO. 29**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS STEVENS, Tobin, Giessel, Bjorkman, Claman

Introduced: 1/18/23

Referred: Education, Finance

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**  
2 **graduation requirements; establishing the Alaska Civics Education Commission; and**  
3 **providing for an effective date."**

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

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

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

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

1 (1) has completed one semester of a civics education course taught  
2 using the curriculum developed under (a) of this section;

3 (2) has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment developed  
4 under (a) of this section; or

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

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

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

15 (e) In this section, "passing score" means a student correctly answers 70  
16 percent or more of the questions.

17 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.168, as amended by sec. 22, ch. 40, SLA 2022, is amended to read:

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

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

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

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

30 (4) a summary of implementation and utilization of the consortium  
31 established under AS 14.30.800, including a review of consortium effectiveness and

1 the participation rates of districts, teachers, and students;

2 (5) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state  
 3 public school system, civics courses offered in each district, student performance  
 4 by district on the civics assessment developed under AS 14.03.076, the number of  
 5 students who took a civics education course taught using the curriculum  
 6 developed under AS 14.03.076(a), and the number of students who completed the  
 7 civics education course;

8 (6) recommendations made by the Alaska Civics Education  
 9 Commission to the board under AS 14.07.215.

10 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.07.168, as amended by sec. 23, ch. 40, SLA 2022, is amended to read:

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

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

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

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

23 (4) a description of the civics education curriculum in the state  
 24 public school system, civics courses offered in each district, student performance  
 25 by district on the civics assessment developed under AS 14.03.076, the number of  
 26 students who took a civics education course taught using the curriculum  
 27 developed under AS 14.03.076(a), and the number of students who completed the  
 28 civics education course;

29 (5) recommendations made by the Alaska Civics Education  
 30 Commission to the board under AS 14.07.215.

31 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 14.07 is amended by adding new sections to read:

1                   **Article 3. Alaska Civics Education Commission.**

2                   **Sec. 14.07.200. Alaska Civics Education Commission.** The Alaska Civics  
3 Education Commission is established in the department. The lieutenant governor shall  
4 provide staff to the commission.

5                   **Sec. 14.07.205. Composition; chair.** The commission consists of 12 members  
6 as follows:

7                               (1) the lieutenant governor, who shall serve as chair;

8                               (2) the chief justice of the supreme court or another justice of the  
9 supreme court appointed by the chief justice;

10                              (3) the commissioner of education and early development or the  
11 commissioner's designee;

12                              (4) two members from the house of representatives, one of whom is  
13 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and one of whom is appointed  
14 by the minority leader of the house of representatives;

15                              (5) two members from the senate, one of whom is appointed by the  
16 president of the senate and one of whom is appointed by the minority leader of the  
17 senate;

18                              (6) five members appointed by the governor as follows:

19                                       (A) two members who are teachers and have experience  
20 teaching courses in civics education, United States government, or  
21 social studies; one member must be a teacher for a correspondence  
22 study program in the state and the other must be a member of the  
23 National Education Association;

24                                       (B) one member who represents a nonprofit organization that  
25 promotes civics education and engagement as its core mission;

26                                       (C) one member who is an active member in good standing of  
27 the Association of Alaska School Boards;

28                                       (D) one member who is a student in good standing enrolled in  
29 grade 11 or 12 and demonstrates an interest in promoting civics education.

30                   **Sec. 14.07.210. Terms of office.** Members of the commission serve terms of  
31 two years. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A

1 person appointed to a vacancy serves for the unexpired portion of the term.

2 **Sec. 14.07.215. Duties of the commission.** The commission shall

3 (1) discuss and review the most current information regarding best  
4 practices, pedagogies, and policies for civics education;

5 (2) make recommendations to the board regarding civics education and  
6 provide guidance for statewide implementation of the recommendations established by  
7 the commission.

8 **Sec. 14.07.220. Meetings.** The commission shall meet at least once every three  
9 months at the call of the chair. The commission may meet and transact business  
10 electronically.

11 **Sec. 14.07.225. Compensation, per diem, and expenses.** Members of the  
12 commission serve without compensation, but are entitled to per diem and travel  
13 expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

14 **Sec. 14.07.295. Definition.** In AS 14.07.200 - 14.07.295, "commission" means  
15 the Alaska Civics Education Commission established in AS 14.07.200.

16 \* **Sec. 5.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect on the effective date of sec. 23, ch. 40, SLA  
17 2022.

18 \* **Sec. 6.** Except as provided in sec. 5 of this Act, this Act takes effect July 1, 2023.