

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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SENATE BILL 23

Civics Education in Alaska Schools

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS (Version 1)

- Sec. 1: AS 14.03.076, relating to public schools, adds a new section directing:
- a. The State Board of Education & Early Development (SBOE) to develop curriculum, an assessment, and a project-based assessment relating to comparative government and civics, to include:
 - i. an assessment that is based on the civics portion of the naturalization examination administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship;
 - ii. the curriculum developed by SBOE may be used by school districts in educating students in comparative government and civics.
 - b. The curriculum developed by SBOE must include instruction on a wide variety of the fundamental U.S. principles of government, to include study of:
 - i. the founding history the U.S., the U.S. and AK Constitutions, the responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, civil rights and liberties, political parties and interest groups, campaigns and elections, foreign and domestic policy, and comparative systems of government used globally and by Alaska Natives.
 - c. In order to receive a high school diploma, a student must either:
 - i. complete a semester course covering topics described in (b) above;
 - ii. pass the written assessment described under (a) above;
 - iii. present evidence of having passed an assessment similar to that described in (a) above within the previous 5 years;
 - iv. achieve a passing score on a project-based assessment described under (a) above;
 - v. present evidence of having passed a project-based assessment similar to that described in (a) above while in high school; or
 - vi. is exempted as a student with a disability who receives a waiver.
 - d. Provides exemptions for students transferring into a school district from within the state as a junior or senior, or if from another state and has completed a state history course while in that state.
 - e. Schools are to document on student transcripts when a student has passed the assessment, with the option for the student to retake the assessment repeatedly.

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- f. The AK Dept. of Education and Early Development (DEED) is directed to adopt regulations recognizing students who achieve an excellent level of proficiency in civics knowledge and skill by affixing a seal of civic readiness on the student’s diploma or transcript.
- g. A student may satisfy the civics studies graduation requirement (c) by completing any of the options described above, that being the written assessment (a), or a project-based assessment (b).
- h. Specifies a passing score is a minimum satisfactory score of 70%.

Sec. 2: Transition language, making the graduation requirement for civics effective for students entering grade 9 on or after July 1, 2026

Sec. 3: Establishes an effective date of July 1, 2026.