

**House File 520 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 520  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 236)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to social studies instruction, including  
2 instruction in United States government, provided to students  
3 enrolled in grades nine through twelve, and including  
4 applicability provisions.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph b, Code  
2 2025, is amended to read as follows:

3 b. (1) Five units of the social studies including  
4 instruction in voting statutes and procedures, voter registration  
5 requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting systems in  
6 the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting  
7 an absentee ballot. All students shall complete a minimum of  
8 ~~one-half~~ one unit of United States government and one unit of  
9 United States history.

10 (2) The ~~one-half~~ one unit of United States government shall  
11 include ~~the~~ all of the following:

12 (a) The voting procedure as described in this lettered  
13 paragraph and section 280.9A. ~~The government instruction shall~~  
14 ~~also include a~~

15 (b) A study of the Constitution of the United States and the  
16 Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution and an assessment of  
17 a student's knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

18 (c) Instruction related to civics, including the roles and  
19 responsibilities of citizens in a society and in state and local  
20 governments.

21 Sec. 2. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph g, Code 2025,  
22 is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

23 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (02) The educational standards established  
24 in section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "b", related to United  
25 States government instruction.

26 Sec. 3. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended  
27 by adding the following new paragraph:

28 NEW PARAGRAPH. 0q. Be subject to and comply with the  
29 requirements of section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "b",  
30 relating to United States government instruction in the same  
31 manner as a school district.

32 Sec. 4. APPLICABILITY. This Act applies to school years  
33 beginning on or after July 1, 2026.

34 EXPLANATION

35 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with

1           the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

2       This bill relates to social studies instruction, including  
3 instruction in United States government, provided to students  
4 enrolled in grades 9 through 12.

5       The bill requires students enrolled in grades 9 through  
6 12 in school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, charter  
7 schools, and innovation zone schools to complete a minimum of  
8 one unit of United States government instruction as part of the  
9 social studies curriculum. The bill provides that the United  
10 States government instruction shall include instruction related  
11 to civics. Under current law, students enrolled in grades 9  
12 through 12 in school districts and accredited nonpublic schools  
13 are required to complete a minimum of one-half unit of United  
14 States government instruction.

15       The bill applies to school years beginning on or after July 1,  
16 2026.

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