

House Study Bill 558 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION BILL BY CHAIRPERSON
WHEELER)

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act establishing a seal of civics excellence program
- 2 administered by the department of education to recognize
- 3 student excellence in civics.
- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 256.9, subsection 59, Code 2026, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 59. a. Develop and administer a seal of biliteracy program
4 to recognize students graduating from high school who have
5 demonstrated proficiency in two or more world languages, one
6 of which may be American sign language, though one of which
7 must be English. Participation in the program by a school
8 district, attendance center, or accredited nonpublic school shall
9 be voluntary. The department shall work with stakeholders to
10 identify standardized tests that may be utilized to demonstrate
11 proficiency. The department shall produce a seal of biliteracy,
12 which may include but need not be limited to a sticker that may
13 be affixed to a student's high school transcript or a certificate
14 that may be awarded to the student. A participating school
15 district or school shall notify the department of the names of
16 the students who have qualified for the seal and the department
17 shall provide the school district or school with the appropriate
18 number of seals or other authorized endorsement. The department
19 may charge a nominal fee to cover printing and postage charges
20 related to issuance of the biliteracy seal under this subsection
21 paragraph.

22 b. Develop and administer a seal of civics excellence
23 program to recognize students graduating from high school who
24 have demonstrated proficiency in civics. The department shall
25 determine the minimum requirements necessary for a student to
26 obtain a civics seal, including knowledge of American government
27 and participation in civic and community activities. The
28 department shall produce a civics seal, which may include a
29 sticker to be affixed to a student's high school transcript or a
30 certificate awarded to the student. A seal of civics excellence
31 must be affixed to the diploma and noted on the transcript of
32 a student to recognize that the student has achieved excellence
33 in civics. Participation in the program by a school district or
34 accredited nonpublic school shall be voluntary. A participating
35 school district or accredited nonpublic school shall notify the

1 department of the names of students who have qualified for a
2 seal, and the department shall provide the school district or
3 accredited nonpublic school with the appropriate number of seals
4 or other authorized endorsement. The department may charge a
5 nominal fee to cover printing and postal charges related to the
6 issuance of the civics seal under this paragraph.

7 EXPLANATION

8 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
9 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

10 This bill establishes a seal of excellence program to
11 recognize students graduating from high school who have
12 demonstrated proficiency in civics. The bill directs the
13 department of education to develop and administer the program.
14 The department shall determine the minimum requirements necessary
15 for a student to obtain a civics seal, including knowledge of
16 American government and participation in civic and community
17 activities. The department must produce a civic seal, which may
18 include a sticker for a student's transcript or a certificate.
19 A seal of civics excellence must be affixed to the student's
20 diploma and noted on the student's transcript.

21 The bill provides that participation in the program by a
22 school district or accredited nonpublic school is voluntary. A
23 participating school must notify the department of the names of
24 students who qualify for a seal, and the department must provide
25 the appropriate number of seals or other authorized endorsement.
26 The department may charge a nominal fee to cover printing and
27 posting charges related to issuance of the civics seal.