

Senate File 369 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 369
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 1030)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act requiring students to pass the United States citizenship
2 and immigration services naturalization civics test as
3 a condition of high school graduation and high school
4 equivalency diplomas.
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 256.9, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
2 following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 69. a. Develop and distribute to school
4 districts, accredited nonpublic schools, charter schools,
5 and innovation zone schools a test that consists of the
6 multiple-choice questions contained in the most recent version of
7 the civics test developed by the United States citizenship and
8 immigration services.

9 b. Update the test described in paragraph "a" every five
10 years and distribute the updated test to school districts,
11 accredited nonpublic schools, charter schools, and innovation
12 zone schools.

13 Sec. 2. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended
14 by adding the following new paragraph:

15 NEW PARAGRAPH. Or. Be subject to and comply with the
16 requirements of section 280.9A, subsection 1A, related to the
17 administration of a civics test.

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

20 NEW PARAGRAPH. r. Be subject to and comply with the
21 requirements of section 280.9A, subsection 1A, related to the
22 administration of a civics test.

23 Sec. 4. Section 259A.1, Code 2025, is amended to read as
24 follows:

25 **259A.1 Assessment of competency.**

26 The department of education shall cause to be made available
27 for qualified individuals a high school equivalency diploma.
28 The diploma shall be issued ~~on the basis of demonstrated to~~
29 qualified individuals who successfully pass the civics test as
30 set forth in section 280.9A, and demonstrate competence in all
31 of the following core areas: reading, language arts, literacy,
32 mathematics, science, and social studies.

33 Sec. 5. Section 280.9A, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
34 following new subsection:

35 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. a. The board of directors of each local

1 public school district and the authorities in charge of each
2 accredited nonpublic school shall administer to students enrolled
3 in grades nine through twelve the most recent version of the
4 test distributed to the school district or accredited nonpublic
5 school by the director of the department of education pursuant
6 to section 256.9, subsection 69, in written or electronic format,
7 and shall ensure that each student receives one passing score on
8 the test as a condition of graduation. The board of directors
9 of a local public school district and the authorities in charge
10 of an accredited nonpublic school shall not be required to
11 administer the test to a student who has received a passing score
12 on the test.

13 b. A student must answer at least sixty percent of the
14 questions on the test described in paragraph "a" correctly to
15 attain a passing score. A student who fails to answer at least
16 sixty percent of the questions on such test correctly may retake
17 the test as many times as is necessary.

18 c. The board of directors of a local public school district
19 or the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school
20 shall not impose or collect any fee in connection with the
21 administration of the test described in paragraph "a".

22 d. The board of directors of a local public school district
23 and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school
24 may do all of the following:

25 (1) Modify the test described in paragraph "a" for a student
26 who has an individualized education program or a plan under
27 section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794.

28 (2) Develop and administer an alternate test to a student who
29 has a significant intellectual disability.

30 (3) Modify the test described in paragraph "a" for a student
31 who is an English learner as defined in section 280.4.

32 e. On or before June 30 of each year, the board of directors
33 of each local public school district and the authorities in
34 charge of each accredited nonpublic school shall submit the
35 results of the test described in paragraph "a" to the department

1 of education.

2 *f.* The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to
3 chapter 17A to administer this subsection.

4 EXPLANATION

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

7 This bill requires the director of the department of education
8 to develop and distribute to school districts, accredited
9 nonpublic schools, charter schools, and innovation zone schools
10 a test that consists of the multiple-choice questions contained
11 in the most recent version of the civics test developed by the
12 United States citizenship and immigration services. The bill
13 also requires the director to update the test every five years
14 and distribute the updated test to schools.

15 The bill requires the board of directors of each public school
16 district, the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school,
17 and the governing board of each charter school and innovation
18 zone school to administer to students enrolled in grades 9
19 through 12 the most recent version of the test distributed by
20 the director of the department of education. A student must
21 receive a passing score on the test as a condition of graduation.
22 A student must answer at least 60 percent of the questions on
23 the test correctly to attain a passing score. A student who
24 fails to answer at least 60 percent of the questions on the test
25 correctly may retake the test as many times as is necessary.
26 The bill prohibits schools from imposing or collecting any fee
27 in connection with the administration of the test. A school
28 may modify the test for a student who has an individualized
29 education program or a section 504 plan, develop and administer
30 an alternate test to a student who has a significant intellectual
31 disability, and modify the test for a student who is an English
32 learner. The bill requires schools to submit the test results
33 to the department of education annually. The bill also requires
34 the state board of education to adopt rules to administer these
35 provisions. The bill provides that individuals seeking a high

1 school equivalency diploma must also pass such a test.

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