

SENATE BILL NO. 23

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR STEVENS

Introduced: 1/10/25

Referred: Prefiled

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to civics education, civics assessments, and secondary school**
2 **graduation requirements; and providing for an effective date."**

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

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

5 **Sec. 14.03.076. Comparative government and civics curriculum and**
6 **assessments requirement.** (a) The board shall develop and periodically review a
7 statewide comparative government and civics education curriculum, civics
8 assessment, and civics project-based assessment. The civics assessment must be
9 composed of 100 questions drawn from those set out in the civics portion of the
10 naturalization examination used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration
11 Services of the Department of Homeland Security. A school district may use the
12 curriculum developed by the board to educate students in comparative government and
13 civics.

14 (b) The curriculum developed under (a) of this section must include

1 instruction on

2 (1) the founding history of the United States, including foundational
3 documents and the principles of government of the United States;

4 (2) federalism, including the role and operations of local, state, and
5 national governments;

6 (3) the institutions of the United States government, including the
7 responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches;

8 (4) the rights and responsibilities of United States citizenship;

9 (5) civil liberties and civil rights;

10 (6) the Constitution of the State of Alaska and the Constitution of the
11 United States;

12 (7) political parties and interest groups;

13 (8) campaigns and elections;

14 (9) the United States Congress;

15 (10) domestic policy;

16 (11) foreign policy;

17 (12) comparative systems of governments used globally and by Alaska
18 Natives;

19 (13) international relations; and

20 (14) major issues facing local, state, and the United States
21 governments.

22 (c) A school may not issue a secondary school diploma to a student unless the
23 student

24 (1) has completed one semester of a comparative government and
25 civics education course that includes instruction on the topics listed in (b) of this
26 section;

27 (2) has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment developed
28 under (a) of this section;

29 (3) provides the governing body with evidence that the student has
30 achieved a passing score on a test similar to the civics assessment developed under (a)
31 of this section within the previous five years;

1 (4) has achieved a passing score on a civics project-based assessment
2 developed under (a) of this section;

3 (5) provides the governing body with evidence that the student has
4 achieved a passing score on a civics project-based assessment similar to the civics
5 project-based assessment developed under (a) of this section while in high school; or

6 (6) is a student with a disability who receives a waiver from the
7 governing body.

8 (d) Notwithstanding (c) of this section, a school may issue a secondary school
9 diploma to a student who has not met the requirements of (c) of this section if the
10 student transferred into a state public school after completing grade 10 or has already
11 successfully completed a high school state history course from another state.

12 (e) If a student has achieved a passing score on the civics assessment
13 developed under (a) of this section, the school shall document on the student's
14 transcript that the student achieved a passing score. A student may retake the
15 assessment as needed to achieve a passing score.

16 (f) The department shall adopt regulations to recognize a student who has
17 attained a high level of proficiency in civic knowledge, civic skills, a civic mindset,
18 and civic experiences by affixing a seal of civic readiness on the student's school
19 transcript and diploma.

20 (g) A school district shall allow a student to fulfill the requirements of (c) of
21 this section by taking a comparative government and civics education course that
22 includes instruction on the topics listed in (b) of this section. A school district may
23 allow a student to fulfill the requirements of (c) of this section by achieving a passing
24 score on a civics assessment or civics project-based assessment.

25 (h) In this section, "passing score" means a student correctly answers 70
26 percent or more of the questions on a civics assessment or receives a score of 70
27 percent or higher on a civics project-based assessment.

28 * **Sec. 2.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
29 read:

30 **TRANSITION: GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.** The requirement that a school
31 only issue a secondary school diploma to a student who has met the requirements set out in

- 1 AS 14.03.076(c), enacted by sec. 1 of this Act, applies to students who enter grade nine on or
2 after July 1, 2026.
- 3 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2026.