

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 564 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY BOBACK, KORTZ, BIZZARRO, McNEILL, BARRAR, SAINATO, KAUFFMAN, STAATS, O'BRIEN, MILLARD, MACKENZIE, MURT, WATSON, NEILSON, READSHAW, WARD, COX, STURLA, GABLER, FREEMAN, SOLOMON, RADER, PYLE, SACCONI, D. COSTA, TOOHL, ROE, HAHN, PICKETT, ELLIS, DeLISSIO, LONGIETTI, HARKINS, FABRIZIO, YOUNGBLOOD, CUTLER, PASHINSKI, RYAN, DIAMOND, RAVENSTAHL, ENGLISH, ROTHMAN, RAPP, ROEBUCK, EVERETT, BURNS, DALEY, HELM, V. BROWN, JAMES, DONATUCCI, BENNINGHOFF, GOODMAN, DUSH, SCHLEGEL CULVER, STEPHENS, METCALFE, KIM, C. QUINN AND R. BROWN, FEBRUARY 21, 2017

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, APRIL 9, 2018

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in high schools, providing for civics<--
6 test graduation requirement ASSESSMENT OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE. <--

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a
11 section to read:

12 ~~Section 1613.1. Civics Test Graduation Requirement (a) <--~~
13 ~~Notwithstanding 22 Pa. Code §4.24 (relating to high school~~
14 ~~graduation requirements), beginning in the 2020-2021 school year~~
15 ~~and in each school year thereafter, each school entity shall~~

1 ~~require a student, as a condition of high school graduation, to~~  
2 ~~correctly answer at least sixty percent (60%) of the questions~~  
3 ~~on a test that is identical to the one hundred (100) question~~  
4 ~~civics test used by the United States Citizenship and~~  
5 ~~Immigration Services.~~

6 ~~(b) Each school entity may administer the test required~~  
7 ~~under subsection (a) in any grade from grades seven through~~  
8 ~~twelve, and shall:~~

9 ~~(1) Determine the manner in which the test shall be~~  
10 ~~administered.~~

11 ~~(2) Offer students the opportunity to take the test at least~~  
12 ~~three times each year as follows:~~

13 ~~(i) Once in the fall.~~

14 ~~(ii) Once in the spring~~

15 ~~(iii) Once in the summer.~~

16 ~~(3) Indicate that a student has satisfied the requirements~~  
17 ~~of this section in a student's academic record.~~

18 ~~(c) Each student shall be permitted to take the test~~  
19 ~~required under subsection (a) as many times as necessary in~~  
20 ~~order to meet the requirements of this section.~~

21 ~~(d) A student with an individualized education program shall~~  
22 ~~not be required to comply with the requirements of this section~~  
23 ~~if the provisions of the student's individualized education~~  
24 ~~program indicate otherwise.~~

25 ~~(e) The chief school administrator of a school entity may~~  
26 ~~waive the requirements of this section for students in grade~~  
27 ~~twelve on a case by case basis for good cause in extenuating~~  
28 ~~circumstances. Waivers granted under this subsection shall not~~  
29 ~~exceed ten percent (10%) of the students in the graduating class~~  
30 ~~of the school entity.~~

1 ~~(f) The department shall post on its publicly accessible~~  
2 ~~Internet website links to the one hundred (100) question civics~~  
3 ~~test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration~~  
4 ~~Services and any related resources offered by the United States~~  
5 ~~Citizenship and Immigration Services. The department shall also~~  
6 ~~post on its publicly accessible Internet website any additional~~  
7 ~~materials that the department deems useful to school entities in~~  
8 ~~complying with the requirement in this section.~~

9 ~~(g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require~~  
10 ~~school entities to collect and report new data to the~~  
11 ~~department.~~

12 ~~(h) As used in this section, the following words and phrases~~  
13 ~~shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection, unless~~  
14 ~~the context clearly indicates otherwise:~~

15 ~~"School entity" shall mean each school district, area~~  
16 ~~vocational technical school, intermediate unit, charter school,~~  
17 ~~cyber charter school, regional charter school, or nonpublic~~  
18 ~~school from which a student may graduate high school.~~

19 ~~"Department" shall mean the Department of Education of the~~  
20 ~~Commonwealth.~~

21 ~~"Individualized education program" shall mean an~~  
22 ~~individualized education program established under 22 Pa. Code~~  
23 ~~Ch. 14 (relating to special education services and programs).~~

24 ~~SECTION 1605.1. ASSESSMENT OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE.--(A)~~ <--  
25 ~~BEGINNING WITH THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH SCHOOL ENTITY:~~

26 ~~(1) SHALL ADMINISTER AT LEAST ONCE TO STUDENTS DURING GRADES~~  
27 ~~SEVEN THROUGH TWELVE A LOCALLY DEVELOPED ASSESSMENT OF UNITED~~  
28 ~~STATES HISTORY, GOVERNMENT AND CIVICS THAT INCLUDES THE NATURE,~~  
29 ~~PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES AND STRUCTURE OF UNITED STATES~~  
30 ~~CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY, THE PRINCIPLES, OPERATIONS AND~~

1 DOCUMENTS OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND THE RIGHTS AND  
2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP. EACH SCHOOL ENTITY SHALL  
3 DETERMINE THE FORM OF THE ASSESSMENT AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THE  
4 ASSESSMENT SHALL BE ADMINISTERED AND MAY ADMINISTER THE  
5 ASSESSMENT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE COURSE OF STUDY REQUIRED  
6 UNDER SECTION 1605(A) OR AT THE CONCLUSION OF ANOTHER RELATED  
7 COURSE OR INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT. A SCHOOL ENTITY MAY USE THE UNITED  
8 STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES TEST TO SATISFY THE  
9 REQUIREMENTS OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

10 (2) SHALL ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION TO STUDENTS WHO  
11 ATTAIN A PASSING GRADE ON THE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTERED UNDER  
12 PARAGRAPH (1).

13 (B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

14 (1) WITHIN TWELVE (12) MONTHS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS  
15 SECTION, POST ON ITS PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INTERNET WEBSITE LINKS  
16 TO THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES TEST  
17 AND ANY RELATED RESOURCES OFFERED BY THE UNITED STATES  
18 CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO  
19 POST ON ITS PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INTERNET WEBSITE ANY ADDITIONAL  
20 MATERIALS THAT THE DEPARTMENT DEEMS USEFUL TO SCHOOL ENTITIES IN  
21 COMPLYING WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN THIS SECTION.

22 (2) CONDUCT AN ELECTRONIC SURVEY OF EACH SCHOOL ENTITY AT  
23 THE CONCLUSION OF THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR AND AT THE  
24 CONCLUSION OF EVERY SECOND SCHOOL YEAR THEREAFTER REQUESTING  
25 INFORMATION CONCERNING COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS  
26 SECTION. EACH SCHOOL ENTITY SHALL RESPOND TO THE SURVEY NO LATER  
27 THAN NOVEMBER 30 FOLLOWING THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR WHICH THE SURVEY  
28 IS CONDUCTED. THE SURVEY SHALL ONLY REQUEST THE FOLLOWING  
29 INFORMATION FOR THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING SCHOOL YEAR:

30 (I) THE FORMAT OF THE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTERED AS REQUIRED

1 UNDER SUBSECTION (A) (1).

2 (II) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE ASSESSMENT.

3 (III) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ATTAINED A PASSING  
4 GRADE ON THE ASSESSMENT.

5 (IV) THE GRADE LEVEL OR LEVELS IN WHICH THE ASSESSMENT WAS  
6 ADMINISTERED.

7 (V) THE COURSE OR COURSES IN WHICH THE ASSESSMENT WAS  
8 ADMINISTERED.

9 (3) BY JANUARY 1 OF THE YEAR FOLLOWING THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR  
10 WHICH THE SURVEY IS CONDUCTED, MAKE THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE  
11 SURVEYS CONDUCTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) AVAILABLE ON ITS PUBLICLY  
12 ACCESSIBLE INTERNET WEBSITE.

13 (C) A STUDENT WITH AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM SHALL  
14 NOT BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTERED UNDER  
15 SUBSECTION (A) (1) IF THE PROVISIONS OF THE STUDENT'S  
16 INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM INDICATE OTHERWISE.

17 (D) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, THE FOLLOWING WORDS AND PHRASES  
18 SHALL HAVE THE MEANINGS GIVEN TO THEM IN THIS SUBSECTION UNLESS  
19 THE CONTEXT CLEARLY INDICATES OTHERWISE:

20 "DEPARTMENT" SHALL MEAN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF THE  
21 COMMONWEALTH.

22 "INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM" SHALL MEAN A WRITTEN  
23 STATEMENT FOR EACH CHILD WITH A DISABILITY THAT IS DEVELOPED,  
24 REVIEWED OR REVISED IN A MEETING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
25 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (PUBLIC LAW 91-230,  
26 20 U.S.C. § 1400 ET SEQ.) AND 22 PA. CODE CH. 14 (RELATING TO  
27 SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS).

28 "SCHOOL ENTITY" SHALL MEAN A SCHOOL DISTRICT, AREA  
29 VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL, INTERMEDIATE UNIT, CHARTER SCHOOL,  
30 CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL OR REGIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL.

1 "UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES TEST"  
2 SHALL MEAN THE ONE HUNDRED (100) QUESTION CIVICS TEST USED BY  
3 THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES.

4 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.