

Senate File 369 - Reprinted

SENATE FILE 369
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 1030)

(As Amended and Passed by the Senate April 14, 2025)

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:

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

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

9 *b.* On or before the January 31 immediately subsequent to
10 each general election which is a presidential election, update
11 the test described in paragraph "a" and distribute the updated
12 test to school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, charter
13 schools, and innovation zone schools.

14 NEW SUBSECTION. 70. *a.* Study the relationship between high
15 school graduation rates and the number of students who attain a
16 passing score on the civics test described in section 280.9A,
17 subsection 1A, and submit a report that contains the results of
18 the study to the general assembly on or before June 30, 2029.

19 *b.* This subsection is repealed July 1, 2029.

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

22 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Or.* Be subject to and comply with the
23 requirements of section 280.9A, subsection 1A, related to the
24 administration of a civics test in the same manner as a school
25 district.

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

28 NEW PARAGRAPH. *r.* Be subject to and comply with the
29 requirements of section 280.9A, subsection 1A, related to the
30 administration of a civics test in the same manner as a school
31 district.

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

34 **259A.1 Assessment of competency.**

35 The department of education shall cause to be made available

1 for qualified individuals a high school equivalency diploma.
2 The diploma shall be issued ~~on the basis of demonstrated to~~
3 qualified individuals who successfully pass the civics test as
4 set forth in section 280.9A, and demonstrate competence in all
5 of the following core areas: reading, language arts, literacy,
6 mathematics, science, and social studies.

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

9 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. a. Commencing with the school year
10 beginning July 1, 2026, the board of directors of each local
11 public school district and the authorities in charge of each
12 accredited nonpublic school shall administer to students
13 enrolled in grades nine through twelve the most recent version
14 of the test distributed to the school district or accredited
15 nonpublic school by the director of the department of education
16 pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 69, in written or
17 electronic format, and shall ensure that each student receives
18 one passing score on the test as a condition of graduation.
19 The board of directors of a local public school district and
20 the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school
21 shall not be required to administer the test to a student who
22 has received a passing score on the test.

23 b. A student must answer at least sixty percent of the
24 questions on the test described in paragraph "a" correctly
25 to attain a passing score. A student who fails to answer at
26 least sixty percent of the questions on such test correctly may
27 retake the test as many times as is necessary.

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

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

35 (1) Modify the test described in paragraph "a" for a student

1 who has an individualized education program or a plan under
2 section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794.

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

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

7 e. On or before June 30 of each year, the board of directors
8 of each local public school district and the authorities in
9 charge of each accredited nonpublic school shall submit the
10 results of the test described in paragraph "a" to the department
11 of education.

12 f. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant
13 to chapter 17A to administer this subsection.