

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL DRS45374-MT-126 (03/17)

Short Title: Require U.S. Civics Test in High Schools. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Ballard, Tillman, and Brock (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE A HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS TEST IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS  
3 PORTION OF THE U.S. NATURALIZATION TEST.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81(g) reads as rewritten:

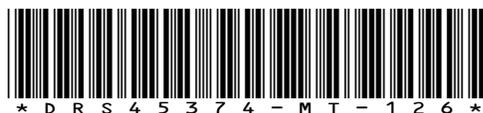
6 "(g) Civic Literacy. –

7 (1) The State Board of Education shall require during the high school years the  
8 teaching of a semester course that includes instruction in the following  
9 Founding Principles of the United States of America and the State of North  
10 Carolina:

- 11 a. The Creator-endowed inalienable rights of the people.  
12 b. Structure of government, separation of powers with checks and  
13 balances.  
14 c. Frequent and free elections in a representative government.  
15 d. Rule of law.  
16 e. Equal justice under the law.  
17 f. Private property rights.  
18 g. Federalism.  
19 h. Due process.  
20 i. Individual rights as set forth in the Bill of Rights.  
21 j. Individual responsibility.  
22 k. Constitutional limitations on government power to tax and spend and  
23 prompt payment of public debt.  
24 l. Strong defense and supremacy of civil authority over military.  
25 m. Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling  
26 alliances with none.

27 A passing grade in the course shall be required for graduation from high  
28 school.

29 ...  
30 (4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level  
31 curriculum-based tests for the course required in subdivision (1) of this  
32 subsection developed and administered statewide ~~beginning with the~~  
33 ~~2016-2017 academic year~~ include questions related to the philosophical  
34 foundations of our form of government and the principles underlying the  
35 Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its  
36 amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.



1           (4a) Notwithstanding subdivision (4) of this subsection, the State Board of  
 2 Education shall require at least one high school level test for the course  
 3 required in subdivision (1) of this subsection administered statewide that is  
 4 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United  
 5 States Citizenship and Immigration Services. A passing grade on the test  
 6 shall be required in order to pass the course required in subdivision (1) of  
 7 this subsection. In order to obtain a passing grade on the test, a student must  
 8 correctly answer at least sixty percent (60%) of the questions. A student who  
 9 does not obtain a passing score on the test may retake the test until the  
 10 student obtains a passing score. Exceptions to this testing requirement shall  
 11 be permitted to accommodate a student's individualized education program.  
 12 If a student passes the test, the school shall document on the student's  
 13 transcript that the student has passed a test that is identical to the civics  
 14 portion of the naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and  
 15 Immigration Services as required by this subsection.

16           (5) The Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of education, as  
 17 appropriate, shall provide or cause to be provided curriculum content for the  
 18 semester course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection and teacher  
 19 training to ensure that the intent and provisions of this subsection are carried  
 20 out. The curriculum content established shall include a review of the  
 21 contributions made by Americans of all races.

22           ...."

23           **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-218.85(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to

24 read:

25           "(3a) A charter school that includes grades nine through 12 shall administer a  
 26 civics test that is identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used  
 27 by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. A passing grade  
 28 on that test or a test administered pursuant to G.S. 115C-81(g)(4a) shall be  
 29 required in order to graduate from the school. In order to obtain a passing  
 30 grade on the test, a student must correctly answer at least sixty percent  
 31 (60%) of the questions. A student who does not obtain a passing score on the  
 32 test may retake the test until the student obtains a passing score. Exceptions  
 33 to this testing requirement shall be permitted to accommodate a student's  
 34 individualized education program. If a student passes the test, the charter  
 35 school shall document on the student's transcript that the student has passed  
 36 a test that is identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by  
 37 the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services as required by this  
 38 subsection."

39           **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with  
 40 students entering the ninth grade in the 2017-2018 school year.