

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017**

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SENATE BILL 586

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

Sponsors: Senators Ballard, Tillman, Brock (Primary Sponsors); Alexander, Krawiec, and Sanderson.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 5, 2017

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

"(g) Civic Literacy. –

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

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

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

...

(4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level curriculum-based tests for the course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection developed and administered statewide ~~beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year~~ include questions related to the philosophical foundations of our form of government and the principles underlying the



1 Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its
2 amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

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

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

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

26 read:

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

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