

Legislative Analysis



HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS TEST LIKE NATURALIZATION TEST

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4136 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Peter J. Lucido
Committee: Education
Complete to 12-1-15

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4136 would amend the Revised School Code to require that the high school civics test be substantially similar to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. A more detailed description of the bill follows.

Now under the law, all Michigan high schools require a one-semester civics course offered during five periods each week. The course includes instruction about the form and functions of our federal, state, and local governments, and it stresses the rights and responsibilities of citizens. A high school diploma is not issued to a student who has not successfully completed this course. [The course requirement is not, however, a graduation requirement for a high school student who enlists or has been inducted into military service.] House Bill 4136 would retain all of these provisions.

In addition, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the bill would prohibit a student from being awarded credit for successfully completing the civics course described above, unless the student earned a passing score on a test that consisted solely of questions that were identical to some or all of the questions on the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

When a student passed the civic test, school officials would be required to record that information on the student's school transcript.

Under the bill, a high school governing board could determine how to administer the test, and also the particular civics questions to include from the naturalization test.

A student who did not earn a passing score could retake the test until successful. As used in the bill, a "passing score" means correctly answering at least 60 percent of the questions included on the test.

MCL 380.1166

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

To review the kinds of questions that constitute the civics portion of the oral naturalization test administered by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration, located within the Department of Homeland Security, visit the following website:

<http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/see-all-section-items-title/Civics%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20for%20the%20Naturalization%20Test/55254?destination=node/41140>

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no impact for the Department of Education (MDE), but it would have an indeterminate impact on local school districts. The test would increase administrative costs in creating the test, administering the test, and creating a new notation on transcripts for passing the test.

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