

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-SECOND SESSION**

S.F. No. 996

(SENATE AUTHORS: NEWMAN)

DATE
02/15/2021

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Introduction and first reading
Referred to Education Finance and Policy

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; modifying civics and social studies graduation requirements;
1.3 amending Minnesota Statutes 2020, sections 120B.02, subdivision 3; 120B.024,
1.4 subdivision 1.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 120B.02, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

1.7 Subd. 3. **Required Knowledge and understanding of civics.** (a) For purposes of this
1.8 subdivision, "civics test questions" means 50 of the 100 questions that, as of January 1,
1.9 2015, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services officers use to select the questions
1.10 they pose to applicants for naturalization so the applicants can demonstrate their knowledge
1.11 and understanding of the fundamentals of United States history and government, as required
1.12 by United States Code, title 8, section 1423. The Learning Law and Democracy Foundation,
1.13 in consultation with Minnesota civics teachers, must select by July 1 each year 50 of the
1.14 100 questions under this paragraph to serve as the state's civics test questions for the
1.15 proximate school year and immediately transmit the 50 selected civics test questions to the
1.16 department and to the Legislative Coordinating Commission, which must post the 50
1.17 questions it receives on the Minnesota's Legacy website by August 1 of that year.

1.18 (b) A student enrolled in a public school ~~must~~ is encouraged to correctly answer at least
1.19 30 of the 50 civics test questions. A school or district may record on a student's transcript
1.20 that the student answered at least 30 of 50 civics test questions correctly. A school or district
1.21 may exempt a student with disabilities from this requirement if the student's individualized
1.22 education program team determines the requirement is inappropriate and establishes an

2.1 alternative requirement. A school or district may administer the civics test questions in a
2.2 language other than English to students who qualify for English learner services.

2.3 (c) Schools and districts may administer civics test questions as part of the social studies
2.4 curriculum. A district must not prevent a student from graduating or deny a student a high
2.5 school diploma for failing to correctly answer at least 30 of 50 civics test questions.

2.6 (d) The commissioner and public schools and school districts must not charge students
2.7 any fees related to this subdivision.

2.8 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2021.

2.9 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 120B.024, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

2.10 Subdivision 1. **Graduation requirements.** (a) Students ~~beginning 9th grade in the~~
2.11 ~~2011-2012 school year and later~~ must successfully complete the following high school level
2.12 credits for graduation:

2.13 (1) four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in
2.14 English language arts;

2.15 (2) three credits of mathematics, including an algebra II credit or its equivalent, sufficient
2.16 to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics;

2.17 (3) an algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade
2.18 standards in mathematics;

2.19 (4) three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of chemistry
2.20 or physics, and one elective credit of science. The combination of credits under this clause
2.21 must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics
2.22 and (ii) all other academic standards in science;

2.23 (5) three and one-half credits of social studies, including credit for a course in government
2.24 and citizenship in either 11th or 12th grade for students beginning 9th grade in the 2021-2022
2.25 school year and later or an advanced placement, international baccalaureate, or other rigorous
2.26 course on government and citizenship under section 120B.021, subdivision 1a, and a
2.27 combination of other credits encompassing at least United States history, geography,
2.28 government and citizenship, world history, and either economics or personal finance
2.29 sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in social studies;

2.30 (6) one credit of the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the state or local academic standards
2.31 in the arts; and

2.32 (7) a minimum of seven elective credits.

3.1 (b) A school district is encouraged to offer a course for credit in government and
3.2 citizenship to 11th or 12th grade students who begin 9th grade in the 2020-2021 school year
3.3 and later, that satisfies the government and citizenship requirement in paragraph (a), clause
3.4 (5). A school district must offer the course starting in the 2021-2022 school year.

3.5 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2021.