

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 271

98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR SILVEY.

Read 1st time January 20, 2015, and ordered printed.

ADRIANE D. CROUSE, Secretary.

1549S.011

AN ACT

To repeal section 170.011, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections relating to civics education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 170.011, RSMo, is repealed and two new sections
2 enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 170.011 and 170.345, to read as
3 follows:

170.011. 1. Regular courses of instruction in the Constitution of the
2 United States and of the state of Missouri and in American history and
3 institutions shall be given in all public and private schools in the state of
4 Missouri, except privately operated trade schools, and shall begin not later than
5 the seventh grade and continue in high school to an extent determined by the
6 state commissioner of education, and shall continue in college and university
7 courses to an extent determined by the state commissioner of higher education. In
8 the 1990-91 school year and each year thereafter, local school districts
9 maintaining high schools shall comply with the provisions of this section by
10 offering in grade nine, ten, eleven, or twelve a course of instruction in the
11 institutions, branches and functions of the government of the state of Missouri,
12 including local governments, and of the government of the United States, and in
13 the electoral process. A local school district maintaining such a high school shall
14 require that prior to the completion of the twelfth grade each pupil who receives
15 a high school diploma or certificate of graduation on or after January 1, 1994,
16 shall satisfactorily complete such a course of study. Such course shall be of at
17 least one semester in length and may be two semesters in length. The
18 department of elementary and secondary education may provide assistance in

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

19 developing such a course if the district requests assistance. A school district may
20 elect to waive the requirements of this subsection for any student who transfers
21 from outside the state to a Missouri high school if the student can furnish
22 documentation deemed acceptable by the school district of the student's successful
23 completion in any year from the ninth through the twelfth grade of a course of
24 instruction in the institutions, branches, and functions of state government,
25 including local governments, and of the government of the United States, and in
26 the electoral process.

27 2. American history courses at the elementary and secondary levels shall
28 include in their proper time-line sequence specific referrals to the details and
29 events of the racial equality movement that have caused major changes in United
30 States and Missouri laws and attitudes.

31 3. [No pupil shall receive a certificate of graduation from any public or
32 private school other than private trade schools unless he has satisfactorily passed
33 an examination on the provisions and principles of the Constitution of the United
34 States and of the state of Missouri, and in American history and American
35 institutions. A school district may elect to waive the requirements of this
36 subsection for any student who transfers from outside the state to a Missouri
37 high school if the student can furnish documentation deemed acceptable by the
38 school district of the student's successful completion in any year from the ninth
39 through the twelfth grade of a course of instruction in the institutions, branches,
40 and functions of state government, including local governments, and of the
41 government of the United States, and in the electoral process.] A student of a
42 college or university, who, after having completed a course of instruction
43 prescribed in this section and successfully passed an examination on the United
44 States Constitution, and in American history and American institutions required
45 hereby, transfers to another college or university, is not required to complete
46 another such course or pass another such examination as a condition precedent
47 to his graduation from the college or university.

48 4. In the 1990-91 school year and each year thereafter, each school district
49 maintaining a high school may annually nominate to the state board of education
50 a student who has demonstrated knowledge of the principles of government and
51 citizenship through academic achievement, participation in extracurricular
52 activities, and service to the community. Annually, the state board of education
53 shall select fifteen students from those nominated by the local school districts and
54 shall recognize and award them for their academic achievement, participation and

55 service.

56 5. The provisions of this section shall not apply to students from foreign
57 countries who are enrolled in public or private high schools in Missouri, if such
58 students are foreign exchange students sponsored by a national organization
59 recognized by the department of elementary and secondary education.

**170.345. 1. This section shall be known as the "Missouri Civics
2 Education Initiative".**

3 **2. Beginning January 1, 2016, every high school student
4 attending any public, charter, or private school except private trade
5 schools or a student seeking to complete a high school equivalency
6 certificate shall, as a condition of high school graduation or its
7 equivalent, take and receive a passing grade on a basic civics test
8 similar to the civics portion of the United States Naturalization test,
9 produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
10 (USCIS).**

11 **3. The test required under subsection 2 of this section shall use
12 the same one hundred questions used by the USCIS that are
13 administered to applicants for United States citizenship. In order to
14 receive a passing score on the test, the student shall answer at least
15 sixty of the one hundred questions correctly.**

16 **4. Any student may take the test as many times as necessary for
17 passage but shall receive a passing score prior to receiving a high
18 school diploma, a certificate of high school graduation, or a high school
19 equivalency certificate.**

20 **5. Every public, charter, or private school except private trade
21 schools, and the department of elementary and secondary education
22 shall certify that a student has taken and received a passing grade on
23 the test.**

24 **6. Each school district shall adopt a policy to permit the waiver
25 of the requirements of this section for any student with a disability if
26 recommended by the student's IEP committee. For purposes of this
27 subsection, "IEP" shall mean individualized education program.**

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