

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1720 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY R. MACKENZIE, ECKER, HANBIDGE, HEFFLEY, JAMES,
KAUFFMAN, M. MACKENZIE, MENTZER, PICKETT, SCHMITT AND STAATS,
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in high schools, further providing
6 for assessment of civic knowledge.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Section 1605.1(a), (b)(2) and (4) and (c) of the
10 act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public
11 School Code of 1949, are amended to read:

12 Section 1605.1. Assessment of Civic Knowledge.--(a)
13 Beginning with the [2020-2021] 2023-2024 school year, each
14 school entity:

15 (1) Shall administer at least once to students during grades
16 seven through twelve [a locally developed assessment of United
17 States history, government and civics that includes the nature,
18 purpose, principles and structure of United States
19 constitutional democracy, the principles, operations and

1 documents of United States government and the rights and
2 responsibilities of citizenship. Each school entity shall
3 determine the form of the assessment and the manner in which the
4 assessment shall be administered and may administer the
5 assessment at the conclusion of the course of study required
6 under section 1605(a) or at the conclusion of another related
7 course or instructional unit. A school entity may use] the
8 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test [to
9 satisfy the requirements of this paragraph]. A student must
10 receive a score of at least sixty percent (60%) as a condition
11 of high school graduation. A student may take the United States
12 Citizenship and Immigration Services Test as many times as
13 necessary to achieve a score of at least sixty percent (60%).

14 (2) Shall issue a certificate of recognition, developed by
15 the department, to students who achieve a perfect score on the
16 [assessment administered] United States Citizenship and
17 Immigration Services Test under paragraph (1).

18 (b) The department shall:

19 * * *

20 (2) Conduct an electronic survey of each school entity at
21 the conclusion of the [2020-2021] 2023-2024 school year and at
22 the conclusion of every second school year thereafter requesting
23 information concerning compliance with the requirements of this
24 section. Each school entity shall respond to the survey no later
25 than November 30 following the school year for which the survey
26 is conducted. The survey shall only request the following
27 information for the immediately preceding school year:

28 [(i) The type of the assessment administered as required
29 under subsection (a) (1).]

30 (ii) The total number of students who took the [assessment]

1 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test.

2 (iii) The total number of students who attained a passing
3 grade on the [assessment] United States Citizenship and
4 Immigration Services Test.

5 (iv) The grade level or levels in which the [assessment]
6 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test was
7 administered.

8 (v) The course or courses in which the [assessment] United
9 States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test was
10 administered.

11 * * *

12 (4) Develop a certificate of recognition for a student who
13 achieves a perfect score on the [assessment] United States
14 Citizenship and Immigration Services Test under subsection (a)
15 (1) and make the certificate available on the department's
16 publicly accessible Internet website for use by a school entity.

17 (c) A student with an individualized education program shall
18 not be required to take the [assessment] United States
19 Citizenship and Immigration Services Test administered under
20 subsection (a)(1) if the provisions of the student's
21 individualized education program indicate otherwise.

22 * * *

23 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.