

2015 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 283 (Substitute of Senate Bill No. 34 by Senator Cortez)

BY SENATOR CORTEZ

CURRICULA. Provides relative to the content of certain Civics courses. (gov sig)

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:274.1(D), relative to required courses of study; to provide relative to the course content and curriculum for certain Civics and civics-related courses; to provide relative to a survey of student knowledge of the history, principles, and form of the United States government; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:274.1(D) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§274.1. Civics and Free Enterprise; required; exceptions

* * *

D.(1) The legislature, in recognition of the national Civics Education Initiative's efforts to ensure that every citizen can, at a minimum, demonstrate the same knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of the United States government required of naturalized citizens, hereby provides for the Louisiana Civics Education Initiative.

(2)(a) Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year:

(i) The curriculum for Civics, and courses permitted to substitute for Civics, shall contain a unit of study that includes civics-related subject matter

1 knowledge naturalized citizens are required to demonstrate.

2 (ii) As a means to inform civics-related curricula and instruction, every
3 student enrolled in Civics, or a course permitted to substitute for Civics, shall
4 be administered a test based upon the civics portion of the naturalization test
5 used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to survey their
6 knowledge of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of the United
7 States government.

8 (b) The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
9 promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this
10 Subsection.

11 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
12 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
13 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
14 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
15 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

DIGEST

SB 283 Engrossed

2015 Regular Session

Cortez

Present law, as a prerequisite to high school graduation, requires students to complete two semesters of instruction in Civics, including a section on Free Enterprise, equal to one unit of credit.

Present law provides that for students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2014, Government, AP US Government and Politics: Comparative, or AP US Government and Politics: United States may be substituted for Civics and shall satisfy the Civics and Free Enterprise instruction required by present law.

Proposed law retains present law and additionally provides for the Louisiana Civics Education Initiative as follows:

- (1) Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year:
 - (a) The curriculum for Civics, and courses permitted to substitute for Civics, must contain a unit of study that includes civics-related subject matter knowledge naturalized citizens are required to demonstrate.
 - (b) As a means to inform civics-related curricula and instruction, every student enrolled in Civics, or a course permitted to substitute for Civics, shall be administered a test based upon the civics portion of the naturalization test

used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to survey their knowledge of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of the United States government.

- (2) Requires the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of proposed law.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:274.1(D))