

HOUSE BILL 26-018

By Senator(s) Robertson, Kent
also Representative(s) Gonzales, Hurst, Jenkins

AN ACT**CONCERNING THE STUDY OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION AS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION.**

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of San Andreas:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This bill shall be known and cited as the “San Andreas Civics Education Act.”

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION.

(a) The General Assembly finds and declares that:

- (I) A well-informed citizenry is essential to the effective functioning of a constitutional system of government;
- (II) Students should graduate from public schools with a working understanding of the structure, powers, and limitations of state government;
- (III) The Constitution of the State of San Andreas establishes unique mechanisms of direct democracy, including initiative, referendum, recall, and citizen veto, which require informed public participation;
- (IV) Civic education strengthens democratic participation, public accountability, and respect for constitutional institutions;
- (V) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that all students receive instruction regarding the San Andreas Constitution and the operation of state government prior to graduation.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “Department” means the Department of Education.
- (b) “Public school” means any public secondary school serving grades nine through twelve within the state.
- (c) “Civics instruction” means coursework or instructional units addressing government structure, constitutional principles, and civic participation.
- (d) “State constitution instruction” means coursework or instructional units specifically addressing the history, structure, interpretation, and civic application of the Constitution of the State of San Andreas.

SECTION 4. REQUIRED INSTRUCTION.

- (a) Beginning with the 2026–2027 academic year, each public high school shall provide instruction on the Constitution of the State of San Andreas.
- (b) School districts may satisfy this requirement by:
- (I) Offering a standalone course on state government or constitutional civics; or
 - (II) Incorporating required content into an existing civics, government, or social studies course.
- (c) Completion of instruction required under this section shall be a condition for graduation for students entering ninth grade during or after the 2026–2027 academic year.
- (d) School districts shall ensure that the instruction required under this section is provided prior to a student’s completion of the twelfth grade.
- (e) Students transferring into a public high school within the state during their junior or senior year may satisfy the graduation requirement established under this section through completion of an abbreviated instructional unit approved by the school district.
- (f) As part of the civics instruction required under this Act, school districts shall provide students with at least one experiential civic learning opportunity, which may include:
- (I) A field trip to the State Capitol of San Andreas;
 - (II) Attendance at a meeting of a local governing body, including a city council, county commission, or school board; or
 - (III) Participation in a simulated legislative or civic proceeding approved by the school district.
- (g) As part of the civics instruction required under this section, each student shall complete a civic engagement project prior to graduation demonstrating practical understanding of state or local government processes. Such projects may include, but are not limited to:
- (I) Communicating with an elected official or public agency regarding a public policy issue;
 - (II) Attending or observing a meeting of a governmental body, including the General Assembly, a city council, county commission, or school board;
 - (III) Analyzing or presenting a report on a legislative bill, ballot measure, or court decision affecting the State of San Andreas; or
 - (IV) Participating in a simulated legislative, judicial, or public policy exercise approved by the school district.
- (h) As a condition of graduation, each student shall demonstrate proficiency in basic civic knowledge relating to the Constitution of the State of San Andreas and the structure of state government. The Department of Education shall develop a civics proficiency assessment or approved equivalent standard to measure student understanding of the topics required under this Act.
- (i) A student who does not initially demonstrate proficiency under subsection (h) of this section shall be provided additional instructional opportunities and may retake the civics proficiency assessment prior to graduation.

SECTION 5. REQUIRED SUBJECT MATTER.

Instruction required under this Act shall include, at minimum:

- (a) The structure and powers of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the State of San Andreas;

- (b) The role and responsibilities of state constitutional officers;
- (c) The legislative process within the General Assembly;
- (d) Direct democracy mechanisms established by the state constitution, including:
 - (I) Initiative;
 - (II) Referendum;
 - (III) Recall; and
 - (IV) Citizen veto;
- (e) The rights and responsibilities of citizens under the state constitution; and
- (f) The relationship between state and federal government authority.
- (g) Instruction required under this section shall also include discussion of the amendment process for the Constitution of the State of San Andreas and the role of voters in ratifying constitutional amendments.
- (h) Instruction shall include examples of historical constitutional amendments, landmark state court decisions interpreting the state constitution, and the development of state institutions.
- (i) Instruction required under this Act may include experiential learning opportunities such as mock legislative sessions, simulated elections, or student participation in civic engagement activities related to state government.
- (j) Instruction required under this Act shall include study of the Bill of Rights contained in Article II of the Constitution of the State of San Andreas, including the civil liberties and protections guaranteed to residents and the relationship between those protections and corresponding provisions of the United States Constitution.
- (k) Instruction regarding the Bill of Rights contained in Article II of the Constitution of the State of San Andreas shall include discussion of the rights of due process, free expression, privacy, equal protection, and other civil liberties recognized under state constitutional law.
- (l) Instruction required under this Act shall include education regarding voter participation in the State of San Andreas, including the process for voter registration, eligibility requirements for voting, and the role of elections in representative government.
- (m) Public high schools may provide eligible students with information regarding voter registration opportunities and participation in elections, including voluntary voter registration programs for students who will be eighteen years of age on or before the next general election.

SECTION 6. CURRICULUM FLEXIBILITY.

- (a) The Department of Education shall develop model instructional standards and resources to assist school districts.
- (b) School districts may adopt the model curriculum or develop equivalent instructional materials that meet or exceed state standards.
- (c) Nothing in this Act shall require the hiring of additional instructional staff if existing teachers are qualified to provide instruction.
- (d) The Department of Education shall make available publicly accessible instructional resources, including digital materials, primary source documents, and sample lesson plans relating to the Constitution of the State of San Andreas.

(e) Nothing in this Act shall prohibit school districts from expanding instruction regarding state government, civic participation, or constitutional law beyond the minimum standards established herein.

(f) The Department of Education shall provide guidance to school districts regarding implementation of experiential civic learning opportunities required under Section 4(f), including strategies for schools located in rural areas or communities with limited access to governmental institutions.

(g) The Department of Education shall develop guidance and example project frameworks to assist school districts in implementing the civic engagement project requirement established in Section 4(g), while preserving local flexibility in how such projects are administered.

(h) The Department of Education shall provide model civics assessment materials and guidance to assist school districts in implementing the proficiency requirement established under Section 4(h). School districts may administer the state-developed assessment or adopt an equivalent locally developed assessment that meets or exceeds the state standard.

(i) The Department of Education may coordinate with the Secretary of State to develop educational materials and resources relating to voter registration and civic participation for use in the instruction required under this Act.

SECTION 7. IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING.

(a) The Department shall provide implementation guidance to school districts prior to the start of the 2026–2027 academic year.

(b) Beginning January 1, 2028, the Department shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding implementation status and recommendations for improvement.

(c) The report required under subsection (b) of this section shall include recommendations for improving civic literacy among students and evaluating the effectiveness of the instruction required under this Act.

(d) The Department may consult with educators, historians, civic organizations, and institutions of higher education when preparing the report required under this section.

SECTION 8. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

The Department of Education may promulgate rules necessary to implement this Act.

SECTION 10. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.

(a) The General Assembly recognizes Article IX, Section 4 of the Constitution of the State of San Andreas, which provides that the State shall not compel any school district to adopt specific textbooks, reading materials, or curricula, and that the selection of instructional materials remains vested in local school boards.

(b) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to require any school district to adopt a particular textbook, instructional material, or prescribed curriculum.

(c) This Act establishes only minimum instructional standards concerning subject matter required for a thorough and efficient education, consistent with the authority expressly reserved to the Legislature under Article IX, Section 4 of the state constitution.

(d) School districts retain sole authority to determine the instructional methods, materials, and specific curricular content used to satisfy the requirements of this Act, provided that students receive instruction covering the minimum subject areas identified herein.

(e) The purpose of this section is to clarify that the Act establishes statewide educational standards while preserving local control over curriculum implementation and instructional materials.