

STATE OF KANSAS

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TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

BRAD STARNES  
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Proponent testimony on Senate Bill 381 Oral Testimony

Requiring instruction to provide students with an understanding of communist and socialist regimes and ideologies and that students pass an American civics examination in order to graduate with a high school diploma

Senate Education Committee

February 11, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit oral testimony in support of SB381. This bill establishes new educational requirements related to social studies curriculum in Kansas schools, focusing on instruction about communist and socialist regimes and ideologies as well as American civics. The state board of education is directed to develop age and developmentally appropriate curriculum, materials, and guidelines to provide students in grades kindergarten through 12 with an understanding of communist and socialist regimes and ideologies. Each school district must provide this instruction to all students in grades K-12 and may utilize the curriculum materials developed by the state board.

The act amends existing law regarding civics education requirements for high school graduation. All accredited schools must provide instruction in civil government, United States history, patriotism, and the duties of citizenship suitable for elementary grades. All accredited high schools must provide instruction on the government and institutions of the United States, particularly the U.S. Constitution, and no student may be certified as having completed graduation requirements without satisfactorily passing such a course. This requirement applies to all public, private, and parochial schools.

The most significant new requirement establishes that all students who enroll in grade nine on or after July 1, 2026, must pass an examination on the principles of American civics in order to graduate from high school. Students may request to take this examination at any time after enrolling in grade seven and may retake it as often as necessary to achieve a passing score. School boards may administer the examination as part of the required curriculum at their discretion. The examination must consist of 100 questions substantially similar to those administered by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to

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naturalization applicants. Accommodations for students with individualized education programs (IEPs) are governed by their individual plans. The state board of education is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to implement these provisions, including providing a model examination and establishing the passing score. The act takes effect upon publication in the statute book.

Thanks for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Starnes".

Senator Brad Starnes