

SESSION OF 2021

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2039**

As Passed Without Recommendation By House  
Committee on Education

**Brief\***

HB 2039 would amend law related to civics education. The bill would require students enrolled in grade 9 in an accredited public, private, or parochial high school beginning July 1, 2021, to pass an American civics exam with 100 questions substantially similar to those of the naturalization test administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The bill would require such students, upon request, to be administered the exam beginning in grade 7 and as many times as necessary for such students to obtain a passing score. A passing score for such civics exam would be required as a course requirement necessary for graduation from high school.

The bill would also require accommodations for or possible exemptions to the civics exam requirement for students with an individualized education program.

The bill would allow the State Board of Education to adopt rules and regulations related to such civics exam.

**Background**

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Education at the request of Representative Huebert.

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

[*Note:* HB 2039 contains provisions similar to those of 2020 HB 2573.]

### ***House Committee on Education***

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Representative Huebert, the Attorney General, and private citizens, stating the bill would enhance civics education in Kansas.

**Opponent** testimony was offered by representatives of the Kansas Association of School Boards and the Kansas National Education Association, stating the bill would not improve civics education and would unnecessarily impede on the authority of local school boards. Written-only **opponent** testimony was provided by representatives of the State Board of Education, Olathe Public Schools USD 233, and a private citizen.

### **Fiscal Information**

According to the fiscal note provided by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, the Kansas State Department of Education estimates additional expenditures of \$400,000 from the State General Fund would be required to administer exams required by the bill (\$10 per exam X 40,000 exams). Any fiscal effect associated with the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2022 Governor's Budget Report*.

Education; American civics examination; graduation requirements