

State of South Dakota

NINETIETH SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2015

893W0471

SENATE BILL NO. 164

Introduced by: Senators Jensen (Phil), Greenfield (Brock), Haggar (Jenna), Holien, Lederman, Monroe, Olson, and Rampelberg and Representatives Haggar (Don), Anderson, Brunner, Campbell, Craig, DiSanto, Feickert, Greenfield (Lana), Haugaard, Hawley, Hickey, Kaiser, Klumb, Langer, Latterell, Marty, May, McCleerey, Partridge, Qualm, Rasmussen, Rounds, Russell, Schoenfish, Soli, Stalzer, Tulson, Verchio, Werner, Wiik, and Zikmund

1 FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, An Act to require students to take a civics test to demonstrate
2 knowledge of United States history and government.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

4 Section 1. That chapter 13-33 be amended by adding thereto a NEW SECTION to read as
5 follows:

6 Each student, before the completion of twelfth grade, shall demonstrate knowledge and
7 understanding of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of the United States
8 government. The students, as a condition to receive a high school diploma, or a diploma's
9 equivalent, must take a civics test about history and government. The test consists of one
10 hundred questions used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to test an
11 applicant to be a naturalized citizen of the United States. The student must correctly answer at
12 least seventy percent of the questions on the civics test. A student may take the test at any time
13 after enrolling in the seventh grade and may repeat the test as often as necessary to pass it. The



1 requirement to pass this civics test applies to each student who is enrolled in a public school,
2 enrolled in a nonpublic school, receiving alternative instruction pursuant to § 13-27-3, or
3 pursuing a general educational development (GED) certificate.

4 Section 2. That chapter 13-33 be amended by adding thereto a NEW SECTION to read as
5 follows:

6 The secretary of education, a school district, or any person may not charge any fee in
7 connection with this test. The secretary of education shall, upon request, provide any person
8 administering the civics test with the correct answer or acceptable answers to each question. A
9 student may be exempted from the requirement to take this test if it is consistent with the
10 student's individualized education program plan.

11 Section 3. That chapter 13-33 be amended by adding thereto a NEW SECTION to read as
12 follows:

13 The provisions of this Act apply to any student who receives a high school diploma, or the
14 diploma's equivalent, during or after the 2016-17 school year.