SESSION OF 2026

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT BRIEF
HOUSE BILL NO. 2412

As Agreed to March 27, 2026

Brief*

HB 2412 would require the State Board of Education (State Board) to develop curriculum, and school districts to provide instruction, on the negative impacts of communist, fascist, and socialist regimes and ideologies for students in non-elementary grades. The bill also would require students entering grade nine at an accredited public, private, or parochial high school to pass an American civics examination (exam) as a condition for graduation.

Curriculum

To provide students with essential knowledge and skills for social studies curriculum, the bill would require the State Board to develop age- and developmentally-appropriate curriculum, materials, and guidelines to provide students in non-elementary grades, as designated by each school district, with an understanding of the negative impacts of communist, fascist, and socialist regimes and ideologies.

The bill would require each school district to provide instruction to students in non-elementary grades, as designated by such school district, on understanding the negative impacts of communist, fascist, and socialist regimes and ideologies. The bill would also permit each school district to use of the curriculum, materials, and guidelines developed by the State Board.

Civics Exam

The bill would require all students who enroll in grade nine in any accredited public, private, or parochial high school on or after July 1, 2026, to pass an exam on the principles of American civics as a condition for high school graduation.

The bill would require the exam to consist of 20 randomly selected questions from a pool of questions substantially similar to those administered to applicants seeking naturalized U.S. Citizenship and would permit the exam to be administered as part of the curriculum for the required course in the government and institutions of the United States. If a student retakes the exam, no more than 25 percent of the questions may repeat from the prior exam. The bill would

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require each student to correctly answer at least 70 percent of the questions on the exam to satisfactorily pass. The exam would only be offered in the English language.

Exam Allowances

The bill would also establish allowances for students, including:

- Students could begin taking the exam starting in grade seven, upon request of the student;
- The exam could be taken as often as necessary to obtain a passing score;
- The exam could be administered as part of the government curriculum required under continuing law; and
- Administration of the exam and the provision of any accommodations for a student with an individualized education plan (IEP) would be governed by the student's IEP.

The bill would authorize the State Board to adopt rules and regulations to implement the bill. The rules and regulations could include, but would not be limited to, providing a model exam for use by any school district or by the governing body of any accredited private or parochial high school.

Definitions

For purposes of the bill, the term "accredited" would mean accredited by the State Board and would include dual accreditation by both the State Board and an accrediting entity other than the State Board.

Conference Committee Action

The Conference Committee agreed to remove the contents of HB 2412, as passed by the Senate, and insert the contents of SB 381, as amended by the House Committee on Education, with the following amendments:

- Specify that the 20 questions on the exam be randomly selected from a pool of questions that are substantially similar to the questions administered to applicants seeking naturalized U.S. Citizenship;
- If the student is retaking the exam, no more than 25 percent of the questions could repeat from the prior exam;
- Lower the percentage of correct answers needed in order to satisfactorily pass the exam from 80 percent to 70 percent;
- Require the exam to only be offered in the English language; and
- Make the bill effective upon publication in the statute book.

[*Note*: The provisions of HB 2412, which would increase the criminal penalties for endangering a child if the child is less than six years of age, were added to the Conference Committee Report on HB 2479.]

Background

SB 381

SB 381 was introduced by the Senate Committee on Education at the request of Senator Starnes.

Senate Committee on Education

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Senator Starnes, representatives of Cicero Action and Moms for Liberty Johnson County KS Chapter, and a private citizen. The proponents generally stated the bill is intended to address concerns about civic literacy and knowledge of U.S. history, including understanding of communism and socialism.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by three private citizens.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), Kansas National Education Association (KNEA), and Kansas Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The opponents generally stated the bill conflicts with local control and the authority of both the State Board and local school boards to establish graduation requirements and determine curriculum.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the State Board and USD 259 (Wichita Public Schools), and a private citizen.

No other testimony was provided.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The Senate Committee of the Whole amended the bill to:

- Define the term “accredited” as used in the bill [*Note*: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.]; and
- Clarify that the instruction provided on communist and socialist ideologies and regimes be on the negative impacts of such ideologies and regimes. [*Note*: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.]

House Committee on Education

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Senator Starnes, a representative of Cicero Action, and a private citizen. The proponents discussed the importance of civics education and stated the bill would promote civic literacy in Kansas.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by four private citizens.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives of KASB, Kansas PTA, United School Administrators, and USD 259 (Wichita Public Schools) and one private citizen. The opponents generally stated the bill would undermine the authority of the State Board and local school boards and discussed challenges related to high-stakes testing requirements.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the State Board and KNEA and two private citizens.

No other testimony was provided.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Add the negative impacts of fascist regimes and ideologies to the required curriculum and instruction [*Note*: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.];
- Specify that the curriculum and instruction on the negative impacts of communist, fascist, and socialist regimes and ideologies would be provided to students in non-elementary grades as designated by each school district [*Note*: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.];
- Change the number of questions on the exam from 100 to 20 [*Note*: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.];
- Specify that the exam would consist of multiple choice questions [*Note*: The Conference Committee did not retain this amendment.];
- Require each student to correctly answer at least 80 percent of the questions on the exam to satisfactorily pass [*Note*: The Conference Committee modified this amendment.]; and
- Make the bill effective upon publication in the *Kansas Register*. [*Note*: The Conference Committee did not retain this amendment.]

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on SB 381, as introduced, the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) indicates enactment of the bill would require the agency to review the history and government curriculum standards for students in grades K-12, with guidelines developed by the State Board. The State Board would also need to review the curriculum recommendations and develop the required test. In addition, the test would have to be converted to accessible formats, including Braille.

KSDE states it would need one-time expenditures of $30,200 State General Fund in FY 2027 to implement provisions of the bill. This estimate includes $7,200 for 144 hours of facilitation time ($50 per hour), including virtual and in-person meetings, as well as follow-up meetings; $7,000 for travel and stipend costs, including subsistence expenditures, for 20 attendees; guidance, printing, and training costs of $6,000; and accessible test conversion costs of $10,000.

KASB indicates enactment of the bill would require school districts to either purchase curriculum or spend staff time to develop curriculum for the bill's requirements. Administration of the new exam would also increase administrative expenditures. Because the bill would allow students to take the exam as many times until a passing grade can be achieved, the number of tests that would be administered is not known; as a result, a fiscal effect cannot be estimated.

Any fiscal effect associated with the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2027 Governor's Budget Report*.

Education; curriculum; communist; fascist; socialist; civics; graduation; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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