



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Fiscal Note

Drafting Number:	LLS 21-0392	Date:	February 22, 2021
Prime Sponsors:	Sen. Coram; Hansen	Bill Status:	Senate Education
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Bill Topic: **STRENGTHENING CIVICS EDUCATION**

Summary of Fiscal Impact:	<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School District
	<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

This bill modifies what must be included in civic standards, creates a seal of excellence for civics education, and allows schools to award a diploma endorsement in civics. Starting in FY 2021-22, the bill will increase state and local workload on an ongoing basis.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status: This fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary of Legislation

This bill requires that public school courses that teach civil government include instruction on specified topics in civics education. The State Board of Education must update the academic content standards for civics to comply with these requirements during the next standards review cycle.

Seal of civics excellence. The bill creates the Colorado Seal of Civics Excellence to recognize public schools and districts with provide high quality civic education programs. Criteria for achieving a seal must be determined by the Commissioner of Education and the History, Culture, Social Contributions, and Civil Government in Education Commission, but at a minimum, a school must attain six of the following criteria:

- incorporate civic learning across a broad range of grades and subjects;
- provide instruction on democratic principles and practices, the creation of foundational documents using federal and state founding documents;
- provide instruction in media literacy;
- implement a project-based assessment in civics at least twice in grades four through eight and once in grades nine through twelve;
- provide opportunities for students to engage in real world learning activities related to government and civics;

- require students to engage in service learning opportunities;
- provide opportunities for students to participate in civic engagement opportunities;
- engage in service learning opportunities with History Colorado or its affiliated organizations; and
- provide evidence of student learning and achievement in civics

A school district may receive a seal if 90 percent of its schools receive a seal from the state. Once a seal is awarded, it must be included in CDE's school performance report. In addition, the General Assembly must give tribute districts receiving a seal.

Diploma endorsement. The bill allows local education providers (LEPs) to grant a diploma endorsement in civic literacy if a student:

- completes all social studies course requirements with at least a 3.5 GPA;
- passes the AP test in US government and politics with a score of at least a 4, if offered;
- completes a service learning project;
- participates in a government simulation outside the classroom, serves one term on the Youth Advisory Council, or participates for one year in the Colorado Student Leaders Institute; and
- completes a capstone project in civics.

State Expenditures

Starting in FY 2021-22, workload in the CDE will increase to develop and implement the seal of excellence, including developing rules, criteria, and applications, disseminating and reviewing program applications, adding seals to the performance report, and reporting what schools received the seal to the legislature. The fiscal note assumes that 30 schools will apply in the first year of the program, requiring less than 100 hours of work per year. This workload can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

School District

LEPs that choose to offer a diploma endorsement will have increased workload to implement the program and verify that a student has achieved all the requirements. LEPs will also incur additional workload to pursue a seal of excellence.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State and Local Government Contacts

Education	Higher Education	Information Technology
History Colorado	Legislature	School Districts