

Civics Test Questions in Minnesota

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the “civics test questions”?

Per 2016 legislation, “civics test questions” are 50 of the 100 questions from the United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) civics test. The Learning Law and Democracy Foundation works with civics teachers to select the 50 questions. (Minn. Stat. § 120B.02, Subd. 3)

2. When does this legislation go into effect?

The legislation is effective for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the 2017-2018 school year or later.

3. Who does this legislation apply to?

All students enrolled in public schools must be given the civics test questions.

4. What is the passing score?

A student must correctly answer at least 30 of the 50 civics test questions.

5. Are schools and districts responsible for recording results on student transcripts?

A school or district may, but is not required to, record on a student’s transcript that the student answered at least 30 of the 50 civics test questions correctly.

6. May students be exempted from this requirement?

A school or district may exempt a student with disabilities from this requirement as determined by the student’s individualized education program team; this team establishes an alternative requirement.

7. May the civics test questions be given in another language?

A school or district may administer the civics test questions in a language other than English to students who qualify for English learner services.

8. How may the civics test questions be administered?

A school or district determines how to administer the civics test questions. The following are examples of some, but not all, considerations for test administration. The civics test questions:

- Can be administered as part of the social studies curriculum;
- Can be administered all at once in a single sitting or over a longer time period of several months or years;
- Can be administered in timed and/or untimed sessions;

- Can be administered in oral, written (paper) or online formats; and
- Can be presented in various forms such true/false, multiple choice, matching, short answer, and so on.

These and other administration issues are determined by the school or district.

9. At what grade can a student be given the civics test questions?

A school or district decides the appropriate grade level(s) to give students the civics test questions.

10. How many times can a student be given the civics test questions?

Students may be given the questions as often as necessary to pass.

11. Is a passing score on the civics test questions a graduation requirement?

A student may not be denied a diploma for failing to correctly answer at least 30 of the 50 civics test questions.

12. Do schools and districts need to report the results to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)?

No.

13. Are schools and districts required to keep a record of scores?

A school or district is not required to keep records of scores; however, it is highly recommended as the civics test questions are a statutory requirement.

14. Can students be charged fees related to the civics test questions?

No, the commissioner and public schools and school districts must not charge students any fees related to this requirement.

15. How do the civics test questions relate to the 2011 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies?

The civics test questions relate to foundational ideas in civics education; they do not address the depth and breadth of civics knowledge and skills in the Citizenship and Government standards and benchmarks. The 50 civics test questions selected by the Learning Law and Democracy Foundation are embedded in the 2011 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies:

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/stds/soc/>.

16. Where are the civics test questions located?

The civics test questions are posted on Minnesota's Legacy website:

<http://www.legacy.leg.mn/>.

17. Are there resources available for students and educators?

The Citizenship Resource Center (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship>) has educational tools related to the civics test questions.