

Senate Bill 1094

Civic Learning in Grades 1-8: Creating Pathways for the State Seal of Civic Engagement



MONIQUE LIMÓN

REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 19

THIS BILL

SB 1094 promotes civic learning in grades 1-8 to introduce the opportunity of achieving a State Seal of Civic Engagement in grades 11th or 12th. Specifically, this bill requires instruction principles of democracy and the State and Federal Constitutions; and a civic engagement or experience with a governmental institution at the local, state, or national level at least once while in grades 1st – 6th and in grades 7th – 8th.

BACKGROUND

According to a 2016 survey, only a quarter of Americans can name all three branches of government.¹

The State Seal of Civic Engagement established by AB 24 (Chapter 2017, Statute of 2017), encourages the creation of pathways for students in secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels.

Subsequently in 2020, the State Board of Education adopted criteria and guidance to award the State Seal of Civic Engagement, which is recognized as a seal that can be affixed to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion.

“In its first year, 5,369 seniors in the class of 2021 received insignias — a little more than 1% of graduates.”² Since 2020, 28,030 Seals of Civic Engagement have been awarded to 11th and 12th graders.

It is imperative we introduce students early to civic education and systems of government to create clear pathways towards a lifetime of civic engagement.

¹ [Americans’ Knowledge of the Branches of Government Is Declining | The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania](#)

PURPOSE

SB 1094 furthers existing law by creating pathways for students in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. This bill aligns with current social studies curriculum frameworks.

This bill begins to close the gaps in civic education between students in 1st through 12th grades and encourage students to become active participants in their communities and government. Civic education provides students with critical thinking and collaboration skills, including the tools to improve their communities. Civic education also positively impacts school attendance, academic achievement, and suspension rates.

SB 1094 empowers teachers to use existing civic learning resources and supports currently available for teachers to integrate civic programming into curriculum across various subject area.

This bill is modeled after the Biliteracy Pathway Recognition, which recognizes P, K – middle school students who have demonstrated progress toward proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. This recognition is an entry for biliteracy or multiliteracy, thus preparing students to earn the State Seal of Biliteracy as graduating seniors. SB 1094 will create a similar pathway for civic learning, thus preparing students to earn the State Seal of Civic Engagement in high school.

SUPPORT

Los Angeles Office of Education (Sponsor)
Sacramento County Office of Education (Sponsor)
Alameda County Board of Education
California County Superintendents
California Council for Social Studies

² <https://edsources.org/2022/districts-offer-special-honor-to-encourage-active-civic-engagement/667062>

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Californians for Civic Learning
California School Boards Association
Civic Education Center
CivXNow Coalition
City of Monterey Park
City of Santa Paula
Generation Citizen
Generation Up
Glenn County Office of Education
Ventura County Office of Education
Simi Valley Unified School District
Teach Democracy
Thinking Nation
Youth Power Project

OPPOSITION

None on File

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