

An Act to promote and enhance civic engagement (HD2189)

Section 1: Amends section 2 of Chapter 71 to include:

Section 2(a): Creates definitions including for a student led civics project which is defined as a “rigorous project-based approach that involves a student-led inquiry and learning process involving essential knowledge, and use of disciplinary concepts and tools, structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks.”

Section 2(b): Keeps current language related to civics education

Section 2(C): Creates a Civics Project Fund to implement the civics requirement as well as to fund professional development

Section 2(D): Requires every student to complete no less than 2 student led civics projects administered in 2 separate grade levels as a graduation requirement and integrated into existing course curricula

Section 2(E): Instructs DESE to establish regional civics councils to monitor civics education implementation whose composition includes high school student members, but leaves the rest of their composition to DESE. The councils will make recommendations about civic education to BESE

Section 2(F): Instructs DESE to produce regulations to implement this section and set quality standards but allows local educational authorities to collaborate with outside entities for the purposes of implementation, professional development and evaluation

Section 2(G): Establishes the Edward M Kennedy Civics challenge available to all 8th grade students allowing them to take a citizenship

test with the top 100 students being recognized at a historic location (potentially the Kennedy Library but at the discretion of DESE)

Section 2(H): Instructs DESE to establish the high school voter challenge, which entails having every high school name one or more pupils to be in charge of registering and pre-registering their peers to vote

Section 2: Requires a report to the legislature no later than July 1, 2020