

Rep. Vos: Civics education bill passes Assembly

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Madison... Public schools, charter schools, and private schools could be required to incorporate civics education in elementary through high school thanks to a bill passed by the Wisconsin State Assembly.

The legislation will require the teaching about shared rights and responsibilities as citizens of the U.S., how to engage in government at the local, state, and federal levels, and the history and content of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

“Only half of Americans could name all three branches of government, and nearly a quarter could not name a single one,” said Rep. Vos. “This is startling given the political climate we currently live in.”

Wisconsin received an “F” in both civics and U.S. History in the Fordham Institute’s 2021 report on the State of State Standards. The report criticized Wisconsin’s lack of guidance that the state’s standards provide for educators.

48 percent of Wisconsin students are not proficient in social studies; nationwide it’s even worse at 75 percent.

“The basic understanding of how the U.S. government operates is severely lacking among students and adults,” said Rep. Vos. “We need to do a better job of informing our citizens of the vital role we all play in our government to encourage

civic pride and the desire to participate in government at all levels.”

The bill also includes having a comparative discussion of other nations’ governing philosophies, including communism, socialism, and totalitarianism, and how these compare with the principles of the freedom and representative democracy that the U.S. was founded on.

The Assembly bill now heads to the state Senate for consideration.