An act relating to the requirement to pass a civics course for high school graduation

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 914 is added to read:

§ 914. HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS COURSE REQUIREMENT

(a) Vermont students shall, as a condition of being awarded a high school diploma, take and receive a passing grade in a course in U.S. civics. The curriculum for this course shall include:

(1) philosophical principles, including:

(A) unalienable rights;

(B) contract theory of government;

(C) popular sovereignty;
(D) republican principles; and

(E) democracy; and

(2) the U.S. Constitution, including:

(A) separation of powers and checks and balances;

(B) majority rule;

(C) minority rights and individual rights as articulated in the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution;

(D) federalism, including the Supremacy Clause (Article VI, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution), 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution);

and

(E) judicial review, including the doctrines of plain meaning, original intent, and inference.

(b) This section shall apply to all students who are awarded a high school diploma who attend a State public school or a career technical center but shall not apply to students who are in special education programs.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021 and shall apply to high school students who graduate in or after the 2023–2024 academic year.