

## Pennsylvania Department of Education Support for Act 35 of 2018 Assessment of Civics Knowledge

The Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights are the documents that express the principles and philosophy of government of the United States of America. These “Charters of Freedom” have given guidance to each generation of Americans to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution.

Each person born in the United States is a citizen. Others become citizens through a voluntary legal process which requires meeting certain criteria: Having basic knowledge of U.S. government, U.S. history; and verbally committing to uphold the Constitution. With this commitment, the new citizen becomes part of “We the People.”

The American Experiment in government began in 1787 with a radical new concept of the people choosing how they are governed. Education of the people is a critical success factor of this government. Thomas Jefferson expressed, “An **educated citizenry** is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people.”

The foundation for an educated citizenry has long been established in the support of public education in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Act 35 of 2018, was passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Tom Wolf in June, 2018.

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, each school district shall administer at least once to students during grades seven through twelve, a locally developed assessment of U.S. history, government, and civics that includes:

- the nature, purpose, principles and structure of U.S. constitutional democracy,
- the principles, operations and documents of U.S. government, and
- the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The Pleasant Valley School District will create the assessment and the way it will be administered.

For resources to support student/family understanding and preparation for the assessment, please click below.

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship-resource-center/the-2020-version-of-the-civics-test/128-civics-questions-and-answers-2020-version>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-1K2LTuIBk>

