

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; academic standards; social studies

State of Arizona  
House of Representatives  
Fifty-sixth Legislature  
First Regular Session  
2023

## **HB 2549**

Introduced by  
Representatives Pawlik: Gutierrez, Hernandez C, Schwiebert, Shah, Stahl  
Hamilton, Sun, Terech, Senators Alston, Marsh

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701.01, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-701.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended  
3 to read:

4 15-701.01. High schools; graduation; requirements; community  
5 college or university courses; transfer from  
6 other schools; academic credit; report

7 A. The state board of education shall:

8 1. Prescribe a minimum course of study that incorporates the  
9 academic standards adopted by the state board for the graduation of pupils  
10 from high school.

11 2. Prescribe competency requirements for the graduation of pupils  
12 from high school incorporating the academic standards in at least the  
13 areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The  
14 academic standards prescribed by the state board in social studies shall  
15 include personal finance, American civics education, **THE HISTORY AND**  
16 **CONTRIBUTIONS OF ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN THE UNITED**  
17 **STATES AND IN THIS STATE**, and a comparative discussion of political  
18 ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism, that conflict with the  
19 principles of freedom and democracy that are essential to the founding  
20 principles of the United States. The state board may consider  
21 establishing a required separate personal finance course for the purpose  
22 of the graduation of pupils from high school. The state board shall  
23 require at least one-half of a course credit in economics, which shall  
24 include financial literacy and personal financial management.

25 3. Through the graduating class of 2025, include in the competency  
26 requirements for social studies prescribed in paragraph 2 of this  
27 subsection a requirement that, in order to graduate from high school or  
28 obtain a high school equivalency diploma, a pupil must correctly answer at  
29 least sixty of the one hundred questions listed on a test that is  
30 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
31 United States citizenship and immigration services. Beginning with the  
32 graduating class of 2026, the state board shall include in the competency  
33 requirements for social studies prescribed in paragraph 2 of this  
34 subsection a requirement that, in order to graduate from high school or  
35 obtain a high school equivalency diploma, a pupil must correctly answer at  
36 least seventy of the one hundred questions listed on a test that is  
37 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
38 United States citizenship and immigration services. A district school or  
39 charter school shall document on the pupil's transcript only a pass or  
40 fail designation that the pupil has passed or failed the test required by  
41 this paragraph. A pupil in grade seven or eight may take the test  
42 described in this paragraph, and if the pupil correctly answers at least  
43 seventy of the one hundred questions on the test:

1 (a) The district school or charter school shall document on the  
2 pupil's transcript only a pass or fail designation that the pupil has  
3 passed or failed the test required by this paragraph.

4 (b) The pupil is not required to take the test required by this  
5 paragraph again in high school.

6 4. Develop and adopt competency tests pursuant to section 15-741.  
7 English language learners who are subject to article 3.1 of this chapter  
8 are subject to the assessments prescribed in section 15-741.

9 B. The governing board of a school district shall:

10 1. Prescribe curricula that include the academic standards in the  
11 required subject areas pursuant to subsection A, paragraph 1 of this  
12 section.

13 2. Prescribe criteria for the graduation of pupils from the high  
14 schools in the school district. These criteria shall include  
15 accomplishment of the academic standards in at least reading, writing,  
16 mathematics, science and social studies, as determined by district  
17 assessment. Other criteria may include additional measures of academic  
18 achievement and attendance. Pursuant to the prescribed graduation  
19 requirements adopted by the state board of education, the governing board  
20 may approve a rigorous computer science course that would fulfill a  
21 mathematics course required for graduation from high school. The  
22 governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course only if the  
23 rigorous computer science course includes significant mathematics content  
24 and the governing board determines the high school where the rigorous  
25 computer science course is offered has sufficient capacity, infrastructure  
26 and qualified staff, including competent teachers of computer science.  
27 The school district governing board or charter school governing body may  
28 determine the method and manner in which to administer a test that is  
29 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
30 United States citizenship and immigration services. A pupil who does not  
31 obtain a passing score on the test that is identical to the civics portion  
32 of the naturalization test may retake the test until the pupil obtains a  
33 passing score.

34 C. The governing board may prescribe the course of study and  
35 competency requirements for the graduation of pupils from high school that  
36 are in addition to or higher than the course of study and competency  
37 requirements that the state board prescribes.

38 D. The governing board may prescribe competency requirements for  
39 the passage of pupils in courses that are required for graduation from  
40 high school.

41 E. A teacher shall determine whether to pass or fail a pupil in a  
42 course in high school on the basis of the competency requirements, if any  
43 have been prescribed. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of  
44 a teacher to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school as provided

1 in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the competency  
 2 requirements, if any have been prescribed.

3 F. Graduation requirements established by the governing board may  
 4 be met by a pupil who passes courses in the required or elective subjects  
 5 at a community college or university, if the course is at a higher level  
 6 than the course taught in the high school attended by the pupil or, if the  
 7 course is not taught in the high school, the level of the course is equal  
 8 to or higher than the level of a high school course. The governing board  
 9 shall determine whether the subject matter of the community college or  
 10 university course is appropriate to the specific requirement the pupil  
 11 intends it to fulfill and whether the level of the community college or  
 12 university course is less than, equal to or higher than a high school  
 13 course, and the governing board shall award at least one-half of a  
 14 Carnegie unit and up to and including one Carnegie unit for each three  
 15 semester hours of credit that the pupil earns in an appropriate community  
 16 college or university course. If a pupil is not satisfied with the  
 17 decision of the governing board regarding the amount of credit granted or  
 18 the subjects for which credit is granted, the pupil may request that the  
 19 state board of education review the decision of the governing board, and  
 20 the state board shall make the final determination of the amount of credit  
 21 to be given the pupil and for which subjects. The governing board shall  
 22 not limit the number of credits that is required for high school  
 23 graduation and that may be met by taking community college or university  
 24 courses. For the purposes of this subsection:

25 1. "Community college" means an educational institution that is  
 26 operated by a community college district as defined in section 15-1401 or  
 27 a postsecondary educational institution under the jurisdiction of an  
 28 Indian tribe recognized by the United States department of the interior.

29 2. "University" means a university under the jurisdiction of the  
 30 Arizona board of regents.

31 G. A pupil who transfers from a private school shall be provided  
 32 with a list that indicates those credits that have been accepted and  
 33 denied by the school district. A pupil may request to take an examination  
 34 in each particular course in which credit has been denied. The school  
 35 district shall accept the credit for each particular course in which the  
 36 pupil takes an examination and receives a passing score on a test designed  
 37 and evaluated by a teacher in the school district who teaches the subject  
 38 matter on which the examination is based. In addition to the above  
 39 requirements, the governing board of a school district may prescribe  
 40 requirements for the acceptance of the credits of pupils who transfer from  
 41 a private school.

42 H. If a pupil who was previously enrolled in a charter school or  
 43 school district enrolls in a school district in this state, the school  
 44 district shall accept credits earned by the pupil in courses or  
 45 instructional programs at the charter school or school district. The

1 governing board of a school district may adopt a policy concerning the  
2 application of transfer credits for the purpose of determining whether a  
3 credit earned by a pupil who was previously enrolled in a school district  
4 or charter school will be assigned as an elective or core credit. A  
5 school district or charter school may note the learning outcomes that a  
6 student mastered as prescribed in the rules adopted pursuant to section  
7 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 38 to provide a record of the demonstrated  
8 competencies and award partial credit.

9 I. A pupil who transfers credit from a charter school, a school  
10 district or Arizona online instruction shall be provided with a list that  
11 indicates which credits have been accepted as elective credits and which  
12 credits have been accepted as core credits by the school district or  
13 charter school. Within ten school days after receiving the list, the  
14 pupil may request to take an examination in each particular course in  
15 which core credit has been denied. The school district or charter school  
16 shall accept the credit as a core credit for each particular course in  
17 which the pupil takes an examination and receives a passing score on a  
18 test that is aligned to the competency requirements adopted pursuant to  
19 this section and that is designed and evaluated by a teacher in the school  
20 district or charter school who teaches the subject matter on which the  
21 examination is based. If a pupil is enrolled in a school district or  
22 charter school and that pupil also participates in Arizona online  
23 instruction between May 1 and July 31, the school district or charter  
24 school shall not require proof of payment as a condition of the school  
25 district or charter school accepting credits earned from the online course  
26 provider.

27 J. The state board of education shall adopt rules to allow high  
28 school pupils who can demonstrate competency in a particular academic  
29 course or subject to obtain academic credit for the course or subject  
30 without enrolling in the course or subject.

31 K. Pupils who earn a Grand Canyon diploma pursuant to article 6 of  
32 this chapter are exempt from the graduation requirements prescribed in  
33 this section. Pupils who earn a Grand Canyon diploma are entitled to all  
34 the rights and privileges of persons who graduate with a high school  
35 diploma issued pursuant to this section, including access to postsecondary  
36 scholarships and other forms of student financial aid and access to all  
37 forms of postsecondary education. Notwithstanding any other law, a pupil  
38 who is eligible for a Grand Canyon diploma may elect to remain in high  
39 school through grade twelve and shall not be prevented from enrolling at a  
40 high school after the pupil becomes eligible for a Grand Canyon diploma.  
41 A pupil who is eligible for a Grand Canyon diploma and who elects not to  
42 pursue one of the options prescribed in section 15-792.03 may only be  
43 readmitted to that high school or another high school in this state  
44 pursuant to policies adopted by the school district of readmission.

1 L. Each school district and charter school shall report to the  
2 department of education all of the following aggregate data, organized by  
3 grade level, relating to the test that is identical to the civics portion  
4 of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and  
5 immigration services required by subsection A, paragraph 3 of this  
6 section:

- 7 1. The median score.
- 8 2. The percentage of pupils who passed by correctly answering the  
9 minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
10 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.
- 11 3. The percentage of pupils who failed by correctly answering fewer  
12 than the minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
13 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.
- 14 4. Any other data required by the department relating to the test.

15 M. A school district or charter school may not include the  
16 personally identifiable information of any pupil in the data reported to  
17 the department of education under subsection L of this section. The  
18 department of education shall make the data publicly available, organized  
19 at a minimum by school district or charter school and grade level, on the  
20 website that includes the school report cards required by section 15-746.

21 Sec. 2. Implementation

22 Notwithstanding section 15-701.01, subsection A, paragraph 2,  
23 Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by this act, the state board of  
24 education is not required to include in the academic standards the history  
25 and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United  
26 States and this state until the state board of education next updates the  
27 social studies standards.