

REFERENCE TITLE: teachers; braille literacy; rules

State of Arizona  
Senate  
Fifty-sixth Legislature  
First Regular Session  
2023

## **SB 1328**

Introduced by  
Senator Bennett

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-214, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

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

2 Section 1. Section 15-214, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:

4 15-214. Braille literacy; rules; requirements; definitions

5 A. The state board of education shall adopt rules to promote  
6 braille literacy that:

7 1. ~~Assure~~ ENSURE that each blind pupil receives an individualized  
8 braille literacy assessment and appropriate educational services resulting  
9 from the assessment, establish standards of proficiency and instruction,  
10 provide materials in a computer accessible format capable of braille  
11 reproduction and require that certified teachers of visually impaired  
12 pupils meet braille competencies as specified in this section.

13 2. ~~Assure~~ ENSURE that, in developing the individualized written  
14 education program for each blind pupil, the presumption ~~shall be~~ IS that  
15 proficiency in braille is essential for that pupil to achieve satisfactory  
16 educational progress. Braille instruction and use are not required by  
17 this section if, in the course of developing the pupil's individualized  
18 education program, all members of the team concur that the pupil's visual  
19 impairment does not affect reading and writing performance commensurate  
20 with ability. ~~Nothing in~~ This section ~~requires~~ DOES NOT REQUIRE the  
21 exclusive use of braille if other special education services are  
22 appropriate to the pupil's educational needs. The provision of other  
23 appropriate services does not preclude braille use or instruction.

24 3. ~~Assure~~ ENSURE that instruction in braille is sufficient to  
25 enable each blind pupil to communicate effectively and efficiently in all  
26 subject areas with the same level of proficiency expected of the pupil's  
27 peers of comparable ability and grade level. The pupil's individualized  
28 education program shall specify:

29 (a) The results of a braille assessment.

30 (b) The methods by which braille will be implemented.

31 (c) The date on which braille instruction will begin.

32 (d) The length of the period of instruction and the frequency and  
33 duration of each instructional session.

34 (e) The level of competency in braille to be achieved by the end of  
35 the period of instruction and a description of the objective measures to  
36 be used to evaluate the pupil's level of competency.

37 (f) A list of the appropriate braille materials and equipment  
38 needed to allow the pupil to achieve the level of competency specified in  
39 the individualized education program.

40 (g) The rationale for not providing braille if braille is not  
41 determined to be an appropriate medium.

42 4. ~~Assure~~ ENSURE that the department of education ~~shall require~~  
43 REQUIRES all publishers of textbooks to furnish the department with  
44 ~~computer diskettes~~ ELECTRONIC VERSIONS for literary and nonliterary  
45 subjects when ~~diskettes~~ ELECTRONIC VERSIONS become available for

1 nonliterary subjects, in a standard format approved by the department of  
2 education from which braille versions of the textbook can be produced.

3 5. ~~Assure~~ ENSURE that teachers certified in ~~the education of~~  
4 EDUCATING blind PUPILS and visually impaired pupils in this state ~~on or~~  
5 ~~after July 1, 1997 shall be~~ ARE required to demonstrate competence in  
6 braille. ~~Competence shall be~~ AS measured by SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING  
7 either:

8 (a) ~~Successful completion of A nationally validated test, when such~~  
9 ~~a test is available~~ NATIONAL CERTIFICATION IN UNIFIED ENGLISH BRAILLE  
10 EXAMINATION.

11 (b) ~~Successful completion of~~ A COMPARABLE braille test developed in  
12 ~~the A UNIVERSITY-LEVEL TEACHER PREPARATION program in visual impairment at~~  
13 ~~the university of Arizona~~ FOR BLIND PUPILS AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS.

14 B. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ADOPT RULES TO ENSURE THAT  
15 BLIND PUPILS AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS RECEIVE APPROPRIATE QUALITY  
16 BLINDNESS COMPENSATORY SKILLS TRAINING TO ALLOW EACH PUPIL TO COMPLETE THE  
17 EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM GOALS IN THE BLIND PUPIL'S AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
18 PUPIL'S INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM BY BOTH:

19 1. ENSURING THAT ALL TEACHERS OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY  
20 INSTRUCTION FOR BLIND PUPILS OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS ARE REQUIRED TO  
21 DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE IN THE FIELD OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY BY  
22 POSSESSING AND MAINTAINING EITHER:

23 (a) A NATIONAL ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY CERTIFICATION.

24 (b) AN ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION.

25 2. ENSURING THAT TEACHERS OF REHABILITATION TEACHING FOR BLIND  
26 PUPILS OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS ARE REQUIRED TO DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE  
27 IN INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS BY EITHER:

28 (a) POSSESSING AND MAINTAINING A NATIONAL CERTIFICATION IN  
29 REHABILITATION TEACHING FOR THE BLIND.

30 (b) DEMONSTRATING PROOF THAT THE TEACHER IS A CERTIFIED VISION  
31 REHABILITATION THERAPIST.

32 ~~B. C. As used in~~ FOR THE PURPOSES OF this section: ~~;~~

33 1. "Blind pupil" means a pupil who meets one or more of the  
34 following conditions:

35 ~~1.~~ (a) Cannot successfully use vision as a primary and efficient  
36 channel for learning.

37 ~~2.~~ (b) Exhibits such a low degree or amount of visual acuity or  
38 visual field that vision is not considered as a primary mode of learning.

39 ~~3.~~ (c) Has a medically indicated prognosis of visual  
40 deterioration.

41 2. "COMPENSATORY SKILLS" MEANS THOSE SKILLS NEEDED BY BLIND PUPILS  
42 OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS TO ACCESS ALL AREAS OF THE GENERAL CURRICULUM.

- 1           3. "EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM" MEANS THE KNOWLEDGE, CONCEPTS AND  
2 SKILLS TYPICALLY LEARNED INCIDENTALLY BY SIGHTED PUPILS THAT MUST BE  
3 TAUGHT TO BLIND PUPILS OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS USING ALTERNATIVE  
4 TECHNIQUES.
- 5           4. "ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY" MEANS THE ABILITY TO TRAVEL SAFELY  
6 AND EFFECTIVELY IN ONE'S ENVIRONMENT USING ALTERNATIVE BLINDNESS SKILLS.
- 7           5. "REHABILITATION TEACHING" MEANS INSTRUCTION IN THE COMPENSATORY  
8 SKILLS AND ACCESS TECHNOLOGY SKILLS NEEDED TO PERFORM ACTIVITIES OF DAILY  
9 LIVING.