

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; academic standards; social studies..

State of Arizona
Senate
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SB 1557

Introduced by
Senators Sundareshan: Kavanagh; Representatives Pawlik, Shah, Sun

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.