

REFERENCE TITLE: high school; graduation requirements; FAFSA

State of Arizona  
House of Representatives  
Fifty-sixth Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
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# HB 2811

Introduced by  
Representatives Quiñonez: Biasiucci, Cook, Gillette, Gutierrez, Pawlik,  
Peña, Schwiebert, Seaman, Terech

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701.01, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

(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 and a comparative  
16 discussion of political ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism,  
17 that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy that are  
18 essential to the founding principles of the United States. The state  
19 board may consider establishing a required separate personal finance  
20 course for the purpose of the graduation of pupils from high school. The  
21 state board shall require at least one-half of a course credit in  
22 economics, which shall include financial literacy and personal financial  
23 management.

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

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

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

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

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

7 1. Prescribe curricula that include the academic standards in the  
8 required subject areas pursuant to subsection A, paragraph 1 of this  
9 section.

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

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

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

39 E. A teacher shall determine whether to pass or fail a pupil in a  
40 course in high school on the basis of the competency requirements, if any  
41 have been prescribed. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of  
42 a teacher to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school as provided  
43 in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the competency  
44 requirements, if any have been prescribed.

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

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

27 2. "University" means a university under the jurisdiction of the  
 28 Arizona board of regents.

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

40 H. If a pupil who was previously enrolled in a charter school or  
 41 school district enrolls in a school district in this state, the school  
 42 district shall accept credits earned by the pupil in courses or  
 43 instructional programs at the charter school or school district. The  
 44 governing board of a school district may adopt a policy concerning the  
 45 application of transfer credits for the purpose of determining whether a

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

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

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

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

43 L. NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION K OF THIS SECTION, A PUPIL MAY NOT  
44 GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN THIS STATE UNTIL THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR  
45 CHARTER SCHOOL IN WHICH THE PUPIL IS ENROLLED VERIFIES THAT THE PUPIL HAS

1 COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID  
2 UNLESS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES:

3 1. THE PUPIL, IF THE PUPIL IS AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE, OR  
4 THE PUPIL'S PARENTS OBJECT TO SUBMITTING THE PERSONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED  
5 BY THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID.

6 2. THE PUPIL, IF THE PUPIL IS AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE, OR  
7 THE PUPIL'S PARENTS DO NOT HAVE THE RECORDS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE FREE  
8 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID.

9 3. A SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL  
10 SIGNS A WAIVER STATING THAT THE STUDENT EITHER DOES NOT NEED TO COMPLETE  
11 THE APPLICATION OR IS NOT ABLE TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION.

12 ~~M.~~ M. Each school district and charter school shall report to the  
13 department of education all of the following aggregate data, organized by  
14 grade level, relating to the test that is identical to the civics portion  
15 of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and  
16 immigration services required by subsection A, paragraph 3 of this  
17 section:

18 1. The median score.

19 2. The percentage of pupils who passed by correctly answering the  
20 minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
21 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.

22 3. The percentage of pupils who failed by correctly answering fewer  
23 than the minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
24 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.

25 4. Any other data required by the department relating to the test.

26 ~~M.~~ N. A school district or charter school may not include the  
27 personally identifiable information of any pupil in the data reported to  
28 the department of education under subsection ~~M~~ M of this section. The  
29 department of education shall make the data publicly available, organized  
30 at a minimum by school district or charter school and grade level, on the  
31 website that includes the school report cards required by section 15-746.