

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; graduation requirements; credits adjustment

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-sixth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2024

SB 1724

Introduced by
Senator Gonzales

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701.01, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-701.04; RELATING TO SCHOOL CURRICULA.

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

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

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

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

44 F. Graduation requirements established by the governing board may
45 be met by a pupil who passes courses in the required or elective subjects

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

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

25 2. "University" means a university under the jurisdiction of the
26 Arizona board of regents.

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

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

1 school district or charter school may note the learning outcomes that a
2 student mastered as prescribed in the rules adopted pursuant to section
3 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 38 to provide a record of the demonstrated
4 competencies and award partial credit.

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

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

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

41 L. Each school district and charter school shall report to the
42 department of education all of the following aggregate data, organized by
43 grade level, relating to the test that is identical to the civics portion
44 of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and

1 immigration services required by subsection A, paragraph 3 of this
2 section:

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

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

17 N. ANY PUPIL WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN ADJUSTMENT OF CREDITS PURSUANT TO
18 SECTION 15-701.04 AND WHO COMPLETES THE REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN SECTION
19 15-701.04 IS EXEMPT FROM THE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN THIS
20 SECTION.

21 Sec. 2. Title 15, chapter 7, article 1, Arizona Revised Statutes,
22 is amended by adding section 15-701.04, to read:

23 15-701.04. Credits required for graduation; minimum number;
24 adjustment; qualifications; posting;
25 notification; complaints

26 A. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER LAW, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
27 SHALL ADJUST THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS NECESSARY FOR HIGH SCHOOL
28 GRADUATION FOR A PUPIL WHO IS IN GRADE NINE, TEN, ELEVEN OR TWELVE AND WHO
29 MEETS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 30 1. SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS AS
31 DEFINED IN 42 UNITED STATES CODE SECTION 11434a.
- 32 2. IS A FORMER DEPENDENT CHILD OR FOSTER CHILD AS DEFINED IN
33 SECTION 8-501 OR HAS BEEN PLACED IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT AS DEFINED IN
34 SECTION 8-501.
- 35 3. IS A DELINQUENT JUVENILE OR AN INCORRIGIBLE CHILD WHO HAS BEEN
36 ORDERED BY A COURT TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - 37 (a) A PROBATION DEPARTMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-341, SUBSECTION A,
38 PARAGRAPH 1, SUBDIVISION (b).
 - 39 (b) A PRIVATE AGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-341, SUBSECTION A,
40 PARAGRAPH 1, SUBDIVISION (d).
 - 41 (c) THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE CORRECTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION
42 8-341, SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 1, SUBDIVISION (e).
 - 43 (d) RECEIVE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES PURSUANT TO SECTION
44 8-341.01.

1 B. A PUPIL WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
2 SECTION SHALL TAKE ALL REQUIRED STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTION
3 15-741 OR AN ACHIEVEMENT ASSESSMENT FROM THE MENU OF ACHIEVEMENT
4 ASSESSMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-741.02.

5 C. A PUPIL WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
6 SECTION MUST CORRECTLY ANSWER AT LEAST SIXTY OF THE ONE HUNDRED QUESTIONS
7 LISTED ON A TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE
8 NATURALIZATION TEST USED BY THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
9 SERVICES AS PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 15-701.01, SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 3,
10 UNLESS THE PUPIL IS EXEMPT PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-763. THE PUPIL MAY
11 FULFILL ADDITIONAL LOCALLY MANDATED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

12 D. A PUPIL WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
13 SECTION OR A PERSON WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS FOR
14 THE PUPIL MAY REQUEST QUALIFICATION FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO THIS
15 SECTION. A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL ESTABLISH A UNIFORM
16 PROCESS FOR REQUESTING QUALIFICATION FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO THIS
17 SECTION.

18 E. A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL POST INFORMATION
19 REGARDING ADJUSTMENTS OF THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS AS PRESCRIBED IN
20 THIS SECTION AND SHALL IDENTIFY AND INFORM PUPILS WHO MAY QUALIFY FOR AN
21 ADJUSTMENT. IF A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL DETERMINES THAT A
22 PUPIL MAY QUALIFY FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION, THE SCHOOL
23 DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL INFORM THE PUPIL AND THE PERSON WHO IS
24 AUTHORIZED TO MAKE EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS FOR THE PUPIL, IN WRITING, OF THE
25 FOLLOWING:

26 1. THE PUPIL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO THIS
27 SECTION AND THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS. IF THE PUPIL IS A FOSTER CHILD,
28 THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL NOTIFY THE PUPIL'S ASSIGNED
29 SPECIALIST WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY.

30 2. THE PUPIL'S RIGHT TO STAY IN SCHOOL TO COMPLETE GRADUATION
31 REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL UNTIL THE PUPIL
32 REACHES TWENTY-TWO YEARS OF AGE.

33 3. THE PUPIL'S RIGHT TO BE NOTIFIED WHETHER THE REQUEST FOR AN
34 ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION HAS BEEN APPROVED OR DENIED AND, IF
35 THE REQUEST IS DENIED, THE GROUNDS FOR THE DENIAL.

36 F. A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL IS NOT REQUIRED TO APPROVE A
37 REQUEST FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT
38 OR CHARTER SCHOOL DETERMINES THAT THE PUPIL IS REASONABLY ABLE TO COMPLETE
39 THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S OR CHARTER SCHOOL'S REGULAR GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
40 BY THE END OF THE PUPIL'S FOURTH YEAR OF ENROLLMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL. A
41 DENIAL OF A REQUEST DOES NOT PRECLUDE A PUPIL FROM REQUESTING
42 QUALIFICATION FOR AN ADJUSTMENT IN A SUBSEQUENT SCHOOL YEAR.

43 G. THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL ENSURE THE FOLLOWING
44 FOR A PUPIL WHO HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
45 SECTION:

1 1. PRIORITY PLACEMENT IN CLASSES REQUIRED FOR THE PUPIL TO GRADUATE
2 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.
3 2. TIMELY ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE FROM COUNSELORS OR OTHER QUALIFIED
4 PERSONNEL TO IMPROVE THE PUPIL'S COLLEGE OR CAREER READINESS.
5 H. A PUPIL WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
6 SECTION AND WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE ENTITLED TO REMAIN IN ATTENDANCE IN
7 HIGH SCHOOL:
8 1. IS NOT REQUIRED TO ACCEPT AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS
9 SECTION.
10 2. MAY NOT BE DENIED ENROLLMENT IN COURSES FOR WHICH THE PUPIL IS
11 OTHERWISE ELIGIBLE, INCLUDING COURSES NECESSARY TO ATTEND AN INSTITUTION
12 OF HIGHER EDUCATION.
13 I. A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY NOT REVOKE A PUPIL'S
14 ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION AFTER THE ADJUSTMENT HAS BEEN
15 APPROVED.
16 J. IF A PUPIL WHO HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY APPROVED FOR AN ADJUSTMENT
17 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION TRANSFERS TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL DISTRICT OR
18 CHARTER SCHOOL, THAT SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL APPROVE THE
19 SAME ADJUSTMENT FOR THAT PUPIL.
20 K. A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY NOT REQUIRE OR REQUEST A
21 PUPIL WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION TO
22 TRANSFER TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR THE ADJUSTMENT.
23 L. A PUPIL OR THE PERSON WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE EDUCATIONAL
24 DECISIONS FOR THE PUPIL MAY FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR
25 CHARTER SCHOOL FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING A WRONGFUL
26 DENIAL OF A REQUEST FOR AN ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. IF THE
27 SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL DETERMINES THAT IT HAS VIOLATED THIS
28 SECTION, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL RECTIFY THE
29 VIOLATION. THE PUPIL OR THE PERSON WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE EDUCATIONAL
30 DECISIONS FOR THE PUPIL MAY APPEAL THE DETERMINATION OF THE SCHOOL
31 DISTRICT OR THE CHARTER SCHOOL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. IF THE
32 DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION HAS OCCURRED, THE
33 DEPARTMENT SHALL DIRECT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL TO RECTIFY
34 THE VIOLATION.