

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; science instruction; requirements

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-first Legislature
First Regular Session
2013

SB 1213

Introduced by
Senators Burges, Crandell: Murphy, Pierce, Shooter, Yarbrough

AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-706.01; 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. Title 15, chapter 7, article 1, Arizona Revised Statutes,
3 is amended by adding section 15-706.01, to read:

4 15-706.01. Science instruction; requirements

5 A. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COUNTY
6 SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS, SCHOOL DISTRICT
7 SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS SHALL ENDEAVOR
8 TO:

9 1. CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS THAT ENCOURAGES PUPILS TO EXPLORE
10 SCIENTIFIC QUESTIONS, LEARN ABOUT SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, DEVELOP CRITICAL
11 THINKING SKILLS AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY AND RESPECTFULLY TO DIFFERENCES OF
12 OPINION ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES.

13 2. ASSIST TEACHERS TO FIND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO PRESENT THE SCIENCE
14 CURRICULUM AS IT ADDRESSES SCIENTIFIC CONTROVERSIES. TEACHERS SHALL BE
15 ALLOWED TO HELP PUPILS UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE, CRITIQUE AND REVIEW IN AN
16 OBJECTIVE MANNER THE SCIENTIFIC STRENGTHS AND SCIENTIFIC WEAKNESSES OF
17 EXISTING SCIENTIFIC THEORIES COVERED IN THE COURSE BEING TAUGHT.

18 B. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COUNTY
19 SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS, SCHOOL DISTRICT
20 SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS SHALL NOT
21 PROHIBIT ANY TEACHER IN THIS STATE FROM HELPING PUPILS UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE,
22 CRITIQUE AND REVIEW IN AN OBJECTIVE MANNER THE SCIENTIFIC STRENGTHS AND
23 WEAKNESSES OF EXISTING SCIENTIFIC THEORIES COVERED IN THE COURSE BEING
24 TAUGHT.

25 C. THIS SECTION PROTECTS ONLY THE TEACHING OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION
26 AND DOES NOT PROMOTE ANY RELIGIOUS OR NONRELIGIOUS DOCTRINE, PROMOTE
27 DISCRIMINATION FOR OR AGAINST A PARTICULAR SET OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR
28 NONBELIEFS OR PROMOTE DISCRIMINATION FOR OR AGAINST RELIGION OR NONRELIGION.

29 Sec. 2. Intent

30 The legislature finds and declares that:

31 1. An important purpose of science education is to inform students
32 about scientific evidence and to help students develop critical thinking
33 skills necessary to becoming intelligent, productive and scientifically
34 informed citizens.

35 2. The teaching of some scientific subjects, including biological
36 evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming and human cloning,
37 can cause controversy.

38 3. Some teachers may be unsure of the expectations concerning how they
39 should present information on such subjects.