

REFERENCE TITLE: **graduation requirement; civics test**

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-second Legislature
First Regular Session
2015

HB 2064

Introduced by

Representatives Montenegro, Barton, Borrelli, Cobb, Fann, Finchem, Gowan,
Kern, Livingston, Mitchell, Olson, Petersen, Stevens, Thorpe, Townsend,
Senators Allen, Begay, Griffin, Kavanagh, Lesko, McGuire, Smith, Ward,
Yarbrough, Yee: Representatives Bowers, Boyer, Lawrence, Leach, Mesnard,
Pratt, Rivero, Robson, Shope, Weninger, Senator Biggs

AN ACT

**AMENDING SECTIONS 15-701.01 AND 15-763, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; 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 to
3 read:
4 15-701.01. High school; graduation; requirements; community
5 college or university courses; transfer from
6 private schools; academic credit
7 A. The state board of education shall:
8 1. Prescribe a minimum course of study, as defined in section 15-101
9 and incorporating the academic standards adopted by the state board of
10 education, for the graduation of pupils from high school.
11 2. Prescribe competency requirements for the graduation of pupils from
12 high school incorporating the academic standards in at least the areas of
13 reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The academic
14 standards prescribed by the state board of education in social studies shall
15 include personal finance. This paragraph does not allow the state board of
16 education to establish a required separate personal finance course for the
17 purpose of the graduation of pupils from high school. BEGINNING IN THE
18 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR, THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES SHALL
19 INCLUDE A REQUIREMENT THAT, IN ORDER TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL OR OBTAIN A
20 GENERAL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA, A PUPIL MUST CORRECTLY ANSWER AT LEAST SIXTY OF
21 THE ONE HUNDRED QUESTIONS LISTED ON A TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS
22 PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST USED BY THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND
23 IMMIGRATION SERVICES.
24 3. Develop and adopt competency tests pursuant to section 15-741.
25 English language learners who are subject to article 3.1 of this chapter are
26 subject to the assessments prescribed in section 15-741.
27 B. The governing board of a school district shall:
28 1. Prescribe curricula that include the academic standards in the
29 required subject areas pursuant to subsection A, paragraph 1 of this section.
30 2. Prescribe criteria for the graduation of pupils from the high
31 schools in the school district. These criteria shall include accomplishment
32 of the academic standards in at least reading, writing, mathematics, science
33 and social studies, as determined by district assessment. Other criteria may
34 include additional measures of academic achievement and attendance. Pursuant
35 to the prescribed graduation requirements adopted by the state board of
36 education, the governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course
37 that would fulfill a mathematics course required for graduation from high
38 school. The governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course
39 only if the rigorous computer science course includes significant mathematics
40 content and the governing board determines the high school where the rigorous
41 computer science course is offered has sufficient capacity, infrastructure
42 and qualified staff, including competent teachers of computer science. THE
43 GOVERNING BOARD MAY DETERMINE THE METHOD AND MANNER IN WHICH TO ADMINISTER A
44 TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST USED
45 BY THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES. A PUPIL WHO DOES

1 NOT OBTAIN A PASSING SCORE ON THE TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS
2 PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST MAY RETAKE THE TEST UNTIL THE PUPIL
3 OBTAINS A PASSING SCORE.

4 C. The governing board may prescribe the course of study and
5 competency requirements for the graduation of pupils from high school that
6 are in addition to or higher than the course of study and competency
7 requirements that the state board prescribes.

8 D. The governing board may prescribe competency requirements for the
9 passage of pupils in courses that are required for graduation from high
10 school.

11 E. A teacher shall determine whether to pass or fail a pupil in a
12 course in high school as provided in section 15-521, paragraph 4 on the basis
13 of the competency requirements, if any have been prescribed. The governing
14 board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher to pass or fail a pupil in a
15 course in high school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base
16 its decision on the competency requirements, if any have been prescribed.

17 F. Graduation requirements established by the governing board may be
18 met by a pupil who passes courses in the required or elective subjects at a
19 community college or university, if the course is at a higher level than the
20 course taught in the high school attended by the pupil or, if the course is
21 not taught in the high school, the level of the course is equal to or higher
22 than the level of a high school course. The governing board shall determine
23 if the subject matter of the community college or university course is
24 appropriate to the specific requirement the pupil intends it to fulfill and
25 if the level of the community college or university course is less than,
26 equal to or higher than a high school course, and the governing board shall
27 award one-half of a carnegie unit for each three semester hours of credit the
28 pupil earns in an appropriate community college or university course. If a
29 pupil is not satisfied with the decision of the governing board regarding the
30 amount of credit granted or the subjects for which credit is granted, the
31 pupil may request that the state board of education review the decision of
32 the governing board, and the state board shall make the final determination
33 of the amount of credit to be given the pupil and for which subjects. The
34 governing board shall not limit the number of credits that is required for
35 high school graduation and that may be met by taking community college or
36 university courses. For the purposes of this subsection:

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

41 2. "University" means a university under the jurisdiction of the
42 Arizona board of regents.

43 G. A pupil who transfers from a private school shall be provided with
44 a list that indicates those credits that have been accepted and denied by the
45 school district. A pupil may request to take an examination in each

1 particular course in which credit has been denied. The school district shall
2 accept the credit for each particular course in which the pupil takes an
3 examination and receives a passing score on a test designed and evaluated by
4 a teacher in the school district who teaches the subject matter on which the
5 examination is based. In addition to the above requirements, the governing
6 board of a school district may prescribe requirements for the acceptance of
7 the credits of pupils who transfer from a private school.

8 H. If a pupil who was previously enrolled in a charter school or
9 school district enrolls in a school district in this state, the school
10 district shall accept credits earned by the pupil in courses or instructional
11 programs at the charter school or school district. The governing board of a
12 school district may adopt a policy concerning the application of transfer
13 credits for the purpose of determining whether a credit earned by a pupil who
14 was previously enrolled in a school district or charter school will be
15 assigned as an elective or core credit.

16 I. A pupil who transfers from a charter school or school district
17 shall be provided with a list that indicates which credits have been accepted
18 as an elective credit and which credits have been accepted as a core credit
19 by the school district. Within ten school days after receiving the list, a
20 pupil may request to take an examination in each particular course in which
21 core credit has been denied. The school district shall accept the credit as
22 a core credit for each particular course in which the pupil takes an
23 examination and receives a passing score on a test designed and evaluated by
24 a teacher in the school district who teaches the subject matter on which the
25 examination is based.

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

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

1 Sec. 2. Section 15-763, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:
2 15-763. Plan for providing special education: definition

3 A. All school districts and charter schools shall develop policies and
4 procedures for providing special education to all children with disabilities
5 within the district or charter school. All children with disabilities shall
6 receive special education programming commensurate with their abilities and
7 needs. Each child shall be ensured access to the general curriculum and an
8 opportunity to meet the state's academic standards. Pupils who receive
9 special education shall not be required to achieve passing scores on the
10 Arizona instrument to measure standards test **OR THE TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO**
11 **THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST UNDER SECTION 15-701.01** in
12 order to graduate from high school unless the pupil is learning at a level
13 appropriate for the pupil's grade level in a specific academic area and
14 unless a passing score on the Arizona instrument to measure standards test **OR**
15 **THE TEST THAT IS IDENTICAL TO THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST**
16 **UNDER SECTION 15-701.01** is specifically required in a specific academic area
17 by the pupil's individualized education program as mutually agreed on by the
18 pupil's parents and the pupil's individualized education program team or the
19 pupil, if the pupil is at least eighteen years of age. The pupil's
20 individualized education program shall include any necessary testing
21 accommodations. Special education services shall be provided at no cost to
22 the parents of children with disabilities.

23 B. The state board of education shall adopt guidelines to define a
24 parent's or guardian's role or a pupil's role, if the pupil is at least
25 eighteen years of age, in the development of a pupil's section 504 plan as
26 defined in section 15-731, including testing and testing accommodations.

27 C. For the purposes of determining the services to pupils served by
28 private schools under existing federal law, the state shall consider the term
29 to include homeschooled pupils.

30 D. If federal monies are provided to a school district or a charter
31 school for special education services to homeschooled or private schooled
32 pupils, the school district or charter school shall provide the services to
33 both the homeschooled pupils and the private schooled pupils in the same
34 manner.

35 E. For the purposes of this section, "special education" has the same
36 meaning prescribed in section 15-1201.