

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; cursive writing requirement

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-second Legislature
Second Regular Session
2016

SB 1197

Introduced by

Senators Griffin, Cajero Bedford, Dalessandro, Driggs, Kavanagh, McGuire, Meza, Smith, Yee; Representative Thorpe; Senators Allen S, Barto, Begay, Biggs, Bradley, Burges, Donahue, Farley, Farnsworth D, Hobbs, Lesko, Shooter, Worsley; Representatives Cardenas, Fann, Fernandez, Gray, Montenegro, Olson, Pratt, Rios, Shope

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701, 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, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-701. Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate;
5 supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of
6 high school district; high school admissions;
7 academic credit; definition

8 A. The state board of education shall:

9 1. Prescribe a minimum course of study, as defined in section 15-101
10 and incorporating the academic standards adopted by the state board of
11 education, to be taught in the common schools. THE MINIMUM COURSE OF STUDY
12 SHALL INCLUDE INSTRUCTION IN CURSIVE READING AND WRITING TO ENSURE THAT
13 PUPILS, BY THE END OF GRADE FIVE, ARE ABLE TO CREATE READABLE DOCUMENTS
14 THROUGH LEGIBLE CURSIVE HANDWRITING.

15 2. Prescribe competency requirements for the promotion of pupils from
16 the eighth grade and competency requirements for the promotion of pupils from
17 the third grade incorporating the academic standards in at least the areas of
18 reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. Notwithstanding
19 section 15-521, paragraph 4, the competency requirements for the promotion of
20 pupils from the third grade shall include the following:

21 (a) A requirement that a pupil not be promoted from the third grade if
22 the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona instrument to
23 measure standards test, or a successor test, that demonstrates that the
24 pupil's reading falls far below the third grade level or the equivalent as
25 established by the board. A pupil may not be retained if data regarding the
26 pupil's performance on the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, or a
27 successor test, is not available before the start of the following academic
28 year. A pupil who is not retained due to the unavailability of test data
29 must receive intervention and remedial strategies pursuant to subdivision (c)
30 of this paragraph if the third grade assessment data subsequently
31 demonstrates that the pupil's reading ability falls far below the third grade
32 level or the equivalent.

33 (b) A mechanism to allow a school district governing board or the
34 governing body of a charter school to promote a pupil from the third grade
35 who obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona instrument to
36 measure standards test, or a successor test, that demonstrates that the
37 pupil's reading falls far below the third grade level for any of the
38 following:

39 (i) A good cause exemption if the pupil is an English learner or a
40 limited English proficient student as defined in section 15-751 and has had
41 fewer than two years of English language instruction.

42 (ii) A pupil who is in the process of a special education referral or
43 evaluation for placement in special education, ~~or~~ a pupil who has been
44 diagnosed as having a significant reading impairment, including dyslexia, or
45 a pupil who is a child with a disability as defined in section 15-761 if the

1 pupil's individualized education program team and the pupil's parent or
2 guardian agree that promotion is appropriate based on the pupil's
3 individualized education program.

4 (c) Intervention and remedial strategies developed by the state board
5 of education for pupils who are not promoted from the third grade. A school
6 district governing board or the governing body of a charter school shall
7 offer at least one of the intervention and remedial strategies developed by
8 the state board of education. The parent or guardian of a pupil who is not
9 promoted from the third grade and the pupil's teacher and principal may
10 choose the most appropriate intervention and remedial strategies that will be
11 provided to that pupil. The intervention and remedial strategies developed
12 by the state board of education shall include:

13 (i) A requirement that the pupil be assigned to a different teacher
14 for reading instruction.

15 (ii) Summer school reading instruction.

16 (iii) In the next academic year, intensive reading instruction that
17 occurs before, during or after the regular school day, or any combination of
18 before, during and after the regular school day.

19 (iv) Online reading instruction.

20 3. Provide for universal screening of pupils in preschool programs,
21 kindergarten programs and grades one through three that is designed to
22 identify pupils who have reading deficiencies pursuant to section 15-704.

23 4. Develop intervention and remedial strategies pursuant to paragraph
24 2, subdivision (c) of this subsection for pupils in kindergarten programs and
25 grades one through three who are identified as having reading deficiencies
26 pursuant to section 15-704.

27 5. Distribute guidelines for the school districts to follow in
28 prescribing criteria for the promotion of pupils from grade to grade in the
29 common schools. These guidelines shall include recommended procedures for
30 ensuring that the cultural background of a pupil is taken into consideration
31 when criteria for promotion are being applied.

32 B. School districts and charter schools shall provide annual written
33 notification to parents of pupils in kindergarten programs and first, second
34 and third grades that a pupil who obtains a score on the reading portion of
35 the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, or a successor test, that
36 demonstrates the pupil is reading far below the third grade level will not be
37 promoted from the third grade. If the school has determined that the pupil
38 is substantially deficient in reading before the end of grade three, the
39 school district or charter school shall provide to the parent of that pupil a
40 separate written notification of the reading deficiency that includes the
41 following information:

42 1. A description of the current reading services provided to the
43 pupil.

1 2. A description of the available supplemental instructional services
2 and supporting programs that are designed to remediate reading deficiencies.
3 Each school district or charter school shall offer at least one intervention
4 strategy and at least one remedial strategy for pupils with reading
5 deficiencies. The notification shall list the intervention and remedial
6 strategies offered and shall instruct the parent or guardian to choose the
7 strategy that will be implemented for that child.

8 3. Parental strategies to assist the pupil to attain reading
9 proficiency.

10 4. A statement that the pupil will not be promoted from the third
11 grade if the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona
12 instrument to measure standards test, or a successor test, that demonstrates
13 the pupil is reading far below the third grade level, unless the pupil is
14 exempt from mandatory retention in grade three or the pupil qualifies for an
15 exemption pursuant to subsection A of this section.

16 5. A description of the school district or charter school policies on
17 midyear promotion to a higher grade.

18 C. Pursuant to the guidelines that the state board of education
19 distributes, the governing board of a school district shall:

20 1. Prescribe curricula that include the academic standards in the
21 required subject areas pursuant to subsection A, paragraph 1 of this section.
22 **THE CURRICULA SHALL INCLUDE INSTRUCTION IN CURSIVE READING AND WRITING.**

23 2. Prescribe criteria for the promotion of pupils from grade to grade
24 in the common schools in the school district. These criteria shall include
25 accomplishment of the academic standards in at least reading, writing,
26 mathematics, science and social studies, as determined by district
27 assessment. Other criteria may include additional measures of academic
28 achievement and attendance.

29 D. The governing board may prescribe the course of study and
30 competency requirements for promotion that are in addition to or higher than
31 the course of study and competency requirements the state board prescribes.

32 E. A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil in
33 grade in a common school as provided in section 15-521, paragraph 4 on the
34 basis of the prescribed criteria. The governing board, if it reviews the
35 decision of a teacher to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common
36 school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision
37 on the prescribed criteria.

38 F. A governing board may provide and issue certificates of promotion
39 to pupils whom it promotes from the eighth grade of a common school. Such
40 certificates shall be signed by the principal or superintendent of schools.
41 Where there is no principal or superintendent of schools, the certificates
42 shall be signed by the teacher of an eighth grade. The certificates shall
43 admit the holders to any high school in the state.

1 G. Within any high school district or union high school district, the
2 superintendent of the high school district shall supervise the work of the
3 eighth grade of all schools employing no superintendent or principal.

4 H. A school district shall not deny a pupil who is between the ages of
5 sixteen and twenty-one years admission to a high school because the pupil
6 does not hold an eighth grade certificate. Governing boards shall establish
7 procedures for determining the admissibility of pupils who are under sixteen
8 years of age and who do not hold eighth grade certificates.

9 I. The state board of education shall adopt rules to allow common
10 school pupils who can demonstrate competency in a particular academic course
11 or subject to obtain academic credit for the course or subject without
12 enrolling in the course or subject.

13 J. A school district may conduct a ceremony to honor pupils who have
14 been promoted from the eighth grade.

15 K. For the purposes of this section, "dyslexia" means a brain-based
16 learning difference that impairs a person's ability to read and spell, that
17 is independent of intelligence and that typically causes a person to read at
18 levels lower than expected.