AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701.01, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL CURRICULA.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)
Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Section 15-701.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

15-701.01. High schools; graduation; requirements; community college or university courses; transfer from other schools; academic credit

A. The state board of education shall:

1. Prescribe a minimum course of study, as defined in section 15-101 and incorporating the academic standards adopted by the state board of education, for the graduation of pupils from high school.

2. Prescribe competency requirements for the graduation of pupils from high school incorporating the academic standards in at least the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The academic standards prescribed by the state board of education in social studies shall include personal finance and American civics education. The state board of education may consider the establishment of a required separate personal finance course for the purpose of the graduation of pupils from high school. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the competency requirements for social studies shall include a requirement that, in order to graduate from high school or obtain a high school equivalency diploma, a pupil must correctly answer at least sixty of the one hundred questions listed on a test that is identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and immigration services. A district school or charter school shall document on the pupil's transcript that the pupil has passed a test that is identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and immigration services as required by this section.

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

B. The governing board of a school district shall:

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

2. Prescribe criteria for the graduation of pupils from the high schools in the school district. These criteria shall include accomplishment of the academic standards in at least reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies, as determined by district assessment. THE GOVERNING BOARD MAY APPROVE A FINANCIAL LITERACY COURSE THAT WOULD FULFILL A MATHEMATICS COURSE REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL. Other criteria may include additional measures of academic achievement and attendance. Pursuant to the prescribed graduation requirements adopted by the state board of education, the governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course that would fulfill a
mathematics course required for graduation from high school. The
governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course only if the
rigorous computer science course includes significant mathematics content
and the governing board determines the high school where the rigorous
computer science course is offered has sufficient capacity, infrastructure
and qualified staff, including competent teachers of computer science.
The school district governing board or charter school governing body may
determine the method and manner in which to administer a test that is
identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the
United States citizenship and immigration services. A pupil who does not
obtain a passing score on the test that is identical to the civics portion
of the naturalization test may retake the test until the pupil obtains a
passing score.

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

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

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

F. Graduation requirements established by the governing board may
be met by a pupil who passes courses in the required or elective subjects
at a community college or university, if the course is at a higher level
than the course taught in the high school attended by the pupil or, if the
course is not taught in the high school, the level of the course is equal
to or higher than the level of a high school course. The governing board
shall determine **WHETHER** the subject matter of the community college or
university course is appropriate to the specific requirement the pupil
intends it to fulfill and **WHETHER** the level of the community college or
university course is less than, equal to or higher than a high school
course, and the governing board shall award one-half of a Carnegie unit
for each three semester hours of credit that the pupil earns in an
appropriate community college or university course. If a pupil is not
satisfied with the decision of the governing board regarding the amount of
credit granted or the subjects for which credit is granted, the pupil may
request that the state board of education review the decision of the
governing board, and the state board shall make the final determination of
the amount of credit to be given the pupil and for which subjects. The
governing board shall not limit the number of credits that is required for
high school graduation and that may be met by taking community college or university courses. For the purposes of this subsection:

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

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

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

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

I. A pupil who transfers credit from a charter school, a school district or Arizona online instruction shall be provided with a list that indicates which credits have been accepted as elective credits and which credits have been accepted as core credits by the school district or charter school. Within ten school days after receiving the list, the pupil may request to take an examination in each particular course in which core credit has been denied. The school district or charter school shall accept the credit as a core credit for each particular course in which the pupil takes an examination and receives a passing score on a test that is aligned to the competency requirements adopted pursuant to this section and that is designed and evaluated by a teacher in the school district or charter school who teaches the subject matter on which the examination is based. If a pupil is enrolled in a school district or charter school and that pupil also participates in Arizona online instruction between May 1 and July 31, the school district or charter school shall not require proof of payment as a condition of the school district or charter school accepting credits earned from the online course provider.
J. The state board of education shall adopt rules to allow high school pupils who can demonstrate competency in a particular academic course or subject to obtain academic credit for the course or subject without enrolling in the course or subject.

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