



ARIZONA STATE SENATE
Fifty-Fifth Legislature, Second Regular Session

AMENDED
FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1326

schools; course equivalents

Purpose

Authorizes, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, school districts, charter schools and the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) to approve students to receive two elective credits during grades 9 through 12 (9-12) through outlined course equivalents. Includes the course equivalents in average daily membership (ADM) calculations.

Background

The SBE establishes 22 credits as the minimum number necessary for high school graduation. The required credits include: 1) 4 credits of English or English as a Second Language; 2) 3 credits in social studies; 3) 4 credits of mathematics; 4) 3 credits of science; 5) 1 credit of fine arts or career and technical education and vocational education; and 6) 7 credits of additional courses prescribed by the local school district governing board or charter school ([A.A.C. § R7-2-302.02](#)).

A school district or charter school may include students enrolled in concurrent coursework for ADM calculations upon receiving approval from the SBE or the charter school's sponsor. Concurrent coursework must: 1) allow a student to receive at least three semester hours of credit in a community college or university course at a higher level than the course taught in grades 9-12; and 2) apply to an established community college academic degree or certificate program transferable to an Arizona public university. The school district or charter school must pay the community college or university for the tuition cost of the concurrent course work, or reimburse the student ([A.R.S. § 15-901.07](#)).

ADM is the total enrollment of fractional and full-time students minus withdrawals. A fractional high school student is enrolled in fewer than four subjects that count towards graduation. A full-time high school student is enrolled in four or more subjects that count toward graduation. Each subject must meet for at least 123 hours during the school year ([A.R.S. § 15-901](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Authorizes, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, school districts, charter schools and the ASDB to approve course equivalents through which a student may receive up to two elective credits total during grades 9-12 through the following:
 - a) working at a job for the equivalent of at least five hours per week over any semester, if the student is of legal working age;
 - b) participating in an organized sport;

- c) participating in learning opportunities outside of the courses offered by the school district, charter school or the ASDB;
 - d) participating in community arts, including music lessons and community theater; and
 - e) enrolling in and passing any course offered by an Arizona public university, community college or SBE-approved private postsecondary institution.
- 2. Prescribes that a student earns, for each approved and completed course equivalent, the equivalent of one currently-required elective credit that counts towards graduation requirements.
- 3. Includes the instructional hours provided to a student who completes a course equivalent in ADM calculation subject to a limit of 1.0 for a full-time high school student.
- 4. Determines a course equivalent that meets 123 hours a year, or the equivalent, to be a subject for the purposes of meeting the definition of a *fractional student* or *full-time student*.
- 5. Requires the SBE to:
 - a) adopt a framework for schools to implement course equivalents; and
 - b) post a list of local or statewide nonprofit organizations and vendors, as provided by school districts, charter schools and the ASDB, where out-of-school experiences may be recognized for credit.
- 6. Requires each participating school district governing board, charter school governing body and the ASDB to establish a process to approve course equivalent credit requests.
- 7. Specifies that an organized sport includes:
 - a) off-campus leagues;
 - b) school district or charter school sports or sports organized by the ASDB in which the student participates for a season;
 - c) for-profit or nonprofit organized sports leagues, club sports and any other sports league that students generally participate in outside of school; and
 - d) any other activity prescribed by the SBE.
- 8. Specifies that a learning opportunity outside of the courses offered by a school district, charter school or the ASDB includes:
 - a) STEM clubs; and
 - b) other project-based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships approved by the SBE, ASDB, school district or charter school.
- 9. Defines *STEM* as science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- 10. Defines *elective credit*, for the authorization to approve course equivalents, as credit earned for successfully completing an additional course that is not a core course as prescribed by the SBE.
- 11. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Amendments Adopted by Committee

1. Specifies that a student working at a job may use the working hours as a course equivalent and removes the inclusion of summer break working hours.
2. Removes tutoring from the list of learning opportunities considered to be a course equivalent.
3. Subjects a course equivalent to the requirement to meet 123 hours a year to be considered a subject.

Amendments Adopted by Committee of the Whole

1. Allows, rather than requires, a school district or charter school to establish a process to approve requests for course equivalent credit and requires a course equivalent to be approved by the school district or charter school for a student to earn elective credit.
2. Extends, to the ASDB, the authorization for a school district or charter school serving students in grades 9-12 to approve course equivalents through which a student may earn elective credit for outlined out-of-school experiences.
3. Limits each student to earning only one required elective credit through each completed course equivalent.
4. Eliminates the requirements for schools to:
 - a) make every effort to recognize the experiences students have outside of school-mandated courses as relevant to student development;
 - b) identify an elective course for a student who works; and
 - c) provide the opportunity to identify course equivalents during the course and semester enrollment period.
5. Removes the authorization for SBE to adopt rules to allow certain out-of-school experiences to satisfy academic standards for students in kindergarten programs and grades 1 through 8.
6. Removes the authorization for the use of extra hours in the school day resulting from a student receiving elective credit for out-of-school experiences for student support and acceleration.
7. Defines *elective credit* as credit earned for successfully completing an additional course that is not a core course as prescribed by the SBE.
8. Makes technical and conforming changes.

Senate Action

ED 2/1/22 DPA 5-3-0

Prepared by Senate Research
February 24, 2022
LB/MS/slp