

REFERENCE TITLE: high schools; trade diploma program

State of Arizona  
House of Representatives  
Fifty-seventh Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2026

# HB 2216

Introduced by  
Representative Taylor

## AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY  
ADDING SECTION 15-217.03; AMENDING SECTION 15-701.01, 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. Title 15, chapter 2, article 1, Arizona Revised  
3 Statutes, is amended by adding section 15-217.03, to read:

4 15-217.03. Trade pathways diploma program; requirements;  
5 annual report

6 A. NOT LATER THAN JULY 1, 2027, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL  
7 ESTABLISH A TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO  
8 SEEK TO ENTER A CONSTRUCTION, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, MECHANICAL OR  
9 UTILITY-INFRASTRUCTURE TRADE. THE STATE BOARD SHALL CONSULT WITH THE  
10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TRADE SCHOOLS, REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP  
11 PROGRAMS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 15-1401, THE DEPARTMENT  
12 OF ECONOMIC SECURITY, EMPLOYERS IN THIS STATE AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL  
13 EDUCATION PROVIDERS TO DETERMINE THE MINIMUM CREDITS, COURSES,  
14 COMPETENCIES AND EXPERIENCES REQUIRED FOR A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TO EARN A  
15 DIPLOMA THROUGH THE TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM. THE MINIMUM  
16 COMPETENCIES FOR THE TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM MUST ALIGN WITH  
17 INDUSTRY DEMAND AND IN-DEMAND CAREER FIELDS. THE MINIMUM COURSE OF STUDY  
18 FOR THE TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM MUST:

19 1. REQUIRE NOT MORE THAN TWO CREDITS IN MATHEMATICS AND TWO CREDITS  
20 IN SCIENCE DURING GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE.

21 2. ALLOW STUDENTS TO EARN CREDITS THAT APPLY TOWARD HIGH SCHOOL  
22 GRADUATION THROUGH:

23 (a) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION COURSES THAT MEET ANY OF THE  
24 FOLLOWING:

25 (i) LEAD TO CERTIFICATION OR INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS.

26 (ii) LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT.

27 (iii) ARE RELATED TO A HIGH DEMAND CAREER FIELD.

28 (b) A PAID INTERNSHIP, TRAINING OR OTHER WORK-BASED LEARNING  
29 PROGRAM, SUBJECT TO INDUSTRY STANDARD WAGES.

30 (c) AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM THAT IS REGISTERED AND CERTIFIED WITH  
31 THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF LABOR UNDER SECTION 1 OF THE NATIONAL  
32 APPRENTICESHIP ACT (50 STAT. 664; 29 UNITED STATES CODE SECTION 50),  
33 SUBJECT TO INDUSTRY STANDARD WAGES.

34 (d) COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURSES.

35 (e) NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 15-901.08, REMOTE INSTRUCTION.

36 B. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, TRADE SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES,  
37 THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
38 PROVIDERS SHALL COOPERATE TO OPERATE A STATEWIDE TRADE PATHWAYS SYSTEM TO  
39 FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES,  
40 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITHOUT LOSS OF CREDIT.

41 C. THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY MAY ALLOCATE A PORTION OF  
42 FEDERAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DOLLARS TO INCENTIVIZE EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE  
43 REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AND OTHER WORK-BASED PROGRAMS TO HIGH  
44 SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH THE TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM.

1 D. ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2029 AND DECEMBER 1 OF EACH YEAR  
2 THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE  
3 SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE  
4 GOVERNOR AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING  
5 INFORMATION FOR THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR:

6 1. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE TRADE PATHWAYS  
7 DIPLOMA PROGRAM.

8 2. THE NUMBER OF CREDENTIALS THAT STUDENTS EARNED THROUGH THE TRADE  
9 PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM.

10 3. THE EMPLOYER RETENTION RATES OF STUDENTS WHO EARNED A TRADE  
11 PATHWAYS DIPLOMA ONE YEAR AFTER GRADUATION AND TWO YEARS AFTER GRADUATION.

12 4. THE AVERAGE WAGES OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRADE  
13 PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PROGRAM.

14 E. EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT, CHARTER SCHOOL, COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND  
15 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM THAT OFFERS INSTRUCTION THROUGH THE TRADE PATHWAYS  
16 DIPLOMA PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ANY DATA AND  
17 INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR THE REPORT REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION D OF THIS  
18 SECTION.

19 Sec. 2. Section 15-701.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
20 read:

21 15-701.01. High schools; graduation; requirements; community  
22 college or university courses; transfer from  
23 other schools; academic credit; report

24 A. The state board of education shall:

25 1. Prescribe a minimum course of study that incorporates the  
26 academic standards adopted by the state board for the graduation of pupils  
27 from high school.

28 2. Prescribe competency requirements for the graduation of pupils  
29 from high school incorporating the academic standards in at least the  
30 areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The  
31 academic standards prescribed by the state board in social studies shall  
32 include personal finance, American civics education and a comparative  
33 discussion of political ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism,  
34 that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy that are  
35 essential to the founding principles of the United States. The state  
36 board may consider establishing a required separate personal finance  
37 course for the purpose of the graduation of pupils from high school. The  
38 state board shall require at least one-half of a course credit in  
39 economics, which shall include financial literacy and personal financial  
40 management.

41 3. Through the graduating class of 2025, include in the competency  
42 requirements for social studies prescribed in paragraph 2 of this  
43 subsection a requirement that, in order to graduate from high school or  
44 obtain a high school equivalency diploma, a pupil must correctly answer at  
45 least sixty of the one hundred questions listed on a test that is

1 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
2 United States citizenship and immigration services. Beginning with the  
3 graduating class of 2026, the state board shall include in the competency  
4 requirements for social studies prescribed in paragraph 2 of this  
5 subsection a requirement that, in order to graduate from high school or  
6 obtain a high school equivalency diploma, a pupil must correctly answer at  
7 least seventy of the one hundred questions listed on a test that is  
8 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
9 United States citizenship and immigration services. A district school or  
10 charter school shall document on the pupil's transcript only a pass or  
11 fail designation that the pupil has passed or failed the test required by  
12 this paragraph. A pupil in grade seven or eight may take the test  
13 described in this paragraph, and if the pupil correctly answers at least  
14 seventy of the one hundred questions on the test:

15 (a) The district school or charter school shall document on the  
16 pupil's transcript only a pass or fail designation that the pupil has  
17 passed or failed the test required by this paragraph.

18 (b) The pupil is not required to take the test required by this  
19 paragraph again in high school.

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

23 B. The governing board of a school district shall:

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

27 2. Prescribe criteria for the graduation of pupils from the high  
28 schools in the school district. These criteria shall include  
29 accomplishment of the academic standards in at least reading, writing,  
30 mathematics, science and social studies, as determined by district  
31 assessment. Other criteria may include additional measures of academic  
32 achievement and attendance. Pursuant to the prescribed graduation  
33 requirements adopted by the state board of education, the governing board  
34 may approve a rigorous computer science course that would fulfill a  
35 mathematics course required for graduation from high school. The  
36 governing board may approve a rigorous computer science course only if the  
37 rigorous computer science course includes significant mathematics content  
38 and the governing board determines the high school where the rigorous  
39 computer science course is offered has sufficient capacity, infrastructure  
40 and qualified staff, including competent teachers of computer science.  
41 The school district governing board or charter school governing body may  
42 determine the method and manner in which to administer a test that is  
43 identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the  
44 United States citizenship and immigration services. A pupil who does not  
45 obtain a passing score on the test that is identical to the civics portion

1 of the naturalization test may retake the test until the pupil obtains a  
2 passing score.

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

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

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

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

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

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

44 G. A pupil who transfers from a private school shall be provided  
45 with a list that indicates those credits that have been accepted and

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

10 H. If a pupil who was previously enrolled in a charter school or  
 11 school district enrolls in a school district in this state, the school  
 12 district shall accept credits earned by the pupil in courses or  
 13 instructional programs at the charter school or school district. The  
 14 governing board of a school district may adopt a policy concerning the  
 15 application of transfer credits for the purpose of determining whether a  
 16 credit earned by a pupil who was previously enrolled in a school district  
 17 or charter school will be assigned as an elective or core credit. A  
 18 school district or charter school may note the learning outcomes that a  
 19 student mastered as prescribed in the rules adopted pursuant to section  
 20 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 38 to provide a record of the demonstrated  
 21 competencies and award partial credit.

22 I. A pupil who transfers credit from a charter school, a school  
 23 district or Arizona online instruction shall be provided with a list that  
 24 indicates which credits have been accepted as elective credits and which  
 25 credits have been accepted as core credits by the school district or  
 26 charter school. Within ten school days after receiving the list, the  
 27 pupil may request to take an examination in each particular course in  
 28 which core credit has been denied. The school district or charter school  
 29 shall accept the credit as a core credit for each particular course in  
 30 which the pupil takes an examination and receives a passing score on a  
 31 test that is aligned to the competency requirements adopted pursuant to  
 32 this section and that is designed and evaluated by a teacher in the school  
 33 district or charter school who teaches the subject matter on which the  
 34 examination is based. If a pupil is enrolled in a school district or  
 35 charter school and that pupil also participates in Arizona online  
 36 instruction between May 1 and July 31, the school district or charter  
 37 school shall not require proof of payment as a condition of the school  
 38 district or charter school accepting credits earned from the online course  
 39 provider.

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

44 K. Pupils who earn a Grand Canyon diploma pursuant to article 6 of  
 45 this chapter are exempt from the graduation requirements prescribed in

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

13 L. PUPILS WHO EARN A TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA PURSUANT TO SECTION  
14 15-217.03 ARE EXEMPT FROM THE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN THIS  
15 SECTION. PUPILS WHO EARN A TRADE PATHWAYS DIPLOMA ARE ENTITLED TO ALL THE  
16 RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF PERSONS WHO GRADUATE WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA  
17 ISSUED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, INCLUDING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY  
18 SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER FORMS OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID AND ACCESS TO ALL  
19 FORMS OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

20 ~~M.~~ M. Each school district and charter school shall report to the  
21 department of education all of the following aggregate data, organized by  
22 grade level, relating to the test that is identical to the civics portion  
23 of the naturalization test used by the United States citizenship and  
24 immigration services required by subsection A, paragraph 3 of this  
25 section:

- 26 1. The median score.
- 27 2. The percentage of pupils who passed by correctly answering the  
28 minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
29 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.
- 30 3. The percentage of pupils who failed by correctly answering fewer  
31 than the minimum number of questions required to pass the test pursuant to  
32 subsection A, paragraph 3 of this section.
- 33 4. Any other data required by the department relating to the test.

34 ~~M.~~ N. A school district or charter school may not include the  
35 personally identifiable information of any pupil in the data reported to  
36 the department of education under subsection ~~M~~ M of this section. The  
37 department of education shall make the data publicly available, organized  
38 at a minimum by school district or charter school and grade level, on the  
39 website that includes the school report cards required by section 15-746.