

House Engrossed

teachers academy; community college students

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

# HOUSE BILL 2255

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-1655, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL  
EMPLOYEE TRAINING.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Subject to the requirements of article IV, part 1,  
3 section 1, Constitution of Arizona, section 15-1655, Arizona Revised  
4 Statutes, is amended to read:

5 15-1655. Arizona teachers academy; tuition and fees  
6 scholarships; fund; reporting requirements;  
7 definitions

8 A. Eligible postsecondary institutions shall implement an Arizona  
9 teachers academy to incentivize students to enter the teaching profession  
10 and to commit to teach in Arizona public schools or for or in schools that  
11 serve primarily public school students with disabilities, which are  
12 considered public schools for the purposes of this section. The Arizona  
13 board of regents, in consultation with eligible postsecondary  
14 institutions, shall develop and implement centralized administrative  
15 processes for the academy, including:

- 16 1. A marketing and promotion plan to recruit students for the  
17 academy.
- 18 2. Data collection and reporting.
- 19 3. Tracking postgraduation service requirements.
- 20 4. Coordinating induction services.
- 21 5. Distributing monies in the Arizona teachers academy fund between  
22 eligible postsecondary institutions.
- 23 6. Collecting reimbursement from individuals who fail to meet  
24 service obligations.

25 B. The Arizona teachers academy may include new or existing teacher  
26 preparation program pathways that are student-focused and that employ  
27 proven, research-based models of best practices already being implemented.  
28 Each eligible postsecondary institution may develop a portfolio of teacher  
29 preparation programs to offer as part of the academy. Each eligible  
30 postsecondary institution that admits students to the Arizona teachers  
31 academy may give priority to senior and junior students but may not  
32 exclude sophomore and freshman students. Programs offered as part of the  
33 academy shall include accelerated models for:

- 34 1. High-demand teacher specializations, including special  
35 education, science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- 36 2. Critical need areas, including low-income public schools, public  
37 schools located on Indian reservations, rural public schools and schools  
38 that serve primarily public school students with disabilities.
- 39 3. Individuals seeking postbaccalaureate coursework that results in  
40 professional certification.
- 41 4. Teachers who are currently teaching a dual enrollment course to  
42 satisfy the requirements for teaching a dual enrollment course adopted by  
43 a higher learning commission that accredits degree-granting postsecondary  
44 educational institutions in the north central region, including this  
45 state.

1           5. Students in noneducation programs to complete one or more  
2 teacher preparation courses to prepare the student to receive a teaching  
3 certification following graduation.

4           C. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall develop formalized  
5 partnerships with public schools in this state to build commitments for  
6 teacher employment on completion of the Arizona teachers academy. The  
7 targeted deployment of teachers who have completed the academy shall be  
8 based on the needs of each school system and the community that is being  
9 served as well as the individual skills of each teacher.

10          D. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall provide to each  
11 student who is enrolled in the Arizona teachers academy an annual  
12 scholarship up to the actual cost of tuition and fees for a maximum of two  
13 academic years or four semesters for graduate university students, up to  
14 the actual cost of tuition and fees for a maximum of four academic years  
15 or eight semesters for undergraduate university students, up to the actual  
16 cost of tuition and fees for a maximum of ~~two~~ FOUR academic years or ~~four~~  
17 EIGHT semesters for community college students for tuition and fees  
18 associated with the student's program of study, up to the actual cost of  
19 obtaining national board certification and renewal, and up to the actual  
20 cost of obtaining a teaching certificate including the actual cost of the  
21 exam, after all other financial gifts, aid or grants received by that  
22 student or teacher. Scholarships under this subsection are subject to all  
23 of the following:

24           1. If the student does not successfully complete the academic year  
25 in good academic standing, the student shall reimburse the Arizona board  
26 of regents for the total amount of the scholarship for tuition and fees  
27 the student received for that year.

28           2. For each academic year that the student successfully completes  
29 and for which the student receives a scholarship for all tuition and fees,  
30 the student must agree to teach for one full school year in a public  
31 school in this state. For students who are teaching and receiving the  
32 scholarship concurrently, the commitment period begins after graduation  
33 from the Arizona teachers academy. For teachers who are seeking a  
34 national board certification, the teaching commitment is one additional  
35 year after completing the requirements of the national board certification  
36 program.

37           3. If a student enrolls in a summer term, that term may not be  
38 included in the calculation of the student's postgraduation public service  
39 commitment.

40           4. If the scholarship does not cover remaining tuition and fee  
41 costs after other aid received, the eligible postsecondary institution may  
42 not charge students the remaining difference. If the scholarship amount  
43 exceeds tuition and fee costs at an eligible postsecondary institution,  
44 the eligible postsecondary institution may use the remaining amount to  
45 support Arizona teachers academy costs.

1           5. If the student does not fulfill the student's obligation to  
2 teach in a public school, the student must reimburse the Arizona board of  
3 regents for the proportional amount of the scholarship for tuition and  
4 fees that the student received that corresponds to the number of school  
5 years the student agreed to teach but did not teach in a public school in  
6 this state.

7           6. If the student is physically or mentally unable to fulfill the  
8 requirements of the Arizona teachers academy, the Arizona board of regents  
9 shall establish a process for assessing the student's ability to repay the  
10 financial assistance received and shall determine any terms of repayment.

11           7. The Arizona board of regents shall establish a process for  
12 deferring service or repayment based on factors adopted by the board.

13           E. The Arizona teachers academy fund is established consisting of  
14 monies deposited pursuant to section 15-1281, subsection D, paragraph 5  
15 and section 15-1809, subsection E and legislative appropriations made for  
16 the purpose of administering the Arizona teachers academy. Monies in the  
17 fund are continuously appropriated and are exempt from the provisions of  
18 section 35-190 relating to lapsing of appropriations. The Arizona board  
19 of regents shall administer the fund and shall establish criteria for  
20 distributing monies in the fund to eligible postsecondary institutions  
21 each fiscal year to fund the costs of the academy. Monies in the fund may  
22 be used only for:

23           1. Reimbursing Arizona teachers academy scholarships that cover the  
24 balance of tuition and fees for undergraduate, graduate and  
25 postbaccalaureate students who are enrolled in the Arizona teachers  
26 academy after all other gifts and aid received.

27           2. Support for teachers who are currently employed in a public  
28 school in this state and who are seeking a national board certification.

29           3. Induction services for Arizona teachers academy graduates.

30           4. Implementing a marketing and promotion plan to recruit and  
31 retain students in the Arizona teachers academy with particular emphasis  
32 on ensuring that participants reflect the diversity of this state's  
33 student population and administering the Arizona teachers academy. Annual  
34 expenditures for marketing, promoting and administering the Arizona  
35 teachers academy may not exceed three percent of the monies in the fund  
36 each fiscal year.

37           F. Monies remaining in the Arizona teachers academy fund at the end  
38 of each fiscal year may be used by eligible postsecondary institutions for  
39 Arizona teachers academy costs in the next fiscal year.

40           G. On or before March 1 each year, the Arizona board of regents  
41 shall report to the joint legislative budget committee and the governor's  
42 office of strategic planning and budgeting on all of the following:

43           1. The total number of students enrolled in the Arizona teachers  
44 academy by eligible postsecondary institution in the current academic  
45 year.

1           2. The number of Arizona teachers academy graduates receiving  
2 induction services in the current academic year.

3           3. The estimated amount of monies committed from the Arizona  
4 teachers academy fund in the current fiscal year.

5           H. On or before September 1 each year, the Arizona board of regents  
6 shall report to the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker  
7 of the house of representatives, and shall submit a copy to the secretary  
8 of state, on all of the following:

9           1. The total number of students enrolled in the Arizona teachers  
10 academy at each eligible postsecondary institution by year of college  
11 enrollment and the number of teachers receiving a scholarship through the  
12 Arizona teachers academy for national board certification.

13           2. The percentage of students who completed each year of the  
14 academy and who plan to continue to the subsequent year, delineated by  
15 each teacher preparation program offered by each eligible postsecondary  
16 institution as part of the Arizona teachers academy.

17           3. The number of teachers who completed a program of study through  
18 the Arizona teachers academy by each eligible postsecondary institution.

19           4. The number of teachers currently teaching in a public school in  
20 this state as part of an agreement for receiving an Arizona teachers  
21 academy scholarship.

22           5. The number of graduates receiving induction services.

23           6. The number of students who have defaulted on their obligation  
24 and who are in repayment agreements.

25           7. The number of students who have deferred repayment agreements.

26           8. The number of students who have completed repayment agreements.

27           9. The methodology for distributing any monies appropriated for the  
28 Arizona teachers academy to each eligible postsecondary institution and  
29 the amounts distributed to each.

30           10. The amount of unused monies in the Arizona teachers academy  
31 fund from the prior fiscal year.

32           I. A college in this state that is owned, operated or chartered by  
33 a qualifying Indian tribe on its own Indian reservation and that offers  
34 baccalaureate teacher education programs may participate in the Arizona  
35 teachers academy and receive monies from the Arizona teachers academy fund  
36 established by this section.

37           J. For the purposes of this section:

38           1. "Eligible postsecondary institution" means any of the following:

39           (a) A university under the jurisdiction of the Arizona board of  
40 regents.

41           (b) A community college in this state.

42           (c) A college described in subsection I of this section if the  
43 college opts to participate in the Arizona teachers academy under  
44 subsection I of this section.

1           2. "School that serves primarily public school students with  
2 disabilities" means a school in which more than seventy-five percent of  
3 the students enrolled in the school are public school students who are  
4 placed at the school according to an agreement with a school, a charter  
5 school or the Arizona state schools for the deaf and the blind.

6           3. "Tuition and fees" means tuition, mandatory fees and program  
7 fees that are associated with a program in the Arizona teachers academy  
8 leading to teacher certification and that are charged by an eligible  
9 postsecondary institution.

10           Sec. 2. Requirements for enactment; three-fourths vote

11           Pursuant to article IV, part 1, section 1, Constitution of Arizona,  
12 section 15-1655, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by this act, is  
13 effective only on the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of the  
14 members of each house of the legislature.