



**ARIZONA STATE SENATE**  
*Fifty-Sixth Legislature, Second Regular Session*

**AMENDED**

FACT SHEET FOR H.B. 2645

foster children; high school; transfer

Purpose

Requires each school district governing board (governing board) and charter school governing body (governing body) to develop and adopt policies as outlined concerning the transfer of academic credits and educational records for a foster child who is enrolled in grades 9 through 12 and transfers to the school pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination.

Background

Within five days after a child enters foster care, or if a foster child's placement changes, specified individuals must determine whether it is in the child's best interest to remain in the child's school of origin, including: 1) the child, if appropriate; 2) the child's caseworker; 3) the child's parent, guardian, custodian, caregiver or foster parent; and 4) representatives from the local education agency or the child's school of origin. If the specified individuals determine that an educational placement change is in the child's best interest: 1) the new educational institution must enroll the foster child within two days of the determination; and 2) the child's school of origin must transfer the child's education records to the new institution within two days of the determination. The new educational institution must immediately enroll the foster child, even if the child does not possess the records normally required for enrollment or owes any outstanding fines or fees to the school of origin ([A.R.S. § 8-530.04](#)).

The State Board of Education (SBE) prescribes a minimum course of study and competency requirements for high school graduation. A governing board prescribes criteria for high school graduation for students in the school district and may prescribe course of study and competency requirements for high school graduation that are in addition to or higher than the course of study and competency requirements the SBE prescribes ([A.R.S. § 15-701.01](#)).

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

Provisions

*Academic Credits Transfer Policies*

1. Requires each governing board and governing body to develop and adopt policies concerning transfer credits for a foster child who is enrolled in grades 9 through 12 and transfers to the school district or charter school pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination.

2. Determines that the foster child transfer credit policies must specify how the school district or charter school will:
  - a) calculate full and partial academic credits earned by the foster child at the foster child's school of origin;
  - b) accept all academic credits, including partial credits, earned by the foster child at the foster child's school of origin;
  - c) determine whether to accept academic credits as elective or core credits; and
  - d) meet with the foster child within 10 days of receiving the foster child's educational records from the foster child's school of origin to review and update the foster child's graduation plan, including the foster child's participation in credit recovery programs, if necessary.
3. Specifies that a school district or charter school, when determining whether to accept academic credits as elective or core credits, must:
  - a) make every possible attempt to accept academic credits earned by a foster child at the foster child's school of origin as core credits; and
  - b) consider each learning outcome mastered and each competency requirement demonstrated by the foster child.
4. Requires a school district or charter school to provide a written copy of a foster child's graduation plan to:
  - a) the foster child;
  - b) each parent of the foster child whose parental rights have not been terminated; and
  - c) the foster child's guardian, custodian, caregiver or foster parent.
5. Requires the SBE to develop guidelines for school districts and charter schools to consider when developing the policies regarding the calculation of academic credits, including partial credits, for a foster child who is in grades 9 through 12 and transfers schools pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination.
6. Specifies that the guidelines SBE develops for the foster child transfer credit policies must include alternative methods for a receiving school to calculate and accept academic credits, including partial credits, that were earned by the foster child in the foster child's school of origin.

#### ***Educational Records Transfer Policies***

7. Requires each governing board and governing body to develop and adopt policies concerning the transfer of educational records by the school of origin for a foster child who is enrolled in grades 9 through 12 and transfers to the school district or charter school pursuant to a best interest educational determination.
8. Determines that the foster child educational records transfer policies must require the school of origin to include, in transferring a foster child's educational records:
  - a) all academic credits, including partial credits, earned by the foster child; and
  - b) documentation of the competencies achieved by the foster child in a course, if the foster child did not receive partial credit for a course the foster child was enrolled in.

- 9. Authorizes a school district or charter school that enrolls a foster child who transfers schools pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination to administer a local competency assessment to award full or partial academic credits for the core competencies identified in the educational records provided by the foster child's school or origin.

*Miscellaneous*

- 10. Precludes a governing board or governing body from requiring a foster child who is enrolled in grades 11 or 12 and transfers schools pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination to satisfy a course of study or competency requirements for high school graduation that are in addition to, or higher than, the minimum course of study and competency requirements prescribed by the SBE.

- 11. Defines terms.

- 12. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Amendment Adopted by Committee

- Narrows the prohibition on a governing board or governing body requiring any additional course of study or competency requirements to a foster child who is enrolled in grades 11 or 12 and transfers schools pursuant to a best interest educational placement determination.

House Action

Senate Action

ED	1/30/24	DP	10-0-0-0	ED	3/6/24	DPA	7-0-0
3 <sup>rd</sup> Read	2/20/24		57-0-2-0-1				

Prepared by Senate Research

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MH/LB/slp