



STATE OF ARIZONA

JANET NAPOLITANO  
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1700 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, PHOENIX, AZ 85007

MAIN PHONE: 602-542-4331  
FACSIMILE: 602-542-7601

May 16, 2006

The Honorable Ken Bennett  
President  
Arizona State Senate  
1700 West Washington Street  
Senate Office Building  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Senate Bill 1443: AIMS test; alternative graduation requirement

Dear President Bennett:

Today, I signed Senate Bill 1443 into law. It makes sense to consider grades in assessing a student's readiness for high school graduation. After all, institutions of higher education and employers consider grades for college entry and employment.

Arizonans should understand, however, that neither Senate Bill 1443 nor the AIMS test itself will move our high schools into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century without a more significant state commitment to improving education quality.

If we are serious about ensuring that every student is ready for college or work, we must: improve the rigor of high school course work; provide for end-of-course testing requirements; increase teacher pay and opportunities for professional development; and upgrade the data systems our schools use so that information regarding students is available to teachers in a timely manner. We must also see to it that all of our K-8 students are prepared for a rigorous high school curriculum, not just some of our students.

I have formed a P-20 Council, made up of parents, educators, legislators and business leaders to discuss the serious issues of education redesign. I look forward to their recommendations and to working with the Legislature in addressing these substantive issues in future legislative sessions.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Napolitano", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Janet Napolitano  
Governor

JN:BH/jm

cc: The Honorable Jim Weiers  
The Honorable Thayer Verschoor

Senate Engrossed

**FILED**

**JANICE K. BREWER  
SECRETARY OF STATE**

State of Arizona  
Senate  
Forty-seventh Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2006

CHAPTER 282

# **SENATE BILL 1443**

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-701.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

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

2 Section 1. Section 15-701.02, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:

4 15-701.02. Alternative high school graduation requirement;  
5 definition

6 A. A pupil who fails to achieve a passing score on a competency test  
7 required for graduation during 2006 or 2007 of pupils from high school may  
8 graduate if the pupil meets the alternative graduation requirements  
9 established pursuant to this section.

10 B. A pupil is eligible for the alternative graduation requirements  
11 established pursuant to this section if all of the following apply:

12 1. The pupil has taken the competency test each time the test was  
13 offered when the pupil was eligible to take the test.

14 2. The pupil has completed with a passing grade all coursework and  
15 credits prescribed for the graduation of pupils from high school by the  
16 governing board of the pupil's school district pursuant to section 15-701.01.

17 3. The pupil has participated in any academic remediation programs  
18 available in the pupil's school in those subject areas where the pupil failed  
19 to achieve a passing score on the competency test.

20 C. Pupils who fail to achieve a passing score on a competency test  
21 required for graduation from high school may augment the score with  
22 additional credit as provided in subsection D of this section. A pupil shall  
23 augment the score of each area where the pupil failed to achieve a passing  
24 score separately and concurrently in an amount not to exceed one quarter of  
25 the pupil's achieved score in each area. For the purposes of this section, a  
26 pupil may use the highest achieved score in each area of any time the  
27 competency test was taken.

28 D. The state board of education shall provide for the augmenting of  
29 competency test scores of pupils who fail to achieve a passing score on the  
30 competency test required for graduation from high school. The board, by  
31 rule, shall establish the manner that additional credit may be used to  
32 augment the score of the pupil. The board shall use the augmented scores  
33 only for the purpose of determining whether the pupil meets the alternative  
34 graduation requirements established pursuant to this section. If the  
35 augmented score of the pupil exceeds the passing score on the competency  
36 test, the pupil shall be considered to have passed the competency test in  
37 that area for graduation purposes.

38 E. Additional credits applied to the pupil's score pursuant to  
39 subsections C and D of this section shall be based only on the performance of  
40 the pupil in those courses that meet the requirements for graduation  
41 established by the state board of education pursuant to section 15-203,  
42 subsection A, paragraph 13, INCLUDING ANY ELECTIVES THAT SATISFY THE  
43 REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION. Each course that  
44 receives additional credit pursuant to this section shall receive equivalent  
45 additional credit regardless of subject area, except that greater additional

1 credit shall be granted for courses with more advanced academic content  
2 related to the academic standards prescribed by the state board of education  
3 pursuant to section 15-701.01.

4 F. In establishing its rules regarding additional credit for specific  
5 performance in courses pursuant to subsections C, D and E of this section,  
6 the state board of education shall provide varying amounts of additional  
7 credit for each performance level achieved in the course as follows:

8 1. A grade of A or its equivalent shall be proportionally higher than  
9 a grade of B or its equivalent.

10 2. A grade of B or its equivalent shall be proportionally higher than  
11 a grade of C or its equivalent.

12 3. Grades lower than C or its equivalent shall not be eligible for  
13 additional credit.

14 G. For the purposes of this section, "competency test" means a  
15 competency test required for graduation of a pupil from high school  
16 established by the state board of education pursuant to section 15-701.01,  
17 subsection A, paragraph 3.

18 Sec. 2. Emergency

19 This act is an emergency measure that is necessary to preserve the  
20 public peace, health or safety and is operative immediately as provided by  
21 law.

**EMERGENCY  
NOT ENACTED**

**APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR MAY 16, 2006.**

**FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE MAY 16, 2006.**