



COVID-19 Updates: Statewide Assessments, High School Graduation, and Remote Learning Opportunity Plan Form

Statewide Assessments: Federal Waiver Approved

Due to the extraordinary circumstances and extended school closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Arizona Department of Education, with approval from the State Board of Education, submitted a request to the U.S. Department of Education to waive certain assessment, accountability, school identification for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and report card requirements for the 2019-2020 school year for the State of Arizona. The U.S. Department of Education has completed an initial review of Arizona's request and has stated that it appears to meet all statutory requirements and that Arizona may now begin to implement the waivers while the formal approval is being processed.

The following requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 are included in this approved waiver request for the 2019-2020 school year:

- The requirements to administer all required assessments
- Accountability and school identification requirements (CSI & TSI)
- Report card provisions related to certain assessments and accountability

State Board of Education: High School Graduation and Remote School Learning Opportunity Plan Form

Awarding Academic Credit and High School Diplomas

On March 31, 2020, the State Board of Education adopted emergency rules (see R7-2-302.11) regarding the issuance of academic credit and high school diplomas for the 2019-2020 school year.

When deciding how to award academic credit and high school diplomas, schools should first base the decisions on the entire school year, including any educational opportunities provided during closures. School districts and charter schools determine what the educational opportunities are and how they are delivered. Examples may include independent study and online instruction.

If schools are unable to provide educational opportunities during the closure, then schools may look to the student's progress prior to the closure. Specifically, if the student already met the competency requirements for the course or was on track to graduate prior to the closure, then the school may award the credit or diploma. How to make this determination is at the discretion of the school district or charter school.

Regarding the Civics Test Graduation Requirement, students are still required by statute to receive a 60% or better on the Civics Test. As a reminder, students may take the assessment in a form and manner determined by the school district or charter school. Schools should not withhold diplomas from a student that is unable to take the assessment due to barriers created by the public health emergency.

These rules are intended to clarify pathways to award credit and diplomas as the result of the closures. Schools retain the authority to decide whether to issue diplomas or credit to students. However, schools may not base these decisions solely due to missed instructional time as the result of the closure.

- R7-2-302.11 Minimum Course of Study and Competency Requirements Public Health Emergency in the 2019-2020 school year

Remote School Learning Opportunity Plan Form

HB 2910 requires local education agencies (LEA) to offer educational opportunities, as determined by the LEA, during the school closure in order to receive continued formula funding. The Board and ADE are required to adopt the manner in which LEAs attest to providing educational opportunities.

To accomplish this, LEAs must do the following by April 15, 2020:

- Fill out a form for each school or LEA.
- On the form, LEAs will attest to the educational opportunities they are providing to students via a signature by the LEA's superintendent, school leader or their designee.

The Remote School Learning Opportunity Plan form can be accessed here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1dz39okbrFIGckwXDRB7hzoquqfazYbc-eyq0Bw_ZltM/edit.

Following the end of the school year, the Board will follow-up with schools on the Plans submitted.

For questions on completing the form, please contact Board staff at inbox@azsbe.az.gov or (602) 542-5057.

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