



ARIZONA

CERTIFICATION

The Certification Unit of the Arizona Department of Education oversees the issuance of teaching certificates in the state. At both the elementary and secondary levels provisional and standard certificates are issued. Alternative certificates are not currently being issued in Arizona.

Elementary Certification

Provisional Elementary Certificates are valid for two years and are not renewable, but they may be extended. In order to obtain a Provisional Elementary Certificate in Arizona applicants must have

- ❖ a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution;
- ❖ a valid Class 1 or Class 2 Fingerprint Clearance Card issued by the Arizona Department of Public Safety;
- ❖ a passing score on the professional knowledge portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment;
- ❖ a passing score on the elementary education subject knowledge portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment;
- ❖ one of the following requirements:
 1. 45 hours of education courses, at least eight semester hours of which are practicum hours in grades K-8; two years of verified teaching experience in grades K-8 can substitute for the eight semester hours of practicum;
 2. valid elementary certificate from another state; and
 3. completion of a teacher preparation program in elementary education from an accredited institution or from a board-approved teacher preparation program;

- ❖ Arizona Constitution (college course or appropriate examination); and
- ❖ U.S. Constitution (college course or appropriate examination)—if applicant is deficient in only these requirements (Arizona and U.S. Constitution) then he/she can be granted a Provisional Certificate and he/she will have one year to fulfill the requirements.

Standard Elementary Certificates are valid for six years and are renewable. In order to obtain a Standard Elementary Certificate, applicants must have

- ❖ qualified for the Provisional Elementary Certificate;
- ❖ a valid Class 1 or Class 2 Fingerprint Clearance Card issued by the Arizona Department of Public Safety;
- ❖ 45 clock hours or 3 semester hours of instruction in research-based systematic phonics, provided by an accredited institution or other approved provider; and
- ❖ a passing score on the performance portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment. Two years of verified teaching experience during the valid period of the Provisional Certificate may be used to convert the Provisional Certificate to a Standard Certificate.

Secondary Certification

Provisional Secondary Certificates are valid for two years and are not renewable, but they may be extended. In order to obtain a Provisional Secondary Certificate, applicants must have

- ❖ a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution;
- ❖ a valid Class 1 or Class 2 Fingerprint Clearance Card issued by the Arizona Department of Public Safety;
- ❖ a passing score on the professional knowledge portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment;
- ❖ a passing score on one or more subject knowledge portions of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment. If a proficiency assessment is not offered in a subject area, an approved area shall consist of a minimum of 24 semester hours of subject-related courses from an accredited institution. Subject knowledge tests are required in both social studies and in history;
- ❖ one of the following requirements:
 1. 30 semester hours of education courses including at least 8 semester hours of practicum in grades 7–12. Two years of verified teaching experience in grades 7–postsecondary may substitute for the 8 semester hours of practicum;
 2. a valid secondary certificate from another state; and
 3. completion of a teacher preparation program in secondary education from an accredited institution or from a board-approved teacher preparation program;

- ❖ Arizona Constitution (college course or the appropriate examination); and
- ❖ U.S. Constitution (college course or the appropriate examination)—if applicant is deficient in only these requirements (Arizona and U.S. Constitution) then he/she can be granted a Provisional Certificate and he/she will have one year to fulfill the requirements.

Standard Secondary Certificates are valid for six years and are renewable. In order to qualify for a Standard Secondary Certificates, applicants must

- ❖ qualify for the Provisional Secondary Certificate;
- ❖ have a valid Class 1 or Class 2 Fingerprint Clearance Card issued by the Arizona Department of Public Safety; and
- ❖ have a passing score on the performance portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment. If the applicant has two years of verified teaching experience during the valid period of the Provisional Certificate those years may be used to convert the Provisional Certificate to a Standard Certificate.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Arizona has developed nine Professional Teacher Standards. The seventh standard addresses the level of content knowledge expected of new teachers. No specific social studies content standards have yet been located for teachers.

Standards for Students

Standards in Arizona exist at five levels: readiness (kindergarten), foundations (grades 1–3), essentials (grades 4–8, sometimes broken out as grades 4–5 and 6–8), proficiency (grades 9–12), and distinction (honors/AP). Content standards in social studies were approved for Arizona students in March 2000. Arizona’s Social Studies Standards Rationale explains that the “study of history is essential in developing citizens who understand contemporary issues with a depth and wisdom drawn from the experience of the past.” The rationale calls for the integration of the humanities and social sciences through the study of history. Western civilization is featured prominently in the standards, but students are also expected to learn about non-Western civilizations. The Arizona standards recognize the diverse background of many people who have contributed to American life while emphasizing our shared heritage as citizens of the United States. Specific mention is made of the importance of studying the documents of the Founding Period in United States history. The Social Studies Standards Rationale emphasizes the importance of students acquiring core knowledge, practicing reasoning skills, and engaging in inquiry and research.

Arizona’s Social Studies Standards include history, civics/government, geography, and economics. Standard 1, the history standard, requires that

- ❖ students analyze the human experience through time, recognize the relationships of events and people, and interpret significant patterns, themes, ideas, beliefs, and turning points in Arizona, American, and world history.

Specific standards are then organized at each of the five levels, and performance objectives are identified. Standards at the readiness and foundations levels require students to describe history as the story of events, people, and places of the past, engage in chronological sequencing, recognize change over time, and describe stories of American heroes. By the time students reach the essentials level, they are expected to use historical research skills and analytical skills and to apply them to the content standards. From the essentials level on, specific historical research skills and analytical skills are identified and related to the content standards. The standards become more content specific beginning with the fourth grade. Areas of focus begin to be identified (for example, American history from discovery through the U.S. Constitution and Arizona). At the essentials level, world history (specifically ancient civilizations through the age of exploration) also receives a point of focus, and later U.S. and Arizona history (through Reconstruction) are emphasized. The proficient level requires students to examine world history from the Enlightenment to the modern age. The focus for U.S. and Arizona history is the industrial revolution to “current issues.” The distinction level does not add any additional content. The focus is instead on the use of historical knowledge and the processes incorporated by historians.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

The Arizona State Board of Education established 20 credits as the minimum required for high school graduation. The board stipulates that one and one-half credits must be earned in instruction in the essentials, sources, and history of the constitutions of the United States and Arizona, and one credit must be earned in world history/geography.

Exit Exam

No high school exit exam requirements have been identified.

ASSESSMENT

Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) is a program that provides for the collection and reporting of achievement data. In Arizona students take the Stanford 9 nationally norm-referenced test, and they take the AIMS test at grades 3, 5, 8, and at the high school level. AIMS high school tests measure achievement in writing, mathematics, and reading. No evidence of assessment in history or social studies has been found.