



Issue 4

July 2015

# The Grader

**Dear Colleagues,**

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Everyone in the state has been managing so much change recently related to the assessment, state legislation, our ESEA waiver, etc. Most recently, ADE has reorganized so that the Support & Innovation section (formerly School Improvement) and the Accountability section will both fall under the High Quality Assessments and Accountability Division. This reorganization will ensure that schools receive the necessary information and support to improve wherever possible.

Arizona has not yet received an approved waiver from US DOE for ESEA flexibility for the 2015-2016 school year. ADE's "waiver team" consists of representatives from across the agency in order to build the submission currently [posted online](#). This version is considered DRAFT until approved by US DOE.

Although we have no A-F letter grades for the 2015 school year, ADE is required by both state and federal law to publicly report annual performance data for all schools. The primary reporting mechanism for reporting this data will be the ADE website. We highly recommend that school and district administrators check the accountability website weekly for updated data; however, current reports (i.e. graduation and dropout rate) specific to schools can be accessed in ADEConnect. All Fiscal year 2015 data (and all fiscal years going forward) should be accessed through the "Accountability" application in ADEConnect. Publicly posted data will include data for all schools across the state. ADEConnect or CommonLogon will reflect data specific to the user's school or district. Please contact [achieve@azed.gov](mailto:achieve@azed.gov) if you have questions specific to a measure or student prior to the public file which will be considered final data.

Registration for the Title I Spring Coordinators' Meeting is now up on the ADE Calendar of Events. Register [here](#).

Thank you!

## ELL AMENDMENT REQUESTS

Amendment requests do not remove or waive accountability for assessment and educating students with a documented ELL need; amendment requests ensure a student’s needs are being reported correctly. Last year was the first year schools were able to provide the student-level information needed in order to amend ELL status when no other automated system or process existed. This process will continue, however, the data collection method and stakes attached to these amendment requests have changed due to new requirements from Title III as well as the state accountability system. In order to submit ANY request to amend student information related to students’ English language need or English language program participation status, the LEA must submit a reason for every student without a valid FY2015 Spring Reassessment through an application called "LEA Reason for Lack of Reassessment". If a school needs to amend the SDELL73 status of a student (for example: student was not tested but had a documented ELL need), the school can then (and only then) use the ELL Amendment Request application to request to amend the status of any student listed in the LEA Reason and/or Amendment Request application. In about 90% of cases, students were accurately captured by SAIS as having a need documented prior to the testing window, not tested, and not amended. Although we understand that the requirement to test 100% of students is a high standard, ADE enforces the federal accountability requirement for at least 95% test participation.

Here are some reasons a student’s ELL status might be amended based on a submission through ADEConnect AFTER the LEA provides a reason for the student’s lack of reassessment:

- ◆ Student’s overall proficiency score not reflected from prior year due to integrity errors of another LEA
- ◆ Student was not enrolled during the school’s testing window
- ◆ Other reason which warrants a change to the student status of having an ELL need
- ◆ Other reason which warrants a change to the student status of no Spring reassessment
  - ◇ Students who take a qualifying placement test after Jan. 1 will be counted as tested without the requirement for schools to submit an amendment request

Here are some reasons a student’s ELL status would not be amended based on a submission through ADEConnect AFTER the LEA provides a reason for the student’s lack of reassessment:

- ◆ LEA didn’t know the student had an ELL need
- ◆ The Spring Reassessment was not processed or submitted correctly
- ◆ Other reasons related to data management but do not change the need or requirement to provide services and assessment

Please note that ADE will not waive more than 1% of an LEA’s total “N-count” (number of ELL students) since this volume of data management issues can and should be corrected prior to the end of the fiscal year.

### ELL Amendment Request

District:

School:

An ELL Amendment Request can amend the SDELL73 Report when no other process exists to update enrollment information based on student mobility or other factors. The LEA may request to either delete students that had a documented ELL need in SAIS but were not tested on the Spring AZELLA Reassessment or add students that received a Spring AZELLA Reassessment but had no documented ELL need in SAIS.

**Directions**

1. Evaluate each student record individually for the specific record(s) the LEA requests to amend.
2. Request to change (either add or remove) the student’s SDELL73 status by selecting the ‘check box’ in the Amendment Request column.
3. Provide specific comment which supports the request to amend each particular student record requested.
4. Leave the amendment request column unchecked for records to maintain the SDELL73 status (i.e. students who took a placement test after Jan 1 in lieu of Reassessment do not require an amendment since the student was not required to reassess).
5. Select the ‘check box’ to certify accuracy once all records and requests to amend records are verified.
6. **Once submitted, reasons cannot be changed.** Hit the “Submit” button to finalize all amendment request(s).

After the integrity process is complete and the fiscal year end data is finalized in SAIS, if the data supports the request, the school’s SDELL73 Report and the student’s ELL need will be updated. No single LEA or school can receive more than one waiver or waive 1% of the ELL n-count (whichever is more) based on student mobility. Amendment requests for **untested data in SAIS** supports removal or addition will be reflected in **SAIS** (as counted) by ADE Accountability. All amendment requests which are not approved will maintain status related to test participation requirements. Final reclassification percentage will be impacted by the percentage of students tested. **This application will close; all amendment requests must be received by the Accountability deadline (www.azed.gov/accountability for more information on deadlines, etc.).**

| School Entity | School | SAIS ID | Last Name | First Name | Grade | Date of Birth | SDELL 73 Status | AZELLA Tested | Amendment Request        | Amendment Request Comment |
|---------------|--------|---------|-----------|------------|-------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|               |        |         |           |            |       |               | Listed          | Not Tested    | <input type="checkbox"/> |                           |
|               |        |         |           |            |       |               | Listed          | Not Tested    | <input type="checkbox"/> |                           |
|               |        |         |           |            |       |               | Listed          | Not Tested    | <input type="checkbox"/> |                           |

I certify that the amendment request(s) submitted for ELL Amendment Request are complete.

Submit

Check "LEA Reason for Lack of AZELLA Reassessment" and "AZELLA Corrections" to ensure accurate data.  
 1 If listed and not tested, by clicking the amendment request box you are requesting the student to be removed from the test list.  
 2 If not listed and tested, by clicking the amendment request box you are requesting the student to be added to the test list.

# *Alternative Schools Accountability Advisory Group Meeting SUMMARY*

On July 2, 2015, ADE staff from Accountability, Support & Innovation met with stakeholders to collect feedback about current and future policy and/or legislation related to accountability for alternative schools specifically. Many of the meeting items discussed below may also apply to traditional schools; this summary was provided to the State Board of Education staff.



## ***CONSIDERATION FOR FUTURE ACCOUNTABILITY LABELS FOR ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS***

- ◆ A-F letter grades do not serve same purpose, benefit to schools which operate academic programs geared toward independent, under-credited students – nor their parents who are often not involved in the decision or seeking a school which will enroll students with possible behavioral/legal issues regardless of its A-F performance.
- ◆ Legacy labels (i.e. performing, performing plus, etc.) were less punitive than an actual “A-F” letter grade which could cause confusion based on how different alternative schools are from traditional schools – yet they appear to have the same grading system/standard.
- ◆ One overall label or letter grade does not provide sufficient information to the public regarding the school’s performance in key areas unique to the school type (i.e. credit recovery for alternative schools) so “accountability” should disaggregate performance measures.

## ***STATUTORY REQUIREMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR BOTTOM 25% SUBGROUP***

- ◆ Although required by law, increased accountability for the Bottom 25% may not be meaningful if the vast majority of students enrolled at an alternative school have previously demonstrated low achievement.
- ◆ Current operationalization of the Bottom 25% at the school level penalizes alternative schools with higher mobility rates due to the inability to provide meaningful interventions to a static group of students.
- ◆ More flexibility to use other subgroups (i.e. super subgroup, NCLB subgroups, etc.) minimizes the negative impact associated with serving students who struggle academically.

## ***LIMITATIONS OF PRESPECTIVE WEIGHTING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS***

- ◆ Statutory requirements for a minimum of 50% of accountability based on student proficiency displaces the academic growth emphasized at alternative schools.
- ◆ Operational definition of “growth” (difference in scale scores) in statute does not recognize growth in academic credits required for receiving a high school diploma.
- ◆ An exhaustive list of what will be included in an achievement profile limits the ability to use other data when it is available.

## ***STATUTE REQUIRING SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY***

- ◆ Allow the use of multiple measures of student performance and school quality
- ◆ Define what measures must be included without defining how
- ◆ Continue to require student mobility adjustment
- ◆ Give recognition to the unique nature of alternative schools specifically

## **GRANT REMINDERS**

- ◆ **SIG Cohort 2** year 5 sustainability grants and **SIG Cohort 3** year 2 implementation grants have been scored and LEAs notified. The allocations are set as listed in the original Cohort 3 award letter and Cohort 2's notification of year 5 funding availability.
- ◆ **Priority and Focus** grant process for FY16 includes two steps
  - ◇ The “application” is the completed L/SCIP outlining goals, strategies, and action steps aligned to the 7 Turnaround Interventions for Priority Schools and Principle 5, plus others identified, to address reason for Focus Schools. Tags are required at the action step level to identify Priority or Focus and Principle number being addressed.
  - ◇ Completion of the budget and detailed budget narrative matching the L/SCIP

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

Register NOW for the Title I [Spring Coordinators' Meeting](#).

- ◆ August 1, 2015 - Priority and Focus continuation grant allocations to LEAs
- ◆ August 1, 2015 (approximate date) - All Support and Innovation grants available on GME
- ◆ August 15, 2015 - New Priority and Focus grant allocations to LEAs
- ◆ August 15, 2015 or earlier - Assurances due (email to assigned Specialist and upload into ALEAT file cabinet)
- ◆ August 31, 2015 -To ensure no lapse of Priority and Focus grant funding, submit the L/SCIP (on ALEAT) and Budget with detailed narrative (on GME). Your assigned Specialist will approve them or be in contact about necessary revisions and/or additions.
- ◆ August 31, 2015 - If you have a new grant or want earlier approval on a continuation grant, complete the L/SCIP (on ALEAT) and Budget with the detailed narrative (on GME) and notify your assigned Specialist
- ◆ September 30, 2015 - All Support and Innovation FY15 projects' completion date
- ◆ September 30, 2015 - Completion Reports can be started as soon as you have completed all activities funded in FY15 grant. Remember, once Completion Reports are started, no more reimbursements can be requested from FY15 funds. CRs must be submitted in a timely manner in order for FY16 reimbursement requests to be paid.
- ◆ October 1, 2015 - Final deadline for submitting L/SCIP (on ALEAT) and Budget with detailed narrative (on GME).
- ◆ October 15, 2015; January 15, 2016; March 15, 2016; June 15, 2016 - Quarterly achievement data submissions due (email to assigned Specialist and upload into ALEAT file cabinet)
- ◆ October 15, 2015; January 15, 2016; March 15, 2016; June 15, 2016 - Quarterly detailed expenditure reports due (email to assigned Specialist and upload into ALEAT file cabinet)



## *STAFF INTRODUCTIONS*

**Yovhane Metcalfe - Chief Accountability Officer**

| <b>ADE ACCOUNTABILITY, SUPPORT &amp; INNOVATION SECTION</b> |                              |                                |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>As of 7/31/2015</b>                                      |                              |                                |
| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Title</b>                 | <b>Support Area</b>            |
| Elizabeth Allen   | Education Program Specialist | District School Support        |
| Mary Arno   | Education Program Specialist | District School Support        |
| Ericka Ciganek  | Education Program Specialist | Charter School Support         |
| John Cortez   | Education Program Specialist | Charter School Support         |
| Felicia Francis   | Project Specialist           | Section Support                |
| Robert Gray   | Director                     | Charter School Support         |
| Steve Henneberg   | Education Program Specialist | District School Support        |
| Justin Hernandez  | Research Assistant           | Accountability                 |
| Devon Isherwood   | Director                     | District School Support        |
| Scott Maxwell   | Director                     | Cross-Divisional Collaboration |
| Tammy McKeown   | Director                     | ELL Accountability and Support |
| Jan Pender  | Education Program Specialist | District School Support        |
| Susan Poole   | Education Program Specialist | Cross-Divisional Collaboration |
| Cindy Richards  | Administrative Assistant     | Section Support                |
| Fei Zhao  | Research Scientist           | Accountability                 |



Tammy McKeown, M.S. joined the ADE in July 2015. Prior to joining ADE she conducted research and evaluation activities for federally funded grant projects (alternative teacher preparation and teacher professional development programs). She is currently completing a Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation. Tammy recently moved to Arizona from Virginia and, in her free time, has been teaching herself to play bass guitar.

## Should ADE assign labels, provide recognition to all schools during the Accountability Transition?



| PRO(S)   | CON(S)  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>By assigning labels to Title I &amp; <u>non-Title I</u> schools, ADE can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Give high achieving non-Title schools earned recognition</li><li>Provide more usable information instead of no information to parents, communities</li><li>Hold all schools to the same standards regardless of socioeconomic makeup</li><li>Maintain some accountability for school performance during transition</li><li>Identify all schools for support before they fall "below average"</li></ul> | <p><b>By assigning labels to Title I &amp; <u>non-Title I</u> schools, ADE must address:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lack of state incentives/support for lower achieving non-Title schools which may receive a label</li><li>Complex messaging for schools which do not qualify for any label</li><li>Opposition from lower achieving schools with small enrollment numbers, for-profit status, or schools with higher socioeconomic demographics</li><li>Intention of SB1289 to relieve pressure of accountability by prohibiting ADE's ability to letter grade schools</li></ul> |

ADE Accountability, Support & Innovation will return to the SBE this fall to provide an update on the requested amendment to consider additional information in the method used to identify alternative schools with "below average" levels of performance as required by SB1289. In addition, the Department is collecting feedback on "Reward" and "Focus" labels for non-Title I schools which may qualify for a label but do not qualify to receive the support and resources available to Title I schools. This feedback will inform the Department's plan on how to recognize schools without issuing A-F letter grades for the 2015 and 2016 school years.

***Tell us what you think!***  
***Take a short survey here.***

### ***Estimated Data Availability Schedule***

The data reporting schedule below refers to the availability of this information statewide. While there is NO embargo on any of the data below so schools may report their own rates, ADE will report this information with Accountability business rules applied. ***\*Updated July 2015.***

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| August 2015     | Graduation 4, 5, 6, and 7 year Rate (s)           |
| August 2015     | Persistence Rate                                  |
| August 2015     | Dropout rate                                      |
| *September 2015 | Reclassification on AZELLA rate                   |
| August 2015     | AZELLA Test Participation Rate                    |
| August 2015     | AIMS & AIMS A Science Proficiency                 |
| November 2015   | College and/or Career Readiness Index Information |
| November 2015   | ELA/Math/Science Test Participation Rate          |
| November 2015   | AzMERIT (All Subjects) Pass or CCR rate           |
| January 2016    | Student Growth Percentiles                        |
| January 2016    | NCSC pass rate                                    |
| February 2016   | Reward, Focus, Priority PILOT Determinations      |

## ***ACCOUNTABILITY FAQs***

### **Q1. For the proposed RFP criteria, will Title I schools only be compared to other Title I schools?**

A. Each school in the state will be compared to all other schools regardless of their Title I status. This is in order to identify the schools with below average levels of performance as required by SB1289. For Reward identification, the criteria will be applied to Title I schools only.



### **Q2. For the “Low Achieving Subgroup” determination in the proposed RFP criteria, what does it mean in terms of “Highest quartile of overlap between the school’s B25 subgroup and the state Bottom 25%” and how it is calculated?**

A. The State Bottom 25% refers to all students whose scale score is at the lowest quartile in the state for each subject and grade level in that single year. For example, the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile for the 2014 AIMS administration are posted on [page 93](#) of our ESEA waiver request. School B25% refers to the lowest achieving students within a school across all subjects and grade levels. Schools, where a large percentage of their Bottom Quartile Student Subgroup is in the state bottom 25%, are what we are identifying in this criterion. We rank order this percentage for all the schools in the state and identify the schools that have the highest percentage of students who score in the Bottom 25% of the state. You can also find the information at the most recent ESEA resubmission: <http://www.azed.gov/eseawaiver/>

### **Q3. What are our AMOs now?**

A. New AMOs based on 2015 AzMERIT results will be reported for the 2015 as well as the 2016 school year by January 2016. Please see [page 138](#) of our ESEA waiver request for more information.



**Q4. Where is the Arizona’s Measure of Academic Progress form located for extremely small schools and schools with insufficient data?**

A. Schools which did not receive any letter grade for the 2013-2014 school year can access the form here: <http://www.azed.gov/accountability/files/2015/06/measure-of-academic-progress.pdf>. Charter schools which did not receive any 2013-2014 A-F letter grade do not have to submit or complete any additional information or reports for accountability at this time.

**Q5. When we report high school students, are we now assuming for SY 2014-15 in math and ELA that all high school students are potentially participating in assessments? So we would count them as not participating if they do not have an assessment?**

A. In the past, we only reported students in their second year of high school (based on cohort). Given that NCSC only occurs in Grade 11 and EOC participation becomes a local decision, schools are now accountable for the students’ assessment in Math and ELA by the time they complete Grade 11. To calculate test participation in 2015 high school ELA (or Math); divide (numerator) the total number of students who have taken Grade 10 AIMS in 2014, or have finished any ELA EOC in FY2015, or have taken NCSC in FY2015, by (denominator) the total number of Grade 11 students enrolled.

$$\text{High School Test Participation} = \frac{\text{Students who took Grade 10 AIMS in FY2014, or finished any ELA EOC in FY2015, or took NCSC in FY2015}}{\text{Total number of Grade 11 students enrolled}}$$

**Q6. In reviewing May issue of The Grader, it states that a final percentage of reclassification of ELLs will be available in September. Will there be a reclassification percentage given to LEAs before the final percentage?**

A. All LEAs have the assessment data required to calculate their overall reclassification percentage. The “final” reclassification percentage used for accountability purposes will reflect amendment requests processed in August, adjustments for untested students, and any other data corrections made prior to the fiscal year end.

**Q7. Have any test dates for AzMERIT in the fall been decided yet?**

A. Yes. The schedule is announced here: <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/files/2015/06/detail-calendar-2015-2016.pdf>

**Q8. Where can I find 2015 AIMS & AIMS A Science results for the state?**

A. Schools and LEAs can download student-level information from ADEConnect —> Accountability —> AIMS Data Download. Statewide performance results are located [here](#).

**Q9. Since graduation requirements related to AIMS changed last year, is there an updated graduation rate technical manual available yet?**

A. Achieve has updated the “Grad, Dropout, and Persistence Rate Technical Manual” (July 2015) with the most current business rules and posted it on the technical assistance/resources [page](#) of the Accountability website.