



Quarterly Newsletter

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ISSUE 3

First Order of Business... Educator Evaluations

We have just returned from the annual American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) conferences. Many of the sessions I attended were on teacher effectiveness and teacher evaluation. I went to the sessions looking for answers or at least guidance for the rating system that we devised for ADE's teacher evaluation model. Of course, most of the psychometricians in the room recommended the value-added models but there were cautionary notes added to keep in mind if you chose to use such a model to measure teachers' effectiveness.

- 1) The value-added models (VAM) are very complicated and can be daunting for a principal to interpret and explain the results accurately.
- 2) Small LEAs may not have the expertise to conduct such an analysis.
- 3) The assignment of students to a classroom may affect the VAM models and thereby give the perception that the teacher is not effective with his/her students.

The educator evaluation models that the ADE are creating are primarily for any LEA to use in its entirety or as a template for their own custom evaluation system. In order to devise a model that could be useful to an LEA who: 1) does not have the resources to hire a vendor to assist them, and 2) does not have the expertise to conduct a complex statistical analysis; we need to keep the three points mentioned above in mind. As more research is completed in this area we will continue to weigh all options for our model.

Until then, our state model for a teacher and principal has a simple *rating system* with a range of points to acquire towards a final score for student academic progress data. For our Group A teachers we are using every assessment possible from the state level in an effort to combine multiple measures (e.g., AIMS, AIMS A, AZELLA, SAT or ACT scores) aside from college and career ready indicators that were added for appropriate grade levels. We are still working on fully developing the Student Learning Objectives process for Group B teachers with other state departments across the county and plan on fully implementing SLOs for both Group A and Group B teachers in our second year of the pilot. WestEd's Regional Education Laboratory West (REL) will be conducting an evaluation of our model over the course of

the next two years. Like all of you, we are anxious to see from the data how the components of the models perform on their own (e.g., the fidelity of the new observation framework), how the components complement each other to draw a comprehensive picture of an educator's performance, and identify appropriate cut scores for the four performance levels.

There are five LEAs working with us on the pilot for the teacher and principal evaluation who have provided us with valuable feedback that has caused us to develop this model further than we initially anticipated. They will continue to work with us throughout next year, giving us two years' worth of data to share out. In addition, we have partner LEAs that are sharing out data with us from their own evaluation systems.

We are very appreciative to our pilot LEAs, our partner LEAs, and those that have exchanged ideas, voiced concerns, and talked about possible solutions with us through various forums such as local conferences and events. This collegial exchange of information has allowed us to be very productive at an incredible pace.

*Dr. Carrie L. Giovannone
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

[R&E Homepage](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY UPDATES

The 2012 A-F Letter Grade Technical Manual has been posted. You can find it [here](#).

The 2013 Accountability Timeline Memo is available [here](#).

Registration for the 2013 Accountability Workshops is now open and available [here](#).

Flagstaff	05/10/13	8AM-12PM & 1PM-5PM
Phoenix	05/13/13	8AM-12PM & 1PM-5PM
Sahuarita	05/24/13	8AM-12PM & 1PM-5PM
Phoenix	05/28/13	1PM-4PM
Webinar	05/29/13	1PM-4PM

The dates and locations of the 2013 Workshops:

CURRENT RESEARCH

Native American students in Arizona experience education in diverse contexts. Many attend schools on or near reservations, where they attend school together with primarily Native American peers; others attend schools where they are part of the minority. The Research and Evaluation division and the Indian Education Office at ADE examined the achievement of Native American students in an annual Status of Native American Education report, and are developing a comprehensive research agenda to address and support the education of our Native American students.

In order to capture their unique experience in varied contexts, the annual report examined Native American students' academic achievement in two main contexts. The first context was schools where Native American students represent either a high proportion (73% or greater Native American students, referred to as high density schools) or a low proportion (less than 73% Native American students, referred to as low density schools) of the student population. Next, we looked at local education agencies (LEAs) that are within or border tribal lands. These districts are recognized in Arizona law under the Indian Education Act (IEA), and many apply for and receive Title VII federal Indian Education program support.

Several key findings highlight the unique experience of Arizona Native American students. Statewide, Native American students are showing among the highest increases in percent passing AIMS in both reading and in mathematics; however, the percent of Native American students passing AIMS in reading or mathematics in any one year is still lower than other racial/ethnic groups. In reading, Native Americans showed an increase of 4 percent in average percent passing from 2010 to 2012, which was the second highest among all racial/ethnic groups. Native American and Hispanic students showed the highest increase in average percent passing in mathematics from 2010 to 2012 of 4 percent. Further, of those Native American students not passing AIMS, the proportion of students who scored in the Falls Far Below category declined over the past 2 years. Drilling down from the statewide results, we see that Native American students are performing differently in

different contexts. Native American students in low density schools outperformed students in high density schools in every grade. Similarly, Native American students in non-IEA LEAs generally performed better than those in IEA LEAs. The exception to this is mathematics in Grades 3 through 6 in which Native American students performed better in IEA LEAs than non-IEA LEAs. Lastly, graduation and dropout rates show mixed trends. Statewide, all ethnicities have had a slight increase in dropout rates over the past 3 years, including Native American students. The graduation rates for Native American students in low density schools increased from 2009 to 2011, whereas the graduation rate for Native American students in high density schools actually declined during those years. In terms of accountability, we see school-wide challenges in high density schools. Low density schools perform better than high density schools on A-F Letter Grades, as well as in Federal Accountability on the ESEA Annual Measureable Objectives.

In summary, Native American students statewide are making progress academically. But there is still a need for targeted improvement, particularly for Native American students who are attending high density schools, or in IEA LEAs. For this reason, R&E is beginning to plan a Native American Education research agenda to address this achievement gap. There are several unique factors to consider in these education contexts and ADE would like to gather input from experts and researchers at Arizona's Universities and examine what the barriers have been and what has worked that can be replicated or expanded. To read the complete Annual Report, please visit our website or the [ADE Indian Education Office](#). For more information or to get involved with this research effort, please contact Research & Evaluation (Achieve@azed.gov).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring/Summer 2013

- 2013 Accountability Workshops have been scheduled in May – registration is available [here](#).
- Data corrections for graduation and dropout rates opened April 15, 2013.
- The deadline for data corrections is June 30, 2013.
- The deadline to apply for alternative school status is May 15, 2013.

USEFUL LINKS

ESEA Flexibility Request details are [here](#).

R&E Customer Survey Results are located [here](#).

You can find a comprehensive step-by-step guide to our Common Logon application [here](#).