



State of Arizona
Department of Education
Research and Evaluation

Quick Guide to AZ LEARNS (Arizona State Accountability)

In November 2001, Arizona voters approved Proposition 301 which provided funds to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to develop "a system to measure school performance based on student achievement, including student performance on the AIMS test." The legislative requirements for the accountability system are stated in section 15-241 (ARS § 15-241) of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The accountability system created to satisfy the statute is referred to as AZ LEARNS. The school evaluation given by the ADE to each school is referred to as the school's achievement profile.

The achievement profile for a school serving grades 3 through 8 consists of the following performance measures:

1. A status measure based on the performance of students on all three sections of the AIMS (reading, writing, and mathematics) in the current year.
2. A measure of improvement in aggregate student performance on the AIMS compared to the baseline year.
3. A measure of growth in individual student performance. This is the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)
4. A measure of student performance on the state's English language proficiency assessment, AZELLA.
5. In order to create the incentive for schools to improve the achievement of average and above-average students, a school cannot earn the highly performing or excelling labels unless the percentage of its students exceeding the standard on AIMS meets specific thresholds.

The achievement profile for a high school is made up of all of the above components except for measure 3 (MAP). In addition, the following performance measures are used for high schools:

6. Dropout rate.
7. Graduation rate.

Schools are awarded scale score points based on their performance on measures one through four, six, and seven. Scale score points are then summed up for each school and compared to a scale that relates scale score points to the five profile labels: excelling, highly performing, performing plus, performing, and underperforming. Performance measure five is then examined to determine if the school has earned the highest labels of highly performing or excelling.

