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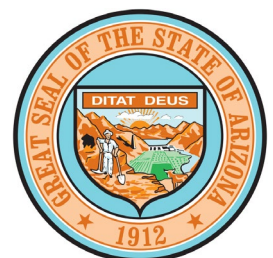
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Average Daily Membership Audit Report Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc. Fiscal Years 2017, 2018 and 2019

Report Number—20-33

March 24, 2020



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Arizona Department of Education

Audit Unit

March 24, 2020

Steven Hykes, CFO
Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.
3448 N 1st Ave
Tucson, AZ 85719 1842

Dear CFO Hykes:

The Arizona Department of Education Audit Unit has conducted an audit of the Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc. entity 92768 (School) Average Daily Membership (ADM) for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019. The purpose of the audit was to address whether the School properly reported student enrollment, and to determine if it received the correct amount of Basic State Aid.

Auditors determined that the School incorrectly reported the enrollment data of 24 students, which resulted in its ADM being overstated by 0.29. As a result, the School was overfunded by \$1,915.37 which the School must repay to ADE.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided by the School's administration during the course of the audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melissa Moreno".

Melissa Moreno,
Chief Auditor

Kathy Hoffman, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Audit Unit has conducted an Average Daily Membership (ADM) audit of the Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc. (School) pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 15-239. This audit focused on whether the School properly reported enrollment data to ADE and received the correct amount of Basic State Aid for Fiscal Years (FY) 2017 through 2019.

Average Daily Membership audits of district and charter holder funding—Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-239, ADE may conduct ADM audits, which help ensure the appropriate distribution of Basic State Aid provided annually to school districts and charter schools. School districts and charter schools receive Basic State Aid based on several factors related to student enrollment and attendance. To receive funding, school districts and charter schools report enrollment and attendance data to ADE. ADE processes that data, determines payment amounts according to the relevant statutory funding formulas and distributes payments to schools up to twelve times each year.

The ADM audit process determines whether payments were correct or if an adjustment is needed. The audit process compares the school district's or charter school's information reported to ADE's student data system to information found on the original records kept at the school. If auditors find that the school district's or charter school's reported information does not match the original documentation, the audit will calculate and report the funding adjustment needed to the school district's or charter school's Basic State Aid. These funding adjustments can be positive or negative, depending upon the audit findings. The audit findings are written and compiled into a report that is then issued to the audited entity.

Superintendent's legal notice links the audit and appeals processes—In addition to the report, the audited entity receives The Notice of Audit Findings and Required Reimbursement (Notice) that details the audit findings and determination of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent) regarding adjustments to be made to the school district or charter school pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-915. The audited entity may appeal the Superintendent's decision in the Notice.

Opportunity to appeal the audit—A.R.S. § 41-1092.03 provides the audited school district or charter school that disagrees with the Superintendent's decision in the Notice with the opportunity to file a formal appeal within thirty (30) days after the report was issued. If an appeal is filed, the school district or charter school and ADE may reach agreement in an informal settlement conference. If an agreement is not reached at the informal settlement conference, the appeal will be adjudicated by the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Funding adjustment process and timeframes—When the Notice is finally settled or adjudicated, if ADE has determined that a school district or charter school received an incorrect amount of Basic State Aid, A.R.S. § 15-915 directs that corrections to schools' funding be made in the current budget year. In case of hardship, schools may request that the Superintendent

allow a correction to be made partly in the current budget year and partly in the following budget year.

School information—The School, located in Phoenix, Arizona, offered instruction in Kindergarten and grades 1 through 8 during the fiscal years audited Table 1 presents the School’s unaudited student, staffing and financial information for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Table 1

**Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.
Total students, revenues and expenditures
Fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019
(Unaudited)**

	2017	2018	2019
Students enrolled	585	807	1,135
Number of teachers	29	43	110
Revenue			
Local	\$ 101,855	\$ 63,378	\$ 127,886
Intermediate	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
State	\$ 3,835,268	\$ 6,127,520	\$ 7,881,266
Federal	\$ 993,675	\$ 1,517,188	\$ 618,091
Total revenues	\$ 4,930,798	\$ 7,708,086	\$ 8,627,243
Total expenditures	\$ 3,787,559	\$ 6,966,005	\$ 7,094,789

Source: Annual Report of the Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The audit focused on whether the School accurately reported its data to ADE and received the correct amount of Basic State Aid in accordance with statutes, the Uniform System of Financial Records for Arizona Charter Schools (USFRCS) and its own policies and procedures for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

To conduct this audit, auditors used a variety of methods, including examining School and ADE records to review 313 of 3,098 students over the three fiscal years audited. Adjustments to ADM are based solely on those identified students that the auditors evaluated further and are not extrapolated to create findings for the entire student population. Auditors also reviewed state statutes and School policies and procedures, and interviewed School management and staff. Specifically:

- **Enrollment data** – Auditors reviewed student schedules, enrollment histories and attendance data to determine if the enrollment data reported to ADE was correct. Auditors compared the enrollment dates and full-time enrollment (FTE) to determine if an adjustment was necessary. Auditors also reviewed absences to ensure that they were reported correctly and made adjustments if they were needed.
- **Student files** – Auditors reviewed student files to ensure that they maintained required documentation such as birth certificates, immunization records, and supporting residency documentation. No findings were identified for this area.
- **Instructional hours** – Auditors reviewed the bell schedules and calendars for the School for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019. The total instructional hours offered for each grade met the minimum required by statute for each of the three fiscal years audited.
- **SPED data** – Auditors determined whether an adjusted student had also been funded for a special education (SPED) category. No findings were identified for this area.
- **Limiting** – Auditors reviewed the total ADM for each enrolled student to ensure that they were appropriately limited by ADE’s system. No findings were identified for this area.

The Audit Unit expresses its appreciation to the School’s administration and staff members for their cooperation and assistance during the course of the audit.

FINDING 1: THE SCHOOL DID NOT ACCURATELY REPORT SOME STUDENT DATA, RESULTING IN AN OVERPAYMENT OF \$1,915.37

Auditors determined that the School inaccurately reported the student data for 24 students for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019. Specifically, auditors found that 23 students were reported with incorrect enrollment dates and one student had an incorrectly reported FTE. As a result of these errors, the School's ADM was overreported by 0.29. and the School was overfunded by \$1,915.37 in Basic State Aid. According to A.R.S. § 15-915, ADE needs to recover these monies from the School.

The School inaccurately reported some student data

The School inaccurately reported 24 student's enrollment data to ADE, which resulted in the School's ADM being overstated by 0.29.

According to ADE External Guideline and Procedures GE-17 and A.R.S. § 15-901, with the exception of pre-enrolled students, the enrollment dates for a student are the first day of actual attendance and the last day of actual attendance or excused absence. Furthermore, withdrawals include students who are formally withdrawn from schools and students who are absent for ten consecutive unexcused school days. However, the School did not always adhere to these requirements. Specifically, for the students that were sampled:

- 23 students were reported with incorrect enrollment dates. As a result, the ADM for the School was overreported by 0.36.
- 1 student was reported with an incorrect FTE. As a result, the ADM for the School was underreported by 0.07.

As shown in Table 2 (page 5), data reporting errors resulted in an ADM overstatement of 0.29 for the three fiscal years audited.

Table 2

**Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.
ADM adjustments due to enrollment data errors
Fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019**

	Enrollment dates	FTE	Total
2017	0.13	-	0.13
2018	0.07	-	0.07
2019	0.16	(0.07)	0.09
Total	0.36	(0.07)	0.29

Source: Auditor analysis of School records, ADE data for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The School failed to comply with statute and ADE guidelines

The School did not follow statute and ADE guidelines when calculating and reporting student FTE or student enrollment data.

The School misreported the enrollment data of 24 students. According to ARS § 15-901 (A)(1), withdrawals include students who are formally withdrawn from schools and students who are absent for ten consecutive unexcused school days. Furthermore, ARS § 15-901 (A)(2) states that the first day of membership for continuing or pre-enrolled students, shall be defined as either the first day a student physically attends school or the first day that classroom instruction is offered, provided that such students physically attend school within the first ten school days. For all other students, the first day of membership shall be defined as the first day a student physically attends school. As a result, the School incorrectly reported the enrollment dates of 23 students. Additionally, the School misreported the FTE of one student.

In the future, the School must ensure it complies with statute and ADE guidelines to properly calculate and report student enrollment dates and FTE. The School should review its reconciliation practices to ensure that discrepancies and errors are identified and corrected.

The School was overfunded by \$1,915.37

Auditors determined that the School did not receive the correct amount of Basic State Aid due to the inaccurate student data reported to ADE for fiscal year 2017, 2018 and 2019. The student data incorrectly reported by the School resulted in its ADM being overstated by 0.29. As a result, the School was overfunded by \$1,915.37 in Basic State Aid, which ADE must recoup from the School. Table 3 (page 6) shows the ADM and funding adjustments required for the School for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Table 3

**Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.
ADM and funding adjustments
Fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019**

	ADM Adjustment	Total
2017	0.13	\$ 842.66
2018	0.07	\$ 429.95
2019	0.09	\$ 642.76
Total	0.29	\$ 1,915.37

Source: Auditor analysis of School and ADE records for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Recommendations:

1. The School must repay to ADE \$1,915.37 in Basic State Aid due to incorrectly reported student data.
2. The School must ensure that it properly reports students' enrollment dates and FTE pursuant to statute and ADE guidelines.
3. The School must reconcile to ensure that enrollment data is reported accurately pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-901.

ADM AND FUNDING ADJUSTMENTS

A.R.S. § 15-915 requires that ADE makes corrections for audit findings to both budget capacity and state aid. ADE’s School Finance Unit’s Memo 13-011 informs LEAs of these statutory requirements:

A.R.S. §15-915, as amended by Laws 2012, Chapter 357, Section 3, requires the superintendent of public instruction, when it is determined that state aid or budget limits have been calculated in error, within the prior 3 years, to make corrections to budget limits and state aid in the current year. (Hardship application may be approved by the superintendent). Effective for audits initiated during 2013 and continuing in subsequent years, corrections for audit findings to both budget capacity and state aid (when applicable) will be made.

Basic State Aid adjustment of \$1,915.37 required to be paid to ADE—Auditors identified an overall funding adjustment of \$1,915.37 for the three fiscal years audited due to inaccurate student enrollment.

Table 4 lists the ADM adjustments and the associated Basic State Aid adjustments for the School for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Table 4

**Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.
ADM and funding adjustments
Fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019**

	2017	2018	2019	Total
ADM adjustment	0.13	0.07	0.09	0.29
Funding adjustment	\$ 842.66	\$ 429.95	\$ 642.76	\$ 1,915.37

Source: Auditor analysis of ADE and School student and financial data for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019.