

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD  
WAIVER REQUEST PURSUANT TO  
34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4)  
June 4, 2020

As part of waiver requirements, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is posting an opportunity for public comment regarding the ADE seeking a one-year waiver pursuant to §8401(b) from requirements within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). The USDOE requires state educational agencies, when seeking waivers from statutory or regulatory requirements, solicit and respond to public comment on the request and provide evidence of the available comment period. This 15-day public comment period will be open from June 4 through June 19, 2020.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**  
**Any individual or organization may submit written comments on the  
proposed waiver pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4).  
Written comments shall be accepted through June 19, 2020.**

Requirements from which Arizona is seeking a waiver include:

- Sections 1111(b)(2)(B) (v)(ii) that require states to test all students in science not less than one time during Grades 3 through 5; Grades 6 through 9; and Grades 10 through 12.
- Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(x) which requires reporting results for students, schools, and districts.

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is planning a census field test for both its standard and alternate assessments in spring 2021 in Grades 5, 8, and 11. These new assessments will be aligned to the new 2018 Arizona Science Standards (adopted October 2018), which are based on the Framework for K-12 Science Education and Working with Big Ideas of Science Education, and will be ready for spring 2022.

This waiver for Grade 8 will enable the ADE to administer the census field test statewide in spring 2021 in lieu of the legacy science assessments (AIMS Science and AIMS A Science) that are aligned to the old standards and not the new Arizona Science Standards. The waiver will help Arizona's students and educators in many ways:

- It will reduce testing time for students and educators in Grade 8. This is the only grade with overlap.
- It will allow schools to rework their curriculum and instruction to align to the new Arizona Science Standards.
- It will enable teachers to begin teaching the new science standards without the pressure of also preparing students for the legacy assessment.
- A census field test will prepare students and educators for both the technical and academic expectations of this assessment for 2021 and beyond.

The ADE will not issue scores from the field test for students, schools, or districts. However, districts and schools will be held accountable for participation in the 2020 – 2021 Arizona AzSCI field test for Grade 8. The Arizona State Board of Education is aware and approves of

this waiver request. The State Board will be addressing the impacts for State Accountability for Grade 8.

**You may submit your comments electronically June 4 through June 19, 2020, using the following link: <https://www.azed.gov/assessment/public-comment-science-waiver/> or directly to Audra Ahumada, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Assessment, Arizona Department of Education, 1535 West Jefferson St. Bin #6, Phoenix, AZ 85007. Mrs. Ahumada may be reached by telephone at 602-542-5450, by fax at 602-542-5467, or through email at [Audra.Ahumada@azed.gov](mailto:Audra.Ahumada@azed.gov).**