Arizona Alternative School Application

Frequently Asked Questions

For Fiscal Year 2023 Alternative School Status schools will use data from the 2021-2022 school year for their application.

If you have questions, please contact Achieve@azed.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I have an alternative program in my school, do I need to apply?

A school is never required to apply for alternative school status. If you have an alternative school program in your school, you are welcome to apply for alternative school status. However, the entire school must apply for and meet the criteria of an alternative school in order to be approved.

2. What is an Alternative School?

Schools that meet the below criteria are eligible to apply for alternative school status.

a. The school has a mission statement adopted that clearly identifies that its purpose is to serve a specific student population that will benefit from an alternative school setting.
b. The educational program and support services align with the mission of the school.
c. Secondary schools must offer a high school diploma of graduation.
d. The school will receive current year state assessment scores for their students.
e. At least 70% of the student body falls into the below categories
    i. Students who have a documented history of disruptive behavior issues
    ii. Students who have dropped out of school and are now returning
    iii. Students in poor academic standing (at least one year behind on grade level performance or academic credits)
    iv. Students who are primary caregivers or are financially responsible for dependents
    v. Students who are adjudicated
    vi. Students are who wards of the state and need an alternative school setting

Schools are considered an Alternative School **for accountability purposes** if they meet the listed criteria, apply for alternative school status and are approved.

3. What is the benefit of applying to be an Alternative School?

Schools that apply for and are approved as alternative schools will receive an A-F Letter Grade using the Alternative School A-F Model instead of the Traditional School A-F Model.

4. How are Alternative School applications reviewed?

Once the alternative school application deadline has passed, all applications are carefully reviewed and validated by the ADE Accountability & Research team. School and LEA entity IDs are checked based on ADE records, enrollment counts are validated using student data in AzEDS, and mission statements are validated with the schools' governing board or chartering entity.

5. What is the timeline for Alternative School applications?

The application timeline for alternative school submissions for Fiscal Year 2023 is below.

- February 14, 2022 – the application opens
- March 31, 2022 – the application closes
- May (tentative) – schools are notified whether they have been selected for additional review and may require an on-site visit/virtual meeting
- End of May (tentative) – schools are notified whether they are approved for alternative school status for Fiscal Year 2023

6. What information is required in the Alternative School application?

- Submitter's information: Name, Title, Email, Phone number
- Superintendent/Charter Holder information: Name, Email, Phone Number
- School Name
- School Entity ID
- LEA Name
- LEA Entity ID
- Confirmation school will receive current year state assessment scores
- File upload of school's mission statement
  - Additional uploads allowed for related supporting evidence
- Number of students who:
  - Have a documented history of disruptive behavioral issues
  - Have dropped out of school and are now returning
  - Are in poor academic standing as demonstrated by being at least one year behind on academic credits or grade level performance
  - Are primary caregivers or are financially responsible for dependents and therefore, may require a flexible school schedule
  - Are adjudicated

- o Are wards of the state and need an alternative school setting
- Total number of students enrolled as of October 1st, 2021
- Credit Recovery Alternative school? (Yes/No)

7. Do I have to apply for Alternative School status every year?

Yes. All schools must submit a First Time Application or Recertification Application (where applicable) each year to identify that they would like to be considered for Alternative School status.

8. Who is supposed to be responsible for applying for Alternative School status?

The person completing the application for Alternative School status differs from school to school and LEA to LEA. We most typically see Alternative School Applications submitted by school Principals; however, other staff members may submit the application if it is applicable and appropriate for your school.

9. What happens if my school does not apply for Alternative School status?

If a school does not apply for alternative school status, they cannot be approved as an Alternative School and will receive an A-F Letter Grade based on the Traditional A-F Model. No applications received after the deadline can be reviewed or considered in order to accommodate all Accountability deadlines and to ensure the timely processing of Alternative School Status applications.

10. How do I know if my school has already applied for Alternative School status this year?

If you are unsure whether or not an alternative school application has been received for your school this year, you can send an email with the school name, school entity ID, LEA name, and LEA entity ID to Achieve@azed.gov and ask if an alternative school application has been received for your school for this fiscal year.

11. What do I do if I submit something incorrectly?

If you submit information incorrectly in the Alternative School application, you can complete a new submission or contact Achieve@azed.gov. If we receive multiple

submissions for a single school, we will use the most recently received application when reviewing alternative school applications.