



**Arizona Department of Education**  
Unique Populations

January 28, 2022

Dear Superintendents, Directors and Coordinators:

It's hard to believe the first month of the year is nearly behind us! We hope you are off to a wonderful second half of the school year and that your students and staff continue to safely implement in-person learning.

In our continued efforts to support our students, teachers, and school leaders we are providing you with a few reminders and updates.

- We would like to introduce our new Director of Title III and EL Funding, Mary Ricci-Marriott. Mary has been with ADE for over 8 years and has supported many of you with your Title III LEP, Title III Consortium and Emergency Immigrant Education Program grants. She will continue to support you with all your grant needs. Feel free to reach out to her at [mary.ricci-marriott@azed.gov](mailto:mary.ricci-marriott@azed.gov).
- We are excited to announce our new OELAS Team structure and designated regions. To enhance our communication with the field, provide consistency and comprehensive support, our OELAS Specialists will now support LEAs through a team structure. The new structure means that LEAs will now have a dedicated team that includes a Fiscal Specialist, EL Program Specialist and Professional Learning Specialist. The Team will provide daily program support and guidance with the implementation, management, and evaluation of SEI programs including, but not limited to enrollment, model implementation, EL monitoring, and EL program funding. Visit our [website](#) for detailed information about your designated region and the designated team that will be supporting you.
- The AZELLA reassessment test administration window is January 31–March 18, 2022. If you have any questions or need additional information, please visit <https://www.azed.gov/assessment/azella-dtcs>
- CCSSO recently shared new CDC guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools. This updated version of COVID-19 guidance for school administrators outlines strategies for K-12 schools to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safe operations. This guidance emphasizes implementing layered prevention strategies (using multiple prevention strategies together) to protect students, teachers, staff, and other members of their households, and to support in-person learning.
  - [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)
  - [Overview of COVID-19 Isolation for K-12 Schools](#)
  - [Overview of COVID-19 Quarantine for K-12 Schools](#)
  - [What you should know about COVID-19 Testing in Schools](#)

*Equity for all students to achieve their full potential*

- Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten sent Chief State School Officers a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#) regarding the availability of Federal funds to support Afghan children being resettled in U.S. schools.
- The US Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) in collaboration with the Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) hosted a webinar to provide information about ORR's process for placing and supporting Afghan refugees in the context of the U.S. educational system. The webinar featured representatives from the Office for Civil Rights, (OCR) and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). All state and local education personnel were invited to join. Archived webinars and related materials are available [HERE](#).

Please reach out to your [OELAS Education Program Specialist](#), Laura Alvarez, Unique Populations Deputy Associate Superintendent, or me, with any questions you have.

Sincerely,

*Melissa Castillo*

Melissa Castillo, Ed.D.  
Associate Superintendent  
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Arizona Department of Education

*Equity for all students to achieve their full potential*