



Arizona Department of Education

# ARIZONA ASSESSMENTS CONFERENCE

Integrating assessments, standards, and accountability  
for student success.

**Wednesday, September 28, 2022 – Session Details**

**General Session: 8:30am – 9:30am**

**Keynote Address: 8:45am – 9:30am**

## **Keynote Address: *ADE Expert Panel Discussion***

### **Description:**

Arizona Department of Education (ADE) program area leaders take great pride in offering exceptional technical and customer support to schools and districts, helping to ensure schools have the tools they need to support the success of all Arizona students. Behind the scenes, ADE leaders meet often to ensure they are supporting one another, whether it is collectively meeting state and federal requirements or sharing insight into their support of schools. In this keynote session, an ADE expert panel will share their experiences and perspectives, demonstrating their collaborative nature and how it is important to come together! The panelists will be asked to respond to various questions, providing insight into the connections between Assessment, Standards, and Accountability as well as efforts to ensure equity and excellence for all Arizona students.

### **ADE Expert Panel:**

#### **Audra Ahumada, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Assessment, ADE**

Audra Ahumada is currently the Deputy Associate Superintendent of Assessment with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), a position she has held for the past 6 years. She oversees the governance responsibilities for the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) Consortium. She was also a state lead during the development of the NCSC Alternate Assessment and other grant projects focusing on assessment development for English learners with significant cognitive disabilities. Previously, she was the Director of Alternate Assessment at ADE and taught special education in Texas for 10 years. Audra believes accessibility, teaching and learning, and assessment are critical components of a strong educational system.

#### **Devon Isherwood, Deputy Associate Superintendent for School Support, ADE**

Devon Isherwood has dedicated over 50 years as an educator and child advocate. She has worked for the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) for ten years and currently holds the position of Deputy Associate Superintendent for School Support, which includes School Improvement and Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds units. Prior to joining ADE, Devon served as an elementary school principal as well as district-level positions in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and Special Education in both Arizona and California.

#### **Stephania Lenzi, Deputy Associate Superintendent for Unique Populations, ADE**

Stephania Lenzi is the Deputy Associate Superintendent for Unique Populations at the Arizona Department of Education. Stephanian leads the development and facilitation of professional learning offerings, which cumulatively inform the instructional efforts impacting Arizona's diverse learners. Stephanian joined ADE in 2020, where her additional duties include overseeing the implementation of EL, migratory student, and foster and homeless programs and monitoring.

**Sean Ross, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Academic Standards, ADE**

Sean Ross is the Deputy Associate Superintendent of Academic Standards for the Arizona Department of Education. He leads the team that oversees Early Childhood, K-12 Academic Standards, Postsecondary Initiatives, and the Arizona Charter School Program. Sean and his team are responsible for training educators across the birth to postsecondary continuum, revising and implementing state standards, and overseeing initiatives that disperse over 100 million dollars to schools across the state. Prior to joining ADE, Sean was a classroom teacher, teacher mentor, and instructional coach for 15 years.

**Sean Smith, Chief Accountability Officer, ADE**

Sean Smith is currently the Chief Accountability Officer with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). The Accountability Team processes data to calculate A-F letter grades and to meet federal accountability guidelines. Sean has worked in Education for over 20 years, serving as a paraprofessional, classroom teacher, and district administrator. Sean believes that accountability measures can help communicate the work schools do to serve students, families, and communities.

**Alissa Trollinger, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Exceptional Student Services (ESS), ADE**

Alissa Trollinger is the Deputy Associate Superintendent of Exceptional Student Services (ESS) at the Arizona Department of Education. This is her sixth year as State Director of Special Education. She has spent 17 years at the state education agency (SEA), where she first served as a special education programmatic monitoring specialist for secure care schools but then transitioned into a director role overseeing ESS Data Management, Assistive Technology, Secondary Transition, Secure Care, and Operations. Prior to working for ADE, Alissa served as a public school special education director, a federal grants manager, and a principal for a SEA-approved private day school for students with severe emotional disabilities. Alissa believes strongly in the foundational tenets of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and in supporting public education agencies to develop strong systems for providing special education services.

**Room:** Media Center

**Target Audience:** All

**Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

**Breakout Session: *Beyond Academic Assessment: Approaches for Assessing “hard to measure” Skills***

**Description:**

Educators want to promote and measure a range of knowledge, skills, and practices that go beyond traditional academic domains. These include dimensions such as social-emotional learning, persistence, collaboration, college and career readiness, and much more. While important, these skills are challenging to define and measure. In this session, we will explore some principles and promising practices that help educators measure more of what matters.

**Presenter:**

**Chris Domaleski, Associate Director, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment**

Dr. Chris Domaleski is a nationally-recognized leader in the design, implementation, and evaluation of assessment and accountability systems. Chris uses his extensive background in psychometrics and policy to advise education leaders on complex technical problems and identifies solutions to improve practice. He currently serves as Associate Director for the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, a non-profit working with states and district education leaders to help develop and validate innovative and effective assessment and accountability systems.

Chris serves on several national technical advisory committees; is the coordinator of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative on Accountability Systems and Reporting; and regularly provides technical support to a variety of agencies, organizations, and policy-makers at the state and national level. He received a Ph.D. from Georgia State University in Research, Measurement, and Statistics, and he has taught numerous graduate courses at multiple institutions. He is a former associate editor for the prestigious Journal of Educational Measurement and regularly publishes his research and presents at national conferences. Prior to joining the Center, Chris was Associate Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability at the Georgia Department of Education, where he was responsible for the development and administration of the state's K-12 testing program and accountability systems.

**Room:** Cira

**Target Audience:** All



**Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

**Breakout Session: *Timeline for Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators***

**Description:**

This session will outline what steps test coordinators need to take in order to prepare themselves for MSAA testing in the spring. It will provide specific dates and timeframes in which platforms will be open. This timeline presentation will help test coordinators better plan for registering students and will help test administrators plan for how to resolve issues if any of the steps along the way are missed. Guide steps will be included if deadlines are missed. This presentation will outline the broad view of MSAA preparation.

**Presenter:**

**Sarah Han, Alternate Assessment Test Coordinator, Arizona Department of Education**

Sarah Han currently serves as the Alternate Assessment Test Coordinator at the Arizona Department of Education. Sarah received her Bachelor's in Special Education, known as LBS (Learning Behavior Specialist) in Illinois. She moved to Arizona six years ago after being offered a position to help open up a new school as a special education teacher. Sarah worked as a special education teacher for four years with students placed at private day schools and alternative schools. She has experience with students in all 13 categories ranging from mild to severe. She administered the MSAA while teaching, and since 2020, she has been working with MSAA on the administrative side as the Alternate Assessment Test Coordinator at ADE. Sarah also has a Master's in Educational Administration.

**Room:** Solana A

**Target Audience:**

- Special Education Leaders
- District Test Coordinators

**Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

**Breakout Session: *New AZELLA Tests: What has changed and how to use the new and improved Sample Tests* (repeat session)**

**Description:**

Arizona adopted new English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) in 2019. Arizona's English Language Proficiency Assessment, AZELLA, has been revised so that it is properly aligned to the new Standards. The new test will be used for the first time for the Spring 2023 Reassessment administration. The new standards required a new test design and the development of new item types.

This session will provide an opportunity to examine the new item types that will be included in both the AZELLA assessments and in the AZELLA Sample Tests. Educators can prepare students for the AZELLA reassessment by using the Sample Tests and lead to more accurate outcomes.

**Presenters:**

**Gabriela Finn, Director of English Language Assessments, Arizona Department of Education**

Gabriela Finn is the Director of English Language Learner Assessments for the Assessment Section of the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). Ms. Finn has worked in the field of second language acquisition in different capacities –as ESL instructor, academic coach, and ELL coordinator for more than 20 years. Ms. Finn has focused her talents on the item development for Arizona's English language proficiency assessment, AZELLA, since 2015.

**Room:** Solana B

**Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- Instructional Coaches
- EL Coordinators
- District Test Coordinators



**Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

**Breakout Session: A-F Letter Grade Basics** *(session repeats)*

**Description:**

Join a discussion on the fundamentals of the A-F letter grade system. Learn how points are calculated; what to expect for the 2022-2023 school year; how district letter grades will be calculated, etc. Brainstorm with other educators on ways to use letter grade data to help students.

**Presenter:**

**Sean Smith, Chief Accountability Officer, Arizona Department of Education**

Sean Smith is currently the Chief Accountability Officer with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). The Accountability Team processes data to calculate A-F letter grades and to meet federal accountability guidelines. Sean has worked in education for over 20 years, serving as a paraprofessional, classroom teacher, and district administrator. Sean believes that accountability measures can help communicate the work schools do to serve students, families, and communities.

**Room:** Solana CD

**Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders
- District Test Coordinators

## **Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

### **Breakout Session: *Using the Arizona/ACT Alignment Guide to Drive Student Success***

#### **Description:**

To support Arizona educators and students, ACT developed the "Arizona Alignment Guide," a document intended to improve assessment literacy with the statewide ACT exam. Understanding the alignment between the ACT assessment and Arizona's academic standards is a crucial part of ensuring that students are prepared for the exam and interpreting the results once they have tested. This presentation will introduce participants to the Guide, which contains vital information about the content of each ACT test section and the many points of linkage with Arizona's ELA/Literacy and Mathematics standards. The Guide includes tips for classroom teachers, school leaders, and district leaders, as well as two sets of comprehensive alignment tables: 1) crosswalk tables that allow a reader to look up the alignments for each Arizona standard, and 2) matrix tables which provide an at-a-glance reference of all standards linked to each ACT test reporting category. Participants will gain deeper insight into the content on the ACT test and ideas for using this free resource to improve student outcomes.

#### **Presenter:**

##### **Colin Dingler, Principal State Advocacy and Policy Analyst, ACT**

Colin Dingler works as a policy analyst with ACT's State and Federal Programs Team to support ACT's state partners in their use of ACT's academic and workforce assessments. His primary focus is state use of assessments for accountability. Prior to his role with State and Federal Programs, he worked in ACT's Test Development division as an assessment designer, including as the principal ELA assessment specialist. In addition to contributing to ACT's industry-leading assessments, Colin has given presentations and led workshops with ACT's customers on a variety of topics related to test design and alignment to state academic standards. He holds a PhD in Rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley and has taught English and composition at the college level.

##### **Scott Johanningmeier, Lead Content Specialist, Mathematics, ACT**

Mr. Johanningmeier is responsible for the management and delivery of all stages of ACT math item development, forms, and ancillary materials. He has been with ACT for over 13 years and has served as a content program lead for large-scale assessments for the past 11 years. Prior to his work in test development and educational publishing, he was certified to teach math for grade K-12 and taught high school math for 2 years.

**Room:** Solana FG

#### **Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- Instructional Coaches
- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders
- District Test Coordinators
- Secondary Teachers

## **Breakout Session 1: 9:45am – 11:00am**

### **Breakout Session: *Overview of Large-Scale Assessment Processes (Part 1)***

#### **Description:**

Every state routinely completes several tasks to create and maintain their statewide assessment program. For example, educators and stakeholders throughout Arizona engage and participate in a variety of activities—such as blueprint formation, item development, committee reviews, and student testing—to refresh and/or maintain the AzSCI, AASA, and AZELLA assessment programs. In this session, three primary processes integral to large-scale standardized assessment will be covered: 1) the overall assessment development cycle, 2) equating of test scores, and 3) standard setting.

First, we will present an overview of developing a high-stakes standardized assessment. There are a number of steps undertaken before the first operational assessment is launched, and many educators and stakeholders must be involved in these processes. There are also steps needed to maintain an assessment once it has been operationalized, which will be discussed.

Second, we will discuss the process of equating student scores for a high-stakes standardized assessment. Equating is a very important psychometric procedure for the comparability of scores, both across assessment forms as well as testing administrations. Focus will be placed on the necessity of equating and how it is applied to produce student scores each year.

Lastly, we will cover the general process and purpose for another important psychometric procedure known as standard setting. Performance standards, which are used to classify student scores into discrete categories, can provide nuanced, finely-tuned information regarding examinee ability beyond that of a total score. Standard setting can be conducted either at the onset of a testing program or when substantial changes have been made to either the blueprint/test structure or curriculum standards. The various steps involved in the preparation of a standard setting will be presented and an introduction to the typical meeting activities that occur at standard setting will be shared.

#### **Presenters:**

##### **Hiroataka Fukuhara, Senior Research Scientist, Pearson**

Hiroataka Fukuhara is a Senior Research Scientist at Pearson. During his career at Pearson, he has supported multiple large scale standardized assessment projects. He is currently the lead psychometrician for AASA, AzSCI, and AZELLA projects. His research interests include large scale standardized assessments, equating, and differential item functioning.

##### **Scott Strickman, Research Scientist, Pearson**

Scott Strickman is a Research Scientist at Pearson. He primarily works on psychometric activities related to the Arizona project, including AASA, AzSCI, and AZELLA. He has also supported numerous standard setting meetings during his time at Pearson, in addition to other state assessment projects. His research interests include standard setting and students' patterns of response to low-stakes assessments.

##### **Anju Kuriakose, Psychometrician, Arizona Department of Education**

Dr. Anju Kuriakose is the director of Psychometrics at the Arizona department of Education. She oversees test construction and validation of multiple state testing programs. She has extensive experience in data analysis, educational research, and the different educational accountability models. She started her career teaching and has served in multiple leadership positions in school districts and at the state level for more than 20 years.



**Room:** Solana H

**Target Audience:**

- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders

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**Breakout Session 2: 11:15am – 12:30pm**

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**Breakout Session: *Federal Accountability Basics***

**Description:**

Join a discussion on the fundamentals of the federal accountability system. Learn how points are calculated and how schools are identified for support.

**Presenter: Sean Smith, Chief Accountability Officer, Arizona Department of Education**

Sean Smith is currently the Chief Accountability Officer with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). The Accountability Team processes data to calculate A-F letter grades and to meet federal accountability guidelines. Sean has worked in Education for over 20 years, serving as a paraprofessional, classroom teacher, and district administrator. Sean believes that accountability measures can help communicate the work schools do to serve students, families, and communities.

**Room:** Cira

**Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders
- District Test Coordinators



**Breakout Session 2: 11:15am – 12:30pm**

**Breakout Session: *Dive into the High School Transcript Study***

**Description:**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) periodically surveys the curricula being implemented in our nation's high schools and the course taking patterns of high school students through the High School Transcript Study (HSTS). The study provides information about the types of courses that graduates take, how many credits they earn, their grade point averages, and the relationship between course taking patterns and graduates' achievement based on their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 12th grade. HSTS was most recently conducted in 2019. Previous studies were collected in 2009, 2005, 2000, 1998, 1994, 1990, and 1987. In this session we will take a look at the highlights of the study.

**Presenters:**

**Gary McIlvaine, Director of NAEP and International Assessments, Arizona Department of Education**

Gary McIlvaine is the Director of NAEP and International Assessment for Arizona. Prior to working as the Director of NAEP, he was the English Language Assessment Development Coordinator and worked on the AZELLA team. He spent 4 years working for Tsinghua University as an English Language Assessment Expert. Tsinghua is the Harvard of China. The Tsinghua Campus where he spent his time is in the Chaoyang District of Beijing in the Olympic tennis center. Gary has 3 sons and is an avid Tropical fish enthusiast and maintains 40 Aquariums. He is a Grand Master Breeder and also supports conservation efforts in and around the organized fish hobby.

**Room:** Solana B

**Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- District Test Coordinators

## **Breakout Session 2: 11:15am – 12:30pm**

### **Breakout Session: *Kindergarten Entry Assessment***

#### **Description:**

In July 2021, Transformative legislation enacted a Statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). This session will explore the purpose of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment and demonstrate how data gathered from the KEA informs the formative assessment process as part of a balanced assessment framework.

#### **Presenters:**

##### **Alexis Horne, Early Childhood Program Specialist, Arizona Department of Education**

Alexis Horne currently serves as an Early Childhood Program Specialist with the Arizona Department of Education. She possesses over 15 years of experience working with underserved populations and in early childhood education in various capacities. Alexis holds a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies from California State Polytechnic University, and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Grand Canyon University. As an educator, Alexis believes in the idea of being a lifelong student where there are opportunities to learn and grow in any field or position. Alexis is originally from Los Angeles, California but has called Arizona home for the last 11 years.

##### **Sean Ross, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Academic Standards, ADE**

Sean Ross is the Deputy Associate Superintendent of Academic Standards for the Arizona Department of Education. He leads the team that oversees Early Childhood, K-12 Academic Standards, Postsecondary Initiatives, and the Arizona Charter School Program. Sean and his team are responsible for training educators across the birth to postsecondary continuum, revising and implementing state standards, and overseeing initiatives that disperse over 100 million dollars to schools across the state. Prior to joining ADE, Sean was a classroom teacher, teacher mentor, and instructional coach for 15 years.

**Room:** Solana CD

#### **Target Audience:**

- School or District Administrators
- District Test Coordinators
- Elementary Teachers

## **Breakout Session 2: 11:15am – 12:30pm**

### **Breakout Session: *Using Inquiry as an Effective Assessment in Social Studies Classrooms***

**Description:**

Inquiry is the key to students' understanding of the world they live in. In this session, you will learn how inquiry assessments can be a powerful tool in a classroom. Participants will also learn how to develop and create easy-to-use inquiry assessments and review open education resources that are easily adaptable to inquiry assessments. This session will provide all teachers, K-12, the skills they need to start using inquiry assessments in their classrooms tomorrow.

**Presenter:**

**Linda Burrows, Director for K-12 Social Studies and World and Native Languages, Arizona Department of Education**

Linda Burrows is the Director for K-12 Social Studies and World Languages at the Arizona Department of Education. She sits on the Executive Boards of the Council of State Social Studies Specialists, the Arizona Council for the Social Studies, and the Arizona Language Association. Linda is a member of the National Council for the Social Studies, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, and works with the Arizona Council on Economic Education and the San Diego Center for Economic Education in advisory positions. As Director, Linda provides support for the implementation of the Arizona Social Studies and World and Native Languages Standards.

Prior to her 3 years at ADE, she taught for 20 years in grades 7-12, teaching world and U.S. history, government, and economics along with AP and Dual-Enrollment courses. She worked with the College Board as an AP Reader and Table Leader. She has a master's degree in Education Leadership and a bachelor's degree in History. She has received many awards and a Fulbright-Hays Summer Project Abroad.

**Room:** Solana FG

**Target Audience:**

- Instructional Coaches
- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders
- Elementary Teachers
- Secondary Teachers

## **Breakout Session 2: 11:15am – 12:30pm**

### **Breakout Session: *Overview of Large-Scale Assessment Development Processes (Part 2)***

#### **Description:**

Every state routinely completes several tasks to create and maintain their statewide assessment program. For example, educators and stakeholders throughout Arizona engage and participate in a variety of activities—such as blueprint formation, item development, committee reviews, and student testing—to refresh and/or maintain the AzSCI, AASA, and AZELLA assessment programs. In this session, three primary processes integral to large-scale standardized assessment will be covered: 1) the overall assessment development cycle, 2) equating of test scores, and 3) standard setting.

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**Room:** Solana H

**Target Audience:**

- Curriculum, Assessment, or Accountability Leaders