

Arizona State Board of Education
Technical Advisory Committee
Report

December 4, 2017

DRAFT

Background

On October 23, 2017, the State Board of Education (Board) directed the Technical Advisory Group (TAC) to review the A-F Accountability Plan, business rules and impact data for problematic issues.

To date, the TAC has met four times to discuss issues relating to the impact data, business rules and the A-F Accountability Plan.

From reviewing the data, the TAC has identified some problematic issues:

N-Count:

To be determined at the meeting on November 28th

Growth:

Typically, students who are highly proficient and proficient will benefit from the SGT calculation, whereas students who are partially proficient and minimally proficient will benefit from the SGP calculations. However, due to the normative nature of both calculations, a third of the students in each group will not receive points, based upon the nature of the calculation.

The TAC committee has found that within the Student Growth to Target (SGT) formula, within the growth indicator, there is a negative correlation with students who are already at proficient. The SGT model is causing a “ceiling” effect on those students who earn the highest proficiency levels and needs to be studied further.

Another analysis argues that the growth indicator negatively impacts schools with high proficiency, due to the weighting within the SGP/SGT model. For example, a student who is proficient the first year and proficient the second year, still has made a year of growth, yet, may not be rewarded for that growth within the SGP/SGT model, due to the weights given to the different growth levels. An answer for this would be to allow for a student with average growth within proficient and highly proficient to earn full points.

In addition, a policy question was brought forth on whether a highly proficient student who falls to proficient the next year, should be penalized for “no growth” when in reality, the goal of all students is to be proficient. Some have argued that a threshold be put in place to reward schools for maintaining proficient students and not allowing those students to slip back into the lower categories, while allowing for lower proficiency schools to earn growth points for moving students into higher categories of proficiency.

Acceleration Measures (K-8):

Threshold metrics should be put into place for the different categories within this measure, due to the potential of schools flip-flopping from year to year. At face value, most schools are earning all of their points, which would show that this measure is “stable”, however, over time, most schools will move from one area to the next, most likely still getting all of the points within this category.

N-count plays into this measure, due to numerous schools not being able to receive points because of lower student counts. Lowering the N-count would help smaller schools.

In addition to the above, some schools are only eligible for a limited number of the acceleration points. By setting a different policy, where schools would have to get points based upon what they are eligible for, may elevate some issues.

Subgroup calculations will also benefit those schools that have a larger student population due to the school's ability to allow for more students to get points year after year. Small schools with a smaller student population may be faced with negative growth year after year due to small changes within their student population.

Proficiency:

In order to address the transparency issue, the TAC determined that the "stability" model has a small impact on a school's overall score within the proficiency indicator. The TAC would like to address this issue further.

In addition to above, TAC committee members had questions on how the FAY stability model was calculated. The committee believes that work can be done around this area to help the field understand the system.

Lastly, the committee pointed out that the proficiency indicator will continue to favor low poverty schools and that the weights given to the school, based upon the students' proficiency levels, looks as if it is measured using an index, rather than a total number of students proficient.

ELL:

In analyzing the ELL scores, 38% of all schools received the full points allotted within this measure. There is concern that schools who do not meet the N-count for the ELL calculation are graded on a 90 point scale, however, those schools may also not meet the Acceleration N-counts, thus, those schools would be graded on a 80 point scale, bringing more weight to the AzMerit assessment. Lowering the N-count for this indicator may be beneficial to those schools who are losing out on ELL points.

Free and Reduce Lunch (FRL)