

Arizona State Board of Education

Annual Board Retreat - August 6-7, 2018

This packet contains resources Board members may need to inform their answers to questions in the workbook. Staff has attempted to pull information from numerous sources, both within and out of state for members. The information and research provided is not meant to be the only resources Board members use to influence their decisions, rather, it is meant to get the conversation built in the right direction.

Consent Agenda: MSAA

Session 1: Collective Commitments

Session 2: Strategic Planning - Move On When Reading

Session 3: Strategic Planning - Accountability

Session 4: Strategic Planning - School Improvement

Session 5: Legislative Item Notes

Miscellaneous

Revised Proposal to MSAA Psychometric Subcommittee for Standards Validation Process

April 3, 2018

Process Overview

At the February 2018 MSAA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, the TAC recommended that the incorporation of the writing prompts within the English Language Arts (ELA) scale through a full multi-round panel-based Standards Validation process was not necessary as the impact of the writing prompts is not expected to dramatically alter the current ELA scale; however, they recommended taking this opportunity to perform an empirical check in order to achieve articulated mathematics and ELA performance standards, while also incorporating the writing prompts on the ELA scale.

It was recommended by the TAC that PLD revisions to incorporate language specific to the writing prompts could occur as a collaboration between MSAA and Measured Progress, and then as a confirmatory step, panel groups, made up of district/school stakeholders, would review the revised PLD for clarity in language included and appropriateness of references to writing prompt scoring rubrics. The empirical check and vertical articulation process would be completed as a separate activity among Measured Progress, the TAC and MSAA and would not involve stakeholders from districts/schools. As such, the revised Standards Validation Process will have five components, described in the sections that follow:

Step	Process Activity	Stakeholder Involvement			
		MSAA Subcommittee(s)	MSAA TAC	Measured Progress	District/School Personnel
1	Vertical Articulation	Psychometric	TAC	Psychometrics, Client Services	
2	Bringing Writing Prompts onto the ELA Scale			Psychometrics	
3	ELA Performance Level Descriptor (PLD) Revisions – Psychometric, Item Development, and Scoring Subcommittees Work	Psychometric, Item Development, & Scoring		Client Services, Content Development	
4	ELA Cut Score Review – Psychometric Subcommittee Work	Psychometric	TAC	Psychometrics, Client Services, Content Development	
5	ELA PLD Review – Panel Work	Psychometric, Item Development, & Scoring		Client Services	District/School personnel

Vertical Articulation (Step 1)

When the original mathematics and ELA theta cuts were set in 2015, the vertical articulation was performed to ensure there were not large changes in the percentage of proficient students from one grade level to the next. This process assumes that the students at one grade level should not be appreciably different from students at a neighboring grade in terms of their proficiency relative to the standards at each grade level. This assumption is based on the expectation that the achievement of a cohort grows by similar amounts from one grade to the next. In particular, differences in student cohorts are assumed to be small. However, with only one year’s worth of data (as occurs when

standard setting is conducted in the first year of a testing program), the effect of student cohorts cannot be measured. At this point, we can evaluate the vertical articulation using data from multiple years. We will conduct a smoothing via vertical articulation with the goal of validating that the existing cut scores for mathematics and ELA are appropriate and valid or adjusting as necessary, as well as confirming the appropriateness of the cut scores when the writing prompts are linked into the ELA scale. The goal of this process is to ensure we are making valid interpretations.

In this regard, we will investigate student performance on mathematics and ELA for the 2016 and 2017 MSAA tests, by identifying the students who were in common between the two years and calculating the percentage of proficient students. There are three specific exclusions from the data set that will be adhered to during this investigation:

1. Student data that displays the “stringer” behavior
2. Student data that had the Early Stopping Rule (ESR) applied
3. Student data for those students that did not move from their grade in 2016 to one higher grade in 2017

Note that the descriptions of the ELA Reading and Writing & Language standards tend to be relatively consistent in the overall skills from one grade to the next (the main change across grades are reflected in text complexity and a shift in emphasis within the different standards), so checking the vertical articulation for ELA seems like an especially pertinent thing to do. If a student is proficient in one year, it seems reasonable that they would attain proficiency the next year, assuming a normal amount of instruction and learning in the intervening year, and assuming a concomitant increase in the difficulty and rigor of the standards from one year to the next.

We also recognize that the original vertical articulation had data for only a single year and was, thus, limited in its evaluation of vertical articulation as described above. Thus, we will also present results for the original 2015 standard setting, as well as for 2017, that compare proficiency percentages and theta cuts across the grades to demonstrate the degree of consistency across grades that was implemented in the first year and the degree to which such consistency is still evident in the most recent year. Exclusion requirements one and two outlined above will apply here as well.

All these results will be studied to determine whether they require any change in the original theta cuts based solely on the revisiting of the vertical articulation. Essentially, the original theta cuts will be treated as the default cuts, and no changes will be implemented unless the results (i.e., the percentages of students in each achievement level) indicate an effect-size difference that is large enough to invalidate the interpretations of the original theta cuts. We will collaborate with the Psychometric subcommittee and the TAC to seek a determination of what would constitute the amount of change from one year to the next that is acceptable. If changes are made in any of the theta cuts, they will be implemented prior to bringing the Level 2 and Level 3 writing prompts onto scale and revising the Performance Level Descriptors. These analyses will be presented to the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee and the TAC for review and will be approved by the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee.

Bringing Writing Prompts onto the ELA Scale (Step 2)

Step 2 is to bring the 2018 Level 2 and Level 3 writing prompts onto the ELA scale as this is the first year of their operational use. They will be brought onto the ELA scale utilizing a Fixed Common Item Parameter (FCIP) method of equating.

The FCIP linking process enables us to bring the writing prompt scores onto the ELA scale by capitalizing on the current ELA (i.e., reading, language and writing standards) scales item parameters. Procedurally, we will take two steps: (1) Calibrate the reading, language and writing items and equate them to the existing ELA scale through their anchor items, (2) Calibrate the Level 2 and Level 3 writing

prompts onto the existing ELA scale by fixing all reading, language and writing item parameters to their existing values (from Step 1) and then estimating the writing prompt item parameters. This process is possible because responses to the reading, language and writing items and the writing prompts come from single groups of examinees.¹ The process creates IRT parameters for each of the score levels for each of the prompts that are linked to the existing ELA scale through the fixed reading, language and writing item parameters. The resulting ELA scale will then have an enhanced interpretation due to the contribution of the writing prompts.

ELA Performance Level Descriptor (PLD) Revisions – Psychometric, Item Development, and Scoring Subcommittees Work (Step 3)

Step 3 of the standards validation process involves state-level subject-matter experts (SMEs), from the MSAA Psychometric, Item Development, and Scoring subcommittees, comprising state-level assessment directors, specialists and advisors, and Measured Progress’s special education directors and specialists, reviewing and revising the ELA PLDs to incorporate descriptions related to the writing prompt expectations for each Performance Level. We will review the MSAA ELA performance level descriptors (PLDs) and incorporate language from the scoring rubrics for the writing prompts, and the MSAA definition of writing in order to include in the PLDs the skills and knowledge areas measured by the writing prompts.

Measured Progress will provide the first draft to MSAA for their review and edits. In order to gain the necessary perspectives of the various subcommittees we’ll provide the draft to the MSAA Psychometric, Item Development, and Scoring subcommittees. We will then incorporate any edits and provide it to the three subcommittees for their final review and approval of the ELA PLDs that will be presented to the panel groups, as outlined in Step 5.

ELA Cut Score Review – Psychometric Subcommittee Work (Step 4)

For Step 4, the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee and Measured Progress will collaborate to complete a cut score review. During this process the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee and Measured Progress will keep in mind the alignment between the revised ELA PLDs and the ELA scale with the writing prompts included to ensure there is consistency between PLD language and the location of cut scores. To do this, Measured Progress will provide to the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee and the TAC an analysis that includes the writing score points relative to the cut scores and discuss any cut scores that may need to be shifted, from those set in Step 1, based on location of the writing prompt score points. During a webinar we will review the analysis and agree to content-based cut score shifts considering the revised ELA PLDs. The collaborators will write content based rationales for retaining or adjusting cut scores, following a consensus approach. This process is necessary to validate the writing prompt scores relative to the cut scores to confirm they make sense given the language reflected in the PLDs about knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the writing prompt.

¹ Actually, there are two single groups of examinees in Step 2: Those who respond to all the operational reading, language and writing items plus the Level 2 writing prompt and those who respond to all the operational reading, language and writing items plus the Level 3 writing prompt. These separate linkings capitalize on the common items and their fixed parameters to bring the writing prompts onto the existing ELA scale.

During this meeting with the MSAA Psychometric subcommittee, Measured Progress will seek immediate initial approval.

State Superintendent or Board of Education Approval

After initial approval is received, the PLDs will be considered ready for the panel review (described below), and States may seek internal approval/adoption of the cuts from their respective superintendents or boards of education. This adoption will be necessary before Measured Progress can begin reporting work.

ELA PLD Review – Panel Work (Step 5)

For Step 5, SMEs will be recruited from the participating MSAA states to populate PLD Review Panels. During Step 5, these panels will be convened for a one-day face-to-face meeting to review the proposed PLD revisions (from Step 3) to confirm that they accurately reflect what the writing prompts are designed to measure. States will recruit panelists from districts/schools based on recommendations and counts provided by Measured Progress.

Panelist training will begin with advance materials to orient them to the MSAA and this population of students, describe the purpose of the panelist meeting, and provide nondisclosure agreements.

During the opening panelist meeting, all panelists will be introduced to and trained in the PLD review process, the MSAA writing definitions, and briefed on the additional training materials they will access during breakout sessions. This initial gathering is estimated to take approximately 1 hour.

Panelists will then reconvene in breakout sessions, where they will receive additional training and orientation utilizing the MSAA writing definitions, applicable scoring rubrics, writing prompts, and a selection of exemplar student samples from the anchor scoring papers. The panels will be asked to reflect on the information included in the PLDs to ensure the language is clear and reflects information that is understandable for the administrators, teachers and parents.

Panel assignments and estimated durations will be as follows:

- Group 1: Narrative Group; grades 3, 4 and 5. Duration: 1 day.
- Group 2: Informational Group; grades 6, 7 and 8. Duration: 1 day.
- Group 3: Persuasive Group; grade 11. Duration: ½ day.

Each panel will have one Measured Progress facilitator. Measured Progress recommends that the number of panelists on each panel be no fewer than 6 and no more than 10. As geographic representation will be one key consideration, this translates into a maximum of 3 panelists recruited per state. Measured Progress also recommends that panels contain a mix of teachers and content specialists, particularly for Groups 2 and 3, above. All panelist activities will be conducted on a single day via a face-to-face meeting. All panelists will attend the opening panelist meeting, and then reconvene in their assigned group/breakout session.

Each panel will be informed that the MSAA writing definitions guided the development of the writing prompts, and the facilitator will show how the definitions have been represented in the revised PLD bullets. Panelists will be walked through the administration of a writing prompt to understand the student experience. Then they will review each prompt, as well as scoring rubrics and student samples/exemplars. These exemplars will come from anchor papers currently used by Measured Progress scoring, which were generated in 2017 when writing was being field tested.

Panelists will be asked to consider the revised portions of the PLDs in light of the inputs and training described above, and the facilitator will invite the panel's feedback on the revised PLDs' clarity,

descriptiveness and consistency with the MSAA writing definitions. Work will be considered complete when the panel agrees on a consolidated set of panel recommendations (or acceptance as-is) for each set of PLDs under consideration.

After completion of the breakout panels' work, Measured Progress will provide the panelist PLD recommendations to the MSAA Psychometric, Item Development, and Scoring subcommittees and request final approval or revisions at that time.

Item and Test Security

Measured Progress fully understands that ensuring security is of paramount importance in establishing and maintaining the highest possible standards of technical quality, fairness, integrity, and public confidence in high-stakes assessments. We have created a system, as well as policies and procedures, to ensure that all assessment materials, and electronic files are developed, used, and maintained in a secure manner. Protecting the confidentiality of all materials, records, and files is an essential practice in our industry, and we take it very seriously.

Security procedures for the meeting will include ensuring that meeting rooms are secure at all times. Measured Progress staff will maintain a presence in meeting rooms at all times while meetings are in progress and will ensure that the rooms have been locked at meal times and at any breaks. All materials used by panelists will be collected and accounted for prior to allowing panelists to leave the room. At the end of the meeting all materials will be shredded securely.

ELA PLD Review-Panel Work Logistics

Measured Progress will provide an online registration format and will send out confirmation and needed information to all participants identified by the MSAA state partners. Measured Progress will arrange travel and accommodations for all participants. The stipend or sub reimbursement budgeted for this meeting is \$100 per day for the meeting day.

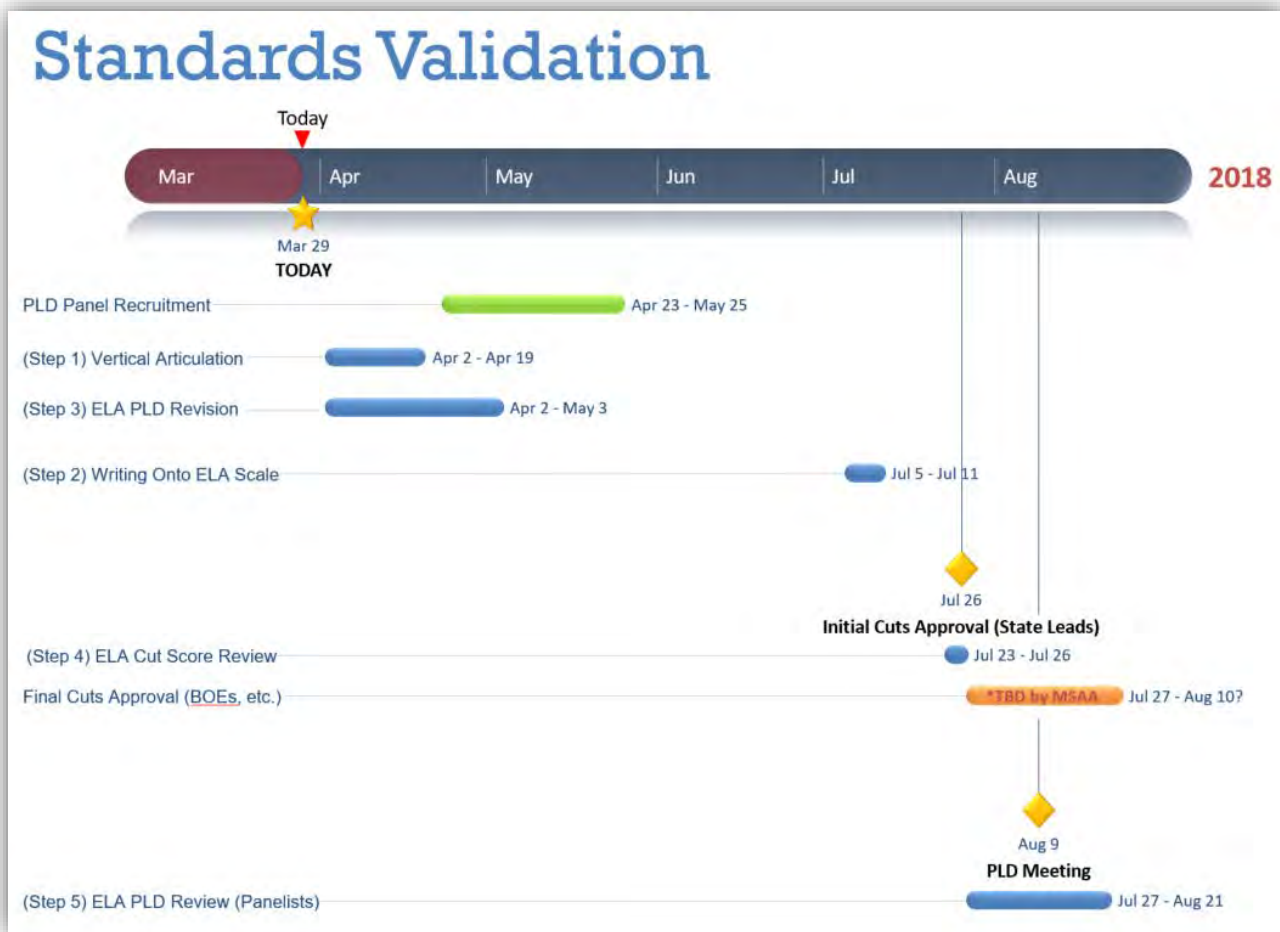
Measured Progress will provide travel and accommodations for one individual from each partner state/entity to observe the ELA PLD Review meeting.

Timeline (Shared with the Psychometric subcommittee on March 29, 2018)

The following visual provides the overall timeline related to each of the steps indicated in this proposal.

Important Notes:

- The timeline for Step 1 Vertical Articulation is dependent upon the date for the discussion regarding a determination of what would constitute the amount of change from one year to the next that is acceptable with the Psychometric subcommittee and the TAC.
- The timeline for Final Cuts Approval (BOEs, etc.) is to be determined (TBD) as this timeline is still being determined by MSAA.





Arizona State Board of Education Annual Board Retreat – August 6-7, 2018 Hassayampa Inn – Prescott, Arizona

Sample Document of Board Staff Collective Commitments

Board staff has provided this document to Board members to show the result of the collective commitment process. The bold statements are the collective commitments, followed by an outline of how the collective commitment was established. The staff's collective commitments follow the same order as the Board questions in the workbook. Notice how at the beginning of each statement there is a goal that Board staff will meet, followed by an action for meeting that goal. These collective commitments allow the Board staff to function as a team, rather than a loose collection of individuals. By having these commitments, Board staff ensures that the Board's success is directly linked to the work staff completes daily.

We will ensure all Board members are prepared for Board meetings by making ourselves available up to two weeks before the Board meeting and communicating the staff's availability to all members.

Board staff prepares the Board binder and sends out two weekends prior to the SBE meeting. Board staff will make themselves available to all Board members to discuss the Board materials prior to the Board meeting (2 weeks). In the event that the ED is not available to meet with SBE members, the DD will assist with the staffing of Board members. The Board staff weekly emails will contain information on the ED's availability and will ask the Board members if additional information is needed for an agenda item, that the members email the ED and the ED will find out the information from the appropriate person. The emails will also request that Board members tell the ED when they would like to speak with the ED the weekend prior to the meeting.

We will follow up with Board members who have directed Board staff to investigate certain topics from the Board meeting by the end of the Board meeting week.

When seeking clarification from Board members following a Board meeting, Board staffers will make a phone call or send an email to the Board member who made the specific request to the staff. Requests are followed up no later than the Friday of the SBE meeting. If no information can be found at that time, the Board staff is required to provide an update to the Board member.

We will be respectful of Board members' positions by using formal language at the Board meetings and in all public settings.

Board staffers are required to use the "President _____, Member _____" when answering Member questions. When first addressing the Board, staffers are required to address with President, followed by Superintendent and Members of the Board. In all public settings, Board staffers are required to use the title of the member, followed by the member's last name.

We will ensure that Board members are aware of the Board's meeting schedule by creating Standard Operating Procedures to address this issue.

The Board's EA receives information regarding the Board members' attendance at meetings. The EA is required to provide that information to the Board staffers in the weekly staff meetings prior to the SBE meeting.

We will promptly seek out additional information for Board members when questions arise on Board meeting materials by contacting the appropriate person to answer such requests or researching the questions ourselves.

Board staffers are required to ensure all members' questions are answered prior to the SBE meeting. Information from questions that will be asked during the meeting should be provided to all staff members to ensure the information is accurately portrayed for the public.

We will follow Board policy as it relates to the legislative session by contacting the legislative committee of the Board prior to speaking on behalf of the Board.

The Board staff is required to speak with the President, Vice President and a third member of the Board during the legislative session in regard to bills. During the off-season, and at times during the legislative session, Board staffers cannot provide the "Board's position" without first seeking clarification from the legislative committee of the Board or if the Board has taken action on proposed legislation or topic. Board staffers will provide information to any legislator or staffer who contacts Board staff on information on process or historical actions of the Board and will sit in stakeholder meetings to be used as a resource for those in the room.

We will communicate the Board's position with education stakeholder groups when the Board has taken action on topics or when Board members have expressed interest in a topic by holding monthly meetings with the education stakeholder groups.

Board staff does not speak for the Board unless the Board has taken direct action on an item. Board staff is required to share all public comment from stakeholders to SBE members, whether in written or verbal form. Furthermore, the ED will meet with all educational stakeholders one week prior to the SBE meeting to discuss all items on the SBE agenda. The ED will take notes and answer questions the stakeholders may have on potential Board action. If the ED is not able to attend, the DD will participate in these meetings. Lastly, during the legislative session, Board staff will hold education policy forums, inviting all stakeholders to Board offices to openly discuss their bills or interests at that time. This process is to ensure that the Board staff is well educated on potential hurdles and is able to communicate to the legislative committee of the Board most effectively.

We will communicate the Board's position with education stakeholder groups by publishing Board Action Highlights within 24 hours of a Board meeting.

Board staff is required to publish a Board "Highlight" document within 24 hours of a Board meeting. In addition, the ED and DD are required to adhere to the Board's actions and viewpoints when speaking with stakeholders of the Board. If clarification is needed, Board staff will reach out to the specific Board member. Board staffers do not speak for individual Board members unless direction is given from the specific member.

We will keep the Board members informed of staff activities and other areas of interest by emailing all members once a week.

The ED will provide an update to the Board members every Friday afternoon/evening. During the legislative session, updates MAY be sent on Saturday to ensure legislative actions from Friday are captured in the weekly update. Every update will contain either: information only or action requested in the subject line. Information in the weekly email will contain staff activities and wrap-ups for the week, next week's meetings and events, invitations to SBE members, conference reminders, stakeholder feedback, links to committee and legislative meetings and any other additional information that may be of importance to the members. The goal of the weekly update is to keep members informed of the Board staff's work and allow the members to interact with the educational areas that have/will occur. If the ED is not available, the DD will send the weekly email.

We will be respectful of Board members' time by returning phone calls and emails within working hours the email or phone call is received.

Board staffers are required to return members' calls the same day.

We will continue to grow as professionals in the education space by visiting and speaking with the field at least four times a year on school campuses.

Board staffers are required to attend school walk-throughs in order to gain an understanding of the issues schools are facing. These activities will help to expand the staff's knowledge of education on the ground level. Each staffer will be adding to their own person perspectives of what an AZ school looks and how it operates, while listening to those individuals whose SBE policies directly impact day to day.

We will ensure that a representative of the State Board attends national conferences by sending at least one Board staff member to every national conference on education.

Board staffers are required to travel to national conferences in areas that the SBE oversees and is relevant to their day-to-day work.

We will fully vet any new or updated policy of the Board prior to submitting to the full Board for approval by holding stakeholder meetings relevant to the policy.

Board staffers are required to hold stakeholder meetings in different fashions prior to proposing any policy change to the SBE.

We will staff each Board committee and hold each committee to the same respect levels of the State Board of Education by ensuring all meeting documents are sent out in a timely fashion, all questions are researched and answered prior to the meeting and stakeholders are aware of the committee's potential action. Furthermore, we will ensure that the Board members are aware of the discussions of the committees by providing documentation to the Board members through email links to the videos.

Board staffers are required to staff SBE committees and prepare information to go to the SBE on the committee's recommendations. Staffers are required to provide links to the SBE members on those committees to help inform members of the committee's recommendations.

Boardsmanship Review

Board Self-Evaluation

A recent survey of administrators and policymakers revealed that most felt the greatest obstacle to achieving improved teaching and learning was the constant revision of reform plans before they were given adequate time to show progress. Leadership, specifically leadership from the state board of education, can create an atmosphere that allows reform to progress with minimum, yet appropriate, mid-course corrections. Consequently, **a board must govern and discipline itself in a way that ensures a steadfast commitment to its mission and goals.** To provide the appropriate level of leadership, a board must take the time to reflect on its actions over a specified period. To realize its vision and achieve its goals, a board should conduct an annual evaluation in at least the following areas:

- ★ Roles and responsibilities of board members;
- ★ Board operations; and
- ★ Progress toward achieving board goals.

Many state boards conduct annual planning retreats. Yet just as many fail to include a comprehensive self evaluation of the board, its operations, and its success in the implementation of its strategic plan as a focal point of the retreat. Boards are inclined to articulate their accomplishments over the previous year in a disjointed manner. Their resistance to putting their accomplishments in the context of a long-term strategic plan exacts a price in the public arena. The board that does not annually measure its progress and convey its policies as a part of a larger design for school and student improvement is frequently the board that finds itself under attack for ineffectiveness from the legislature, the governor's office, and the public.

Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

Despite a time of unprecedented change in membership on state boards of education, very little time is spent orienting new board members on their statutory roles and responsibilities. Moreover, many seasoned board members demonstrate a lack of understanding of the role of policymaker in their approach to service on the state board of education. One approach to measuring how well board members understand and execute their roles is an annual evaluation using an instrument that asks board members to:

- ★ Delineate their roles and responsibilities as board members;
- ★ Identify and assess individual and board activities addressed within that role;
- ★ Measure effectiveness and appropriateness of board activities in advancing and achieving the board's goals; and
- ★ Identify voids in state leadership that are areas into which the board can move.

By using this approach, the board is better able to confront actions that adversely affect the effectiveness of the institution. Thus, for example, a board member who operates independently in approaching the legislature will better understand why such actions are inappropriate. In all probability the board's evaluations will reveal that

independent actions are not the role and responsibility of a single board member, nor do such actions result in moving the board closer to achieving its goals. If the board can determine that only a personal agenda was advanced, the board recognizes that it has organizational and operational dilemmas that the members must address.

Board Operations

The competency of individual board members is irrelevant if the board cannot operate in a cohesive and effective manner. Thus, **evaluating the board's operating procedures motivates the board to critically examine its structure and proceedings and to decide if they are actually moving the board toward its desired outcomes.** An evaluation of the board's functions provides a vehicle that measures a board's efficiency and its adeptness at accommodating the diverse issues it confronts. Some topics that should be included in this portion of an evaluation instrument are:

- ★ Agenda development and administration;
- ★ Policymaking procedures;
- ★ Alignment of the board's operations with its strategic plan, mission, and goals; and
- ★ Opportunities for board development.

A carefully constructed evaluation instrument solicits from board members their levels of satisfaction with the way issues are brought before the board both as agenda items and as study topics. If the board's agenda is not aligned with its strategic plan, or if the board meeting is constructed so that important items are not afforded sufficient time for study or debate, a board should make the necessary adjustments to calibrate itself toward better results.

Besides measuring the effectiveness of the overall functions of the board, a good evaluation instrument reveals areas for future board development. Just as learning is a lifelong process, board development should be a continuous practice.

Progress Toward Achieving Board Goals

A regular and methodical evaluation of the board's goals is one of the most critical components of effective boardsmanship. **A board should have both long- and short-term goals driven by data that can be aggregated and used to improve the performance of students and the professionals that work with them.** The board should approve three to five annual short-term goals that are subsets of their long-term objectives. During its annual evaluation process, the board can measure its satisfaction with the achievement of the goals, as well as the appropriateness of the goals with respect to the board's mission.

Finally, every board should develop and distribute an annual report that articulates its mission, goals, and objectives. The report should accurately reflect what the board has accomplished over the previous year and how it intends to use what it has learned and accomplished to keep moving forward on behalf of the students in the state.

NASBE can help state boards develop a comprehensive self-evaluation instrument as part of its technical assistance services. Please contact Brenda Welburn at NASBE headquarters for additional information.

Boardsmanship Review

Five Steps to Being a Better Board Member

JULY 2015

By Kristen Amundson

Joining a state board of education involves commitment. Citizen volunteers routinely dedicate substantial time and energy to this demanding job. The vast majority report that they have taken on this challenge because they want to help all students succeed. When their talents and abilities are used maximally, they believe their service is well worth the personal cost.

New board members may worry that it will take them years to become truly effective. But effective board service is a skill, and like any skill, it can be learned, practiced, and improved.

Here are ways that a new member can make a difference from day one.

1. FOCUS ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Does board service make a difference? Research shows it can. A recent study of local school board members found that some boards can help students beat the odds—that is, they help students perform better academically than one would expect, given their demographic and financial characteristics. Yet it is clear that such achievement is possible only when board members make it their top priority.

Many other issues and considerations take up a board's time. But the most successful board members do not allow themselves to be distracted by "bright, shiny objects." Instead, they focus consistently on student achievement.

2. DEVOTE THE TIME

Service on a state board of education is time intensive, and there are times when the demands on a member's time are overwhelming. Agendas are long and complex.

For example, a recent meeting in one state required the state board to consider and act

on high school graduation requirements, subject regulations for mathematics and English language arts, a maintenance-of-effort (funding) waiver for one school district, regulations governing the qualifications for school superintendents and school administrators, science standards adoption, and the statewide school discipline plan.

No single board member, especially not one who is combining board service with a demanding career, can be an expert on all those topics. One approach is for the board to divide the workload by assigning some topics to committees. The members of those committees can then serve as resources for the rest of the board.

In addition to attending meetings, most state board members will also be asked to serve on board committees, visit schools to see how programs are working, and meet with many groups: legislators, business leaders, parents, and teachers. All of these add to the time commitment but also pay off in improved student achievement.

3. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

On occasion, board members express frustration when colleagues do not do their homework before meetings. This reflects poorly on the entire board and slows progress. When a board member is chronically unprepared, it is proper for the chair of the board to speak to that individual in private, letting them know the critical importance of meeting preparation. After all, the board is often under a microscope and must be cognizant of its public appearance.

There is also a responsibility for staff members who prepare materials for the board. Members must receive relevant material in a workable time frame. The board should have an operating policy that guides staff on the materials that will be sent to members.

Boards should use executive summaries, report logs, and other devices to give members a chance to read as much as they can to prepare for a given issue.

The board member who has read and digested the information in the board agenda packet will be able to follow and participate in the discussion at the board table. For members who want to influence state education policy, the first step is to read the board materials.

4. QUESTION

Some state boards are created in the state constitution; others were established by state statute. Members may be elected or appointed. But there is one thing they all have in common: the power of the question.

A new board member may be concerned about asking a "dumb question." But odds are that if one board member is wondering about something, others are as well. And as Albert Einstein once noted, "The important thing is not to stop questioning."

Even if a new board member decides not to ask at a first or second board meeting, he or she should definitely ask the question by the second or third time an issue arises.

At a minimum, new board members should ask the following:

- Does the state board have a strategic plan? How do members learn about progress toward meeting the goals set out in the plan?

- How does the board know if its policies are being implemented in schools and districts?
- What are the ground rules for determining what is board work and what are staff responsibilities?
- How do members place items on the board agenda?
- What can new board members do to help ensure a positive working relationship among all members?

Kristen Amundson is NASBE's executive director and can be reached at kristen.amundson@nasbe.org. This Boardmanship Review is based on a 1997 NASBE publication, "Characteristics of Effective Board Members."

5. MAKE DECISIONS

Effective boards make decisions. These decisions are sometimes controversial. Rather than deal with that controversy, boards may be tempted to put off a decision until the next meeting (or the meeting after that).

In nearly every case, however, postponing a decision will not make the problem go away. It is far better to take a vote and then develop a strategy for explaining why the vote was important and how the policy will be implemented.

For board members, however, the responsibility for a decision does not end when the vote is taken. A member who voted with the majority has a responsibility to see that the policy is carried out effectively. The member will work with the chief state school officer to ensure that timelines are established, benchmarks for achievement are clear, and a regular schedule for reporting on progress is developed.

And what if a member opposed the policy that eventually prevailed? Board members who take part in a democratic process have a responsibility to respect it once the vote is taken. Effective boards share common expectations of their colleagues that they observe during deliberation on the policy and in the representation of the board's views once the policy is enacted. When it meets those expectations, the board is a better institution and the focus of policymaking remains squarely on producing results for students.

Boardsmanship Review

Building Partnerships in the Education Community

JUNE 2017

By Abigail Potts

State boards have an obligation to build relationships with education stakeholders and ensure their voices shape education policies. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to engage stakeholders in “timely and meaningful consultation.” While it is a federal requirement, building strong relationships with diverse stakeholders is also essential to fulfilling your role as the citizens’ voice in education. Board members can leverage ESSA to not only bolster relationships with current partners but to seek out new ones, particularly among those who feel disconnected or who have not been historically engaged in a public education dialogue.

DIFFERENT FOLKS, DIFFERENT STROKES

If you are serious about folding meaningful input into your board’s policymaking, you must tailor interactions with your constituencies in a way that recognizes and values their unique contributions to the education process. Those charged with implementing the policies that your board enacts have very different concerns from those the policies affect—parents, business leaders, and employers, who view themselves as consumers of the system. Because of the diverse, divergent perspectives of stakeholders, boards must position themselves in a way that facilitates open, honest discussions. Your board can then lay the groundwork for pragmatic consensus building and broker positions that are acceptable to various interests without compromising the integrity of the policy.

Successful engagement creates a sense of buy-in and shared ownership of the state’s vision and strategic plan for education. Board-approved policies have run into implementation roadblocks when factions of the commu-

nity are not involved at the outset and learned about policies’ impacts only after the fact.

Ask about whether your board has operational policies on how they will engage education constituencies continually. Public meetings and hearings are important tools for receiving input, but they generally focus on specific issues and require stakeholders to monitor state notices. Creating an environment of mutual understanding of responsibilities and concerns requires more substantive, sustained interaction in a less formal setting. A progressive board understands that meaningful engagement also means that its members are visiting school communities regularly and listening to their concerns and ideas to improve education.

Consider the full range of stakeholders throughout the state with vested interests in the education system:

- parents
- students
- teachers
- school leaders
- community-based organizations
- local school boards
- district superintendents
- early childhood educators
- charter school leaders
- civil rights organizations
- governors
- legislators
- postsecondary administrators
- businesses
- philanthropic and grant-making organizations

Your board should demonstrate an understanding of each group’s unique role within the sphere of public education. Local school boards have experiences and responsibilities that are most similar to those of state boards. As the lay education policymakers at the state and local level, these two groups are the public’s voice on issues of excellence and equity. Both develop strategic plans and mission-based policy. To promote a unified approach to goal setting, your state board could host an annual session on strategic planning for local boards that would benefit both. Such sessions can help local boards understand what you envision for all students while allowing them to customize according to community mores.

Most state boards honor their state teachers and principals of the year at an annual ceremony. Some boards have taken this a step further, using these experts’ skills and experiences to help the board think through issues of professional learning and teacher preparation programs. A few states have created teacher advisory boards or panels comprising former teachers of the year or other distinguished professionals. These panels serve as resources to state boards when they deliberate on teacher-related issues.

Most state boards have time allotted for study sessions to increase their understanding of an issue. A board could invite key leaders of

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the education or business community to hear speakers on an issue that the board expects to include on a future policy agenda. By allowing these leaders to learn more about an issue of importance to the state board, raise questions with experts, and have a common understanding of the data, the board is building support before the issue is translated into policy recommendations.

The turnover in superintendents across the nation is reaching critical levels. While many spend less than three years in their posts, they are often the point people for making change happen. They also try to serve multiple masters: teachers, principals, board members, parents, and business leaders. Your board can help education leaders in the state: Work with local superintendents to identify their needs, their frustrations, and their hopes. At the same time, define what the state board can do to support them.

ENGAGING PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Parents often feel that education policymakers undervalue their opinions, particularly at the state level. Your board must be sensitive to those who are active in parent-teacher organizations as well as to those who are less involved in their schools. Identifying and recognizing other established groups that include large numbers of parents, such as civic and church groups, can reinforce the board's commitment to inclusiveness and encourage all parents to take a more active role in schools.

Several state boards have student members who make significant contributions to the board's deliberations. Frequently, these students are elected through an elaborate process that involves hundreds of students across the state. You should consider including these student conventions on the board agenda or seek to have board representation at the meeting to further students' understanding of the importance of the board and its work. Your board should also identify meaningful ways to foster relationships with students who are not active in school politics or student councils. These students are sometimes less aware of the purposes behind

state board actions and would benefit from interaction with the board.

Although this Boardsmanship Review has touched on only a few of the relationships between state boards and other groups, productive relationships share common ingredients. The fundamental elements of good working partnerships are ongoing evaluations of those important relationships at the state and local level, a process for meaningful interactions, and a demonstration that the board is listening. What is most important to remember is that the quality of your policies will come to reflect the quality of your relationships with the community.

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Boardsmanship Review

Working with the Media

JUNE 2017

By Renée Rybak Lang and Michael Spaeth

Regardless of whether you are an appointed or elected member of your state board, your role as a state policymaker opens you up to scrutiny from parents, community leaders, and the news media.

Working with the media and communicating with the public through the media are essential to a board member's role as a public official. Reporters depend on board members to be authoritative sources of information about state education matters, and they pay close attention to board proceedings. In turn, board members can work with the media to help communicate important decisions to stakeholders and build public trust. This Boardsmanship Review outlines ways state board members can effectively interact with the media.

TYPES OF NEWS MEDIA

Although a growing number of people, and particularly young people, get their news from social media and other nontraditional online media sources such as blogs, most still depend on traditional media sources for their news: newspapers, magazines, television, and radio.

BOX 1. WHAT MAKES NEWS?

You know the old saw: "Dog bites man. Not news. Man bites dog. That's news." What excites the news media are stories of rarity, conflict, and drama. When your board moves to change policy in a drastic way, it makes news. When it makes a decision that conflicts with a legislative decision or when it can't agree to make any decision, it makes news. An ethical misstep by a member makes news. As your state board conducts its business, be mindful of agenda items that will pique a reporter's interest and be prepared to answer their calls.

A reporter's job is to report news and information accurately and quickly. Reporters are often assigned "beats," or issues to cover, including politics and education. But as data from the Pew Research Center suggests, newsrooms are increasingly short-staffed. The number of full-time reporters covering state legislatures for daily newspapers declined by 35 percent between 2003 and 2014, and less than one-third of the 801 daily newspapers in the United States send a reporter to cover state capital news. Likewise, just 14 percent of TV stations have an assigned state reporter, and only 124 reporters cover state houses on radio.

One-third of education beat reporters say their newsroom has shrunk in recent years, according to the Education Writers Association. Because of this, reporters covering the state board of education may be working on multiple beats at once, and they are likely to be younger and less experienced.

This inexperience can be both a challenge and an opportunity for state board members. In responding to press inquiries on board decisions, board members can educate reporters new to the beat on the intricacies of education policy-making while answering their specific questions.

Board members can expect both print and online-only newspapers and local TV and radio to report on state board decisions (box 1). Newspaper reporters often have more time to spend on a story and will call for a quote or background, or they may want to confirm a detail about a board decision for a story the next day. Broadcast reporters are likely working on a story for later that day and must distill the same content into a short clip, sometimes only a minute or two long. Concise, complete statements are important for TV or radio interviews, and board members can expect that some of these interviews will be recorded live.

State boards should also consider getting to know the editorial boards and writers from their state's newspaper of record. Newspaper editorials can both affect and reflect public perceptions of an issue. It is in the state board's best interest to develop a rapport with editorial writers before they weigh in on education matters.

BEST PRACTICES FOR PRESS INTERVIEWS

Speaking to reporters can be nerve-wracking, especially if you've never done a press interview before. They will ask difficult questions and sometimes ones meant to throw you off guard. Remember though, they are only doing their jobs. For any press interview, it is important to stay calm and follow these 10 tips:

- 1. Ask yourself, "Am I the appropriate spokesperson?"** Many boards choose to have only one member serve as spokesperson or have rules on member interactions with the media (box 2). Before agreeing to an interview, be clear about what your board's policy is on talking with the press. In cases when you are contacted by reporters but are not the appropriate person to answer their questions, refer them to the appropriate spokesperson or suggest someone else with more expertise on an issue. Reporters will appreciate the tip.
- 2. Be responsive.** Reporters operate on deadlines, so timeliness is of the utmost importance. Reporters remember who is responsive and who is not, so when they call, always ask

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BOX 2. STATE BOARD PRESS POLICIES

State boards of education have thought carefully about how members should interact with the press. All of the 24 boards that responded to NASBE's request for information have either a formal or informal press policy or are developing such a policy. Nearly half of them have a written press policy in their bylaws or other board documents.

About two-thirds of the boards designate a specific person—usually the chair or president, communications director, or executive director—to speak on behalf of the entire board. When that person is unavailable, a few states designate another board member or staff member as spokesperson.

Most of the boards allow members to share their own views with the press, but at least half ask members to provide a disclaimer that they are offering their own opinions and do not represent the entire board, just as Nebraska has done in its policy:

Board members have the responsibility to make it clear when they are speaking or writing on their own behalf that they are not representing the Board. Board members should add a disclaimer to written and electronic communication indicating that their statements represent the Board member's personal views and not those of the State Board of Education. When directed by the full Board, or as directed by Board President, they may speak on behalf of the Board.

But having a media policy is only the first step. It is critical that members work together to articulate and find agreement on clear, cohesive messages that help the public make sense of board decisions. Members should always leverage the expertise of their executive director and/or communications team to craft a messaging plan that accurately reflects the board's vision for education and consult them with them on any press inquiries.

when their deadline is and meet or beat it.

3. Prepare, prepare, prepare. A successful interview depends on how well you know the issue being covered. Before agreeing to be interviewed, ask the reporter what they want to speak with you about. Read up on the issue and outline the key points, messages, and facts that you want to make sure you cover during the interview—regardless of what questions you are asked. Try to anticipate their questions. If you are doing a phone interview, write out important data points you may be asked about and have your talking points handy to help you stay on message. If time allows, review your notes and practice with a colleague or communications staff member beforehand.

4. Check out the interviewer. It's important to research reporters who will be interviewing you. What have they written about recently? Do their stories tend to have a particular angle or point of view? How long have they covered education? Knowing these details can help build rapport with a journalist.

5. Be concise. It's easy to get tripped up by an interview question and say more than you mean to. Before you give a response, ask yourself: "What is the essential information?" Keep your answers short and relevant. Do not use jargon, acronyms, or wonky terms. If you want to drive home a point or key message, be explicit. "The bottom line is...."

6. Accuracy and honesty are critical. Never under any circumstances lie to a reporter. Relationships with the press are built on trust, and every effort should be made to ensure your words are accurate and truthful. If you are caught in a lie, that will be the news. Avoid responding to questions with "no comment," as it can sound like you have something to hide. Instead, if you don't know an answer to a question, say "I don't know." Refer them to another expert, or tell them that you'd like to double check the information before being quoted on it.

7. There is no such thing as "off the record." It is always safest to assume that whatever you say during an interview with a

reporter will be used in her story and attributed—even if your interview is "on background." It is easy for a reporter to misread her notes or decide that something you said is too good not to include. If you are being interviewed in person at your office, clear your desk of any sensitive information. For TV or radio, always assume your microphone is "hot" to avoid stray comments.

8. Watch out for leading questions and hypotheticals. "Wouldn't you say that...." Reporters often try to put words in people's mouths to get them to share insider information. Or they may have already written the story and are trying to set up a quote they need to fill a gap. Avoid the temptation to fill the silence or speak out of turn. Stick to the facts and your talking points.

9. Keep your cool. Sometimes the excitement of an interview brings about unplanned emotions. You may get frustrated by a question. Take a deep breath and try to stay calm. Be mindful of how fast you are talking and your tone. If you are conducting an interview in person, be aware of your posture and facial expressions.

10. Repeat your main points. At the end of every interview, slowly go through your two or three most important points. You want to make sure the reporter has recorded or written—and understands—the most salient facts. You might say, "I just want to make sure you got these three essential points...." And always make sure the reporter has a phone number where you can be reached for additional information on deadline.

CONCLUSION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) prioritizes ongoing stakeholder engagement throughout the state planning process and implementation. The news media are not specifically called out in ESSA, but journalists have the power to influence your most important stakeholders. Having a strong relationship with the media can increase public awareness of and support for your board's policymaking.

Renée Rybak Lang is NASBE's communications director, and Michael Spaeth is communications associate.

Boardsmanship Review

Building Partnerships with the State Department of Education

The state board and the state department of education should view themselves as partners in a single education policy leadership agency, each of whom boosts the effectiveness of the other. Typically, conflicts between state boards and departments arise over the blurred boundaries separating “policy” and “administration.”

Conflict is less likely to surface between the board and the department when the board directs long-range planning, policy review, and evaluation activities. State education departments should provide the necessary support, information, and analyses to back up these processes. The board enhances its effectiveness when it:

- Distinguishes between management and governance;
- Uses staff wisely;
- Has clearly articulated bylaws or policies on working with the department staff;
- Doesn't overload the staff with extraneous issues or personal concerns; and
- Avoids issues that could create real or perceived conflicts.

Working with the Chief

Cultivating a strong and healthy working relationship with the chief state school officer is critical to sound policy development. The relationship between the board and the chief flourishes through open and honest exchanges. If the board hires and evaluates the chief, it must develop measurable goals for the chief to follow and annually evaluate her or him on progress toward achieving those goals. If the governor appoints the chief or if she or he is elected by the public, it is essential that the chief and the board meet early in the relationship. Such a meeting should take place before the first formal board meeting to discuss the board's goals, the chief's goals, issues of mutual concern, and operational styles. The board should address potential conflicts openly. Recognizing that political issues and loyalties are a reality when the board does not hire and evaluate the chief, the board and the chief must try to ensure that politics does not take precedence over good policies for education. The board chair can facilitate the initial interaction with the chief, but hearing the views of a newly elected or appointed chief is useful for the entire board. The chief will also welcome an opportunity to get to know the board on a personal and professional level.

A good board wants a good chief and a good chief wants a good board. The chief should make every attempt to:

- Support the goals and objectives of the board;
- Keep the board informed of emerging issues and concerns;

- Provide for the development of the board collectively and individually; and
- Demand that staff work diligently to support the board's initiatives.

Working with the Department Staff

While the chief works for the board, the governor, or the populace that elected him or her, the department staff works for the chief. In some states the chief requires that all board requests to receive information from department staff be channeled through the chief's office. In other states the chief may feel comfortable with board members dealing directly with staff. Whatever the case, the staff needs clear expectations from the board conveyed and supported by the chief. The board needs to feel that the staff is committed to the goals of the board. To develop a good working relationship with the state department of education staff the board should:

- Have a clearly defined policy on how issues are directed to staff;
- Avoid personnel and personal issues;
- Avoid issues that can be perceived as conflicts of interest;
- Avoid burdening the staff with work unrelated to the board's goals; and
- Direct staff work toward the long range plan of the board.

At the center of the board-staff relationship is the expectation that staff will gather information, analyze and make recommendations to the board and provide alternatives. State department staff should be advisors to the board and should avoid self-serving support for positions and policies. A board should have clear expectations of the department staff:

- The board should expect accurate, focused, and timely information from the staff;
- The board should expect to be regularly informed on current and emerging issues; and
- Board material should be structured toward issues of policy and strategy.

State Board Executives

State board executives across the nation have a wide range of responsibilities, experience, and expertise in working with state boards. Despite the diversity of their responsibilities, they all provide useful and necessary support for boards. Most significantly, they can be a conduit to the chief and the department staff for board issues. In addition, executives frequently organize and direct the work of the board; they are responsible for getting new board members up to speed; and they are responsible for ensuring continuity and responsiveness to the board.

Whether it is the chief, the department staff, or the state board executive, it is the board's responsibility to provide leadership in these relationships. The human equation will always be a factor in managing multiple issues and concerns, but good communication can help resolve even the thorniest issues.

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Building Support for a Strong Board

State boards of education are made up largely of individuals who are not professional educators and who serve on their boards primarily as volunteers. Their work and level of commitment are not always as visible as that of other public servants, consequently the members of the board are frequently put in the position of advocating for support to adequately execute their roles and responsibilities. Although it would be desirable to have external support for the needs of the board, absent such support, boards have a duty to convey to the governor, the legislature, and the department of education their individual and collective needs to be effective policymakers. State boards of education need resources, development, and visibility to accomplish their goals. Some of the areas that benefit from active board advocacy include staffing needs, board and board member development, and representation on other education boards and commissions.

Staffing

Effective state boards of education have designated staff to assist them in their work. Most state and territorial education agencies denote specific staff members to serve their state and territorial boards of education. Although many go by the title of “state board of education executive,” there is wide variation in the titles, responsibilities, and job descriptions of these individuals. Those boards and board members who have access to a professional level staff person to undergird their work find such staff essential to making good decisions. Although some states have department staff who support the board as part of a comprehensive job description, designated staff assigned solely to the board can often more effectively support the board’s work and improve on what otherwise would be an amorphous or disjointed approach to responding to board needs. Examples of professional level work conducted by state board executives include:

- Developing, maintaining, and interpreting board policy and regulations;
- Planning and conducting orientation and in-service training for board members;
- Advising the chief state school officer or department staff of follow-up activities relative to board actions; and
- Conducting research and special projects for the board as a whole or, when appropriate, for individual members.

The state board executive plays a critical role in aligning the work of the education agency with the will of the board and in keeping the public apprized of state education policy development. As noted in *Profile of a State Board of Education Executive*, by the National Council of State Board of Education Executives (NCSBEE), “A generalist is probably more suited to the job than a specialist; however, knowledge of the field of education at the local, state, and federal levels is critical, as is the board executive’s willingness to keep abreast of current education issues.”

Board and Board Member Development

Increasing and enhancing boardsmanship skills and understanding of education issues are essential and fundamental to good board service. A lack of time and resources are often cited as rationales for limiting

board and board member access to development opportunities. Such an approach is counterproductive given the fact that most board members are not professional educators and that many have full-time jobs apart from the board. The return on investing in board development is generally greater than the initial investment. Board and board member development strengthens the board as a unit and gives the individual board member the confidence that his or her decision making is well informed. Development allows boards and members to:

- Increase their knowledge and understanding of emerging education issues;
- Compare various states' approaches to addressing similar issues and solving common problems;
- Expand their networking opportunities to exchange ideas and gain new perspectives on issues;
- Explore issues outside of the context of board meetings; and
- Mobilize the board with new strategies for promoting the board's agenda.

Regardless of the means used, board members should insist upon ongoing professional development from a variety of sources. Informed policymakers are an asset to the chief state school officer, the governor, and the state, and their commitment should be rewarded with opportunities to increase their expertise.

Board Representation on Education Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Panels

State education commissions and boards should have state board of education representation to avoid duplication of efforts and seamless policy development. The system of education governance of the United States is one of the most complex in the world, with separate federal, state, and local roles and responsibilities. The system is further complicated by the continual creation of a variety of commissions, advisory boards, and roundtables that provide recommendations to education policymakers. In some instances, these bodies are created because of a lack of understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and authority of the state board of education. In others, it is a lack of confidence in the state board's ability to move a specific agenda. In still other cases, it is a way to expand the dialogue to include a diversity of view points that might not be reflected on the state board of education. Whether such bodies are established as a result of federal mandates or legislative or gubernatorial actions, the state board should advocate that it be represented on these bodies, or at least obtain a clear understanding of this new body's relationship to the board. Board representation on and integration of the body's work to the efforts of the state board of education help minimize the possibility of creating a contentious policymaking environment and build support for a common state education agenda.

As boards engage in the critical work of self-evaluation, it is important that they ask themselves, What are our expectations of the state in supporting the significant work done by the board? and What supports are needed for the board to be successful? No other body can define the needs of the board as succinctly and accurately as the board itself, and no other body will be aware of the board's needs if it is not made aware of those needs by the board. State boards of education are an important element of education policymaking and governance in the United States. Their work should be supported and enhanced with the resources they need for effective policymaking.

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Characteristics of an Effective Board Member

Individuals who seek or accept service on their state board of education generally enter this venture with good intentions. Most often they bring to the board a belief in public education, a commitment to public service, and a desire to make a positive difference in the lives of the students in their states. If most board members share these altruistic motives, how and why do some boards occasionally become unproductive and dysfunctional?

Although several processes are fundamental to effective policymaking, none is more important than the conduct of individual board members. This is true both at the board table and in the way members represent the interests of the board to interest groups and in their respective communities.

To be an effective board member one should:

- ❖ Be a Team Player
- ❖ Use Good Judgement
- ❖ Have Time for Board Service
- ❖ Be Loyal
- ❖ Be Flexible
- ❖ Use His or Her Expertise for the Good of the Board
- ❖ Show support for and belief in the Board's Mission.

In the richest democratic tradition, board members will often disagree, promote particular view points and debate the issues. This is appropriate in the development of policy. However, once the board has taken a vote, it is critical for every board member to stand behind the collective decision of the body. Effective boards share common expectations of their colleagues that they observe and respect both in the deliberation of policy and in the representation of the board's views when policy is enacted. When it meets those expectations, the board is a better institution and the focus of policymaking is on results for students.

An effective board has members who:

- ★ Support the Mission of the Board;
- ★ Read Written Materials in Preparation for Board Meetings and Decision Making;
- ★ Attend Board Meetings and Actively Participate in Decision Making;
- ★ Advocate for the Board.

Supporting the Mission

Every member of the board must know the mission and know how it relates to the work of the board. The mission should drive the actions of the board and should be modified as the policymaking environment changes for the board. When an individual is elected or appointed to the state board of education, he or she should review the mission, goals and related policies. Although it is typical for members to have their own views of what the board should be accomplishing, it is important that new members show regard for the work of previous boards.

This is not to suggest that a member should not raise new issues and concerns that the board's mission may not adequately address. An existing board should try to accommodate the views of new members without disrupting the progress it has already made. It would be highly unusual if an individual's vision of public education could not some-

how be held in the mission statement of the board. If there is dissent among several members of the board about the mission and goals, then spending time rewriting the mission to achieve a vision that all board members can enthusiastically support at every opportunity is appropriate for the board.

Reading Written Materials in Preparation for Board Meetings and Decision Making

This may appear to state the obvious, but on occasion board members express frustration that a colleague does not do his or her homework in preparation for the meetings. This reflects poorly on the entire board and slows progress. When a board member is chronically unprepared, it is proper for the chair of the board to speak to that individual in private, letting them know the critical importance of preparing for the meeting. After all, the board is often under a microscope and must be cognizant of the way it looks to the public

Although there are board members who are sometime negligent in their preparation, frequently it is simply a case of busy people finding the time to adequately prepare. Board members are volunteers who often find it difficult to read and evaluate the stack of paper that comes to them on a monthly, weekly and sometimes daily basis. Lack of preparation may be more of a reflection of the way in which the staff conveys the value of information to members.

If Board members are expected to read material and come to the meetings prepared to debate and develop policy, then expectations must also be set for the staff responsible for keeping the Board informed. The staff must ensure that members receive relevant material in an workable time frame. The Board should have an operating policy that guides staff on the materials that will be sent to the Board members. Boards should use executive summaries, report logs and other devices to give members a chance to read as much or little as they to prepare for a given issue.

Attending Board Meetings and Actively Participating in Decision Making

It is impossible to make an informed policy decision without active learning and participation in the process. Most boards set aside time for study sessions, hearings and other exercises to help inform the process. It is important that board members attend these sessions and use this time to expand their understanding of the issues and their implications for students. Members who are sincere about getting input from the public and about making informed decisions attend board and committee meetings plus hearings and study sessions. Recognizing how much time this entails, additional meeting responsibilities should be linked directly to the ongoing work and goals of the board.

Active participation in decision making also involves sharing opinions, concerns and expertise with colleagues on the board to help expand their knowledge as well. The strength of a board often rests with its diversity, and a board is better when all members are contributing.

Advocating for the Board

State board members often do not get to see first hand the impact of the policies they make for students. There is no doubt that state education policy has the potential power and influence to change lives. Policies can only change lives, however, if the message the board transmits to teachers, administrators, parents, students and other policy-makers says that, "We, members of the state board of education, stand behind our convictions and our policies." If the board's decisions are to have an impact, board members must advocate the process of lay policy development. The member who casts the dissenting vote should recognize the value of the debate and the integrity of the board's procedures and accept defeat graciously. A member can always advocate change or modification at the appropriate time. Members who deride the board and its positions because they disagree with them do more harm than good for students and for the process. They are also less likely to convince their colleagues to consider their views on other issues.

— Brenda Welburn

The Board's Role in Implementing a Strategic Plan

In recent years, state boards of education have come to recognize the importance of strategic planning in determining the direction of education policymaking at the state level. Strategic planning is a successive process for identifying, evaluating, and implementing long-term objectives and quantifiable goals for an organization. While the process appears logical and efficient at first reflection, boards have quickly come to realize that their reliance on multiple layers of partners for implementation can seriously alter their plan or impede progress.

Questions often raised revolve around the need for a board strategic plan if the education agency has a plan. Although it is perfectly acceptable to have one strategic plan, an agency-developed and driven plan sometimes excludes important work for a board—particularly in terms of the board's ability to engage multiple stakeholders in developing a broad consensus around its vision for education in the state. In addition, the board is frequently less engaged in the tactical aspects of an agency-driven plan. But regardless of whether there is one plan or two complementary plans, it is essential that state board members have a meaningful role in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of their state's education plan.

As state boards embarked on strategic planning, they began to comprehend their unique position in developing strategies for promoting and improving public education in their states. While many organizations have total control over their strategic plans, state boards of education engage in strategic planning activities that require them to combine constitutional and legislative objectives with the priorities and goals established by the board. They do this as part-time volunteers, sometimes with limited staff, and often in an environment that is politicized by competing agendas. It is no wonder that state board follow-up on strategic planning initiatives often falls through the cracks.

Thus, while most boards invest significant time in identifying a vision, a mission, and goals for education, they are less successful in their efforts to drive the implementation of specific strategies for achieving the goals. There are several factors that influence the implementation phase of strategic planning and affect a board's ability to stay on course. Boards that seek to use a strategic planning process to design and propel their work find there are common elements for "follow through" that are critical to success. Those elements include:

- ★ Sub-strategies with measurable goals;
- ★ Use of a timetable;
- ★ Clear direction to staff;
- ★ Collaboration with key constituencies;
- ★ Alignment of the board's agenda to strategies and goals;
- ★ Allocation of resources to strategies and goals; and
- ★ Evaluation.

Sub-Strategies with Measurable Goals

Because most of the major tactics for implementing a strategic plan require explicit staff responsibilities, boards sometimes neglect to clearly define their own roles in the implementation process. Boards need sub-strategies, with measurable goals, **for which they are responsible**. These sub-strategies complement the major strategies that are designed to drive change in the state. When staff is confronted with day-to-day job responsibilities or conflicting agendas, the board's

strategic plan sometimes disintegrates. When the board identifies its distinct role in implementing a strategic plan, staff and board members are able to focus on their own unique areas of accountability, and measuring success becomes more manageable.

Use of a Timetable

Many state boards and staff recognize the value of developing and following a twelve-month calendar to guide the work of the board and the department. The calendar determines the feasibility of the plan and allows for midterm adjustments as necessary. With a time line, there is no question of the board's expectations for itself and the appropriate staff. Once a board has identified its goals, staff should be instructed to develop a calendar that reflects when the board meets and identifies tasks that must be completed for accurately measuring the goals. The timetable or calendar also allows the staff to insert those actions the board must take because of state statutes.

Clear Direction to Staff

Once the board has clearly defined its own obligations for strategic planning follow-up, it must clearly convey directions to the staff. Frequently, the board expects staff to support a new strategic direction without clearly identifying what the staff can and should eliminate from previous approaches to discharge board strategies. Distinct directions let the staff know that there will not only be a change in direction, but a change in the board and staff's work style.

Collaboration with Constituencies

We have noted the unique circumstances of trying to implement a strategic plan while outside forces develop competing or complementary plans. Boards must involve multiple constituencies, including the legislature and the governor's office, in the information gathering phase of strategic planning. Once that work is completed, the board must continuously communicate with education stakeholders about the progress of the board in achieving its short- and long-term goals. Beyond communication, the board must guarantee meaningful input in the implementation and evaluation of the plan.

Alignment of Agenda to Strategies and Goals

The board's agenda is the primary vehicle for doing its work. Once a board has agreed upon its strategic plan, it is critical that the agenda be structured to reflect the priorities of the board and to accomplish the goals. Any outsider should be able to pick up the board agenda and identify its goals and priorities. Some state boards are so committed to alignment that their agendas identify the goal or board responsibility to which that agenda item is linked. This ensures that the majority of the board's time is spent on board identified goals.

Allocation of Resources to Strategies and Goals

A critical component of effective strategic planning is resource allocation. The board must ensure that an adequate number of staff members are in place to implement the plan. Budget development and approval should reflect the board's goals and priorities. When the board does not have the authority to approve the budget, it should use its position as a bully pulpit to advocate sufficient resources to the legislature and the department. The best way to ensure failure is to neglect to provide adequate resources for implementation.

Evaluation

The term "measurable goals" dictates that goals should not only be measurable, but implies that the board will aggressively assess its progress toward achieving the goals. While many boards have annual planning retreats, some do not take the time to examine the status of the goals established in the previous year. The reason is often a lack of a strong paper trail that reminds veteran members and instructs new ones on the goals established in the previous year. Boards should require that anyone who facilitates a board strategic planning session or planning retreat supply them with sufficient follow-up data and a strategy for providing future evaluations.

Strategic Planning for State Boards of Education

Exercising strong leadership at the state board level requires boards to engage in a comprehensive strategic planning process every three to five years, recognizing that the plan must be adaptable to unanticipated circumstances. Such a process ensures that every member understands and accepts the agreed-upon vision and mission of the board and knows the strategies for measuring progress toward achieving the board's goals. Equally as important, the board needs to share its plan with the education stakeholders in the state and tie its policy decisions to its long-term strategic plan. Developing a legislative strategy and formulating a policy review cycle aligned to the strategic plan are also critical elements for successful policy development.

Most boards that gather annually in a retreat format use the time for board development, evaluating the previous year's accomplishments, and discussing the coming year's priorities. They spend a day-and-a-half or two days working on short-term goals and building a cohesive team. These are important activities for boards to engage in, but if they are done in isolation from a strategic plan, these efforts fail to provide a context in which the board should operate. Boards must be careful not to mistake the annual planning retreat for strategic planning. Although board retreats are a critical component for board growth and for evaluating the implementation of the strategic plan, they are not adequate substitutes for strategic planning.

The strategic plan should be a living document that all board members can relate to. As new members join a state board, they must be thoroughly briefed on the strategic plan and should be supported in efforts to relate their individual concerns to the plan. The majority of people accepting appointments or seeking elections to state boards share similar goals for the state's students, even when they don't agree on the existing approaches to achieving those goals. A clear understanding of the board's mission and strategy for enhancing educational opportunity for all students allows new members to incorporate their values into the common values of the board and allows the board to modify its strategies to accommodate new concerns.

State boards are encouraged to review their current strategic plans and determine if their current agendas and board work are aligned to the plan. If not, they must determine if it is appropriate to engage in a new strategic planning process or if they need to better adjust their agendas and work plans toward achieving the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

When a board engages in strategic planning, it should ensure that the plan is designed to answer at a minimum the following questions:

- What is the purpose or mission of the board in the context of state statutes or the state constitution?
- What is the board's vision for education in the state?

- What policies currently exist to support the board’s vision for education? Who benefits from the current policies? How should current policies be changed or modified to better serve a larger percentage of the student population?
- How is the student population changing in the state? How will current policies affect these students? How will board policies change to adapt to changing student populations?
- How does the state’s education governance structure support or hinder student improvement? How does the board operate in the context of the governance structure?
- What accountability mechanisms will the board use to track implementation of the strategic plan?
- How will the board organize its priorities as external circumstances change?

Most experts in the field of strategic planning agree that effective strategic planning depends on accurate, ongoing evaluations of the external and internal environments in which an organization operates. The board’s role in making strategic decisions and in guiding the evaluation of the external and internal environment can determine how effective the board will be in achieving its goals.

External environmental issues include:

- Student performance and achievement levels;
- Changing student populations;
- Public attitudes toward public education;
- Changes in the health and social needs of students;
- Business interests in education; and
- Finance and budget issues.

Internal environmental issues include:

- Department staffing;
- Federal funding of department positions;
- Changes in board composition; and
- Time and structure of board agendas and meetings.

Many boards can point to a mission and vision statement and board goals, but newer members cannot always articulate when the mission and vision were adopted or how they are used in interim planning and evaluation activities. In addition, newer members are sometimes unable to relate to the external and internal influences that were the underlying premises when the statements were adopted, usually because of changing circumstances that are now affecting the system. It is also critical that a board is able to distinguish when the plan simply needs modifying as opposed to when it is time to engage in a new strategic analysis of the needs of the state.

Strategic planning can and should be an integral part of board development. As a board looks to new and challenging circumstances in the months ahead, it should ensure that the board has a road map for where it’s going and that it is working with a useful and comprehensive plan.

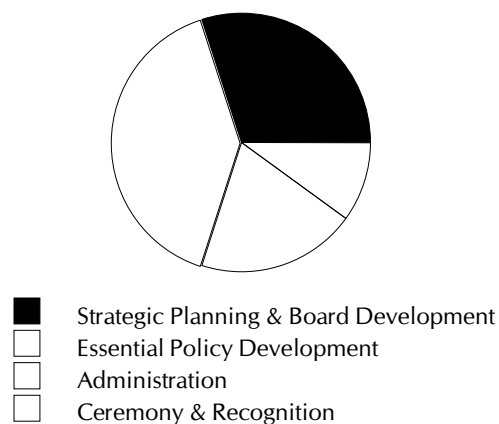
Boardsmanship Review

Meeting Agendas for Effective Board Policymaking

State Boards of Education meet on a continuing schedule with an agenda that drives the content and outcomes of the sessions. To fulfill the board's mission and achieve its goals, the state board chair and chief state school officer should construct meeting agendas that move the policy development and implementation responsibilities of the board forward.

Often the routine of setting agendas for state board meetings follows conventional practice developed over many years. But during this time, many boards have assumed new authorities. Several have engaged in strategic planning activities and developed high academic standards to improve education in their states. Yet boards have given little thought to realigning the agenda and the work of the board to conform with the board's new strategic direction. To develop a functional agenda, chairs should focus on their board's **Purpose, Priorities, Productivity, and Roles & Responsibilities.**

State Board Agendas
Ideal Time Spent on Basic Functions



PURPOSE

The primary objectives of state board meetings are to:

- Advance the goals and strategic direction of the board;
- Explore and foster debate on critical education issues in the state;
- Provide for the development, review and assessment of state education policies;
- Comply with the legal responsibilities of the board as determined by statute and state constitution;
- Recognize the contributions of citizens and educators to the quality of education in the state.

The agenda should reflect continuity and purpose as it moves the board toward achieving the goals and improving education. Board members should understand at the outset of every meeting the purpose and objective of the meeting. In fact, as members review the agendas of upcoming meetings, they should be able to identify where each item falls within the noted objectives. At a glance, board members can determine if the meeting agenda is designed to use their time effectively, or to go through perfunctory exercises that have limited impact on school improvement.

PRIORITIES

Constructive board agendas are formulated to ensure that boards lead, not follow. Consequently, the board agenda should reflect the priorities of the board, not those of the staff. A substantial block of time should be set aside during the board's time together (usually before the formal meeting) to study issues and to engage the

board in development activities that prepare members for informed decision making. Essential policy issues should be placed high on the agenda and the bulk of the board's time should be allocated to these issues. In developing the agenda, the chair and chief should screen issues for their relevancy to the board's long term agenda. Topics that the board should address on the agenda under the policy development requirement are determined by:

- Strategic priorities
- State or federal legislative action
- Predetermined policy review cycles
- Unanticipated policy issues brought to the board's attention by members, staff, local policymakers or educators.

After essential policy issues are addressed, the board should focus on administrative requirements, and issues of liability. Most states have some responsibilities determined by rules and regulations. The board must attend to these issues, but they should be careful not to expend limited board time debating issues over which they have inconsequential authority. The board must also tend to issues required by its own operational policies and bylaws.

Most boards allow time on the agenda to recognize outstanding performance and contributions to education in the state. This is an important function of the board, but need not be on every agenda. The time allotted for these activities should be commensurate with the value the program adds to the board's priorities.

PRODUCTIVITY

The chair has the primary responsibility for protecting and charting the use of the board's time. To achieve this goal he or she must:

- Frame issues around governance not administration;
- Delegate routine business to committees and/or staff;
- Use committee meetings and study sessions for information exchange;
- Use a consent agenda.

The consent agenda is used as a tool for "responsible rubber stamping." Protocol items, external matters that require board action, and routine ratifications required by law or bylaw are all appropriate for a consent agenda. The Board should have bylaws or an operational procedures manual that clearly outlines the issues appropriate for the consent agenda, the procedure for adding items to the consent agenda, and the process by which measures are removed from the consent agenda.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The State Board Chair has the important task of developing the agenda with the chief state school officer. While the chair must keep the board's long term goals at the center of the agenda, all board members need to understand that their concerns on emerging issues are important to the board. A process should be in place for members to raise issues, have them placed on study session schedules, committee agendas or addressed in another agreed-upon fashion. The chair must oversee this process.

As the guardian of the agenda, the chair must control the allocation of time and eliminate excessive detail. Under no circumstances should informational reports be read to the Board.

Each Board member also has a responsibility to do his or her home work and support the operational policies and bylaws of the board.

Excellent Education, Every Step of the Way

To unite people around a shared vision where every student receives an excellent education every step of the way, Expect More Arizona and the Center for the Future of Arizona launched the Arizona Education Progress Meter in February 2016. The Education Progress Meter includes eight key indicators that help gauge progress toward achieving this vision.

With Shared Goals, We Can Make Progress Together

Expect More Arizona convened more than 200 community organizations to set 2030 goals for each indicator, which were released in 2017. The ambitious and achievable goals will move Arizona toward our shared vision for a world-class education. For more information, visit: <https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/>.

The **State Board of Education and Arizona Department of Education** played a very helpful role in creating the 3rd grade reading, 8th grade math, and high school graduation goals, and in aligning the Progress Meter within the goals of Arizona’s statewide plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The SBE formally adopted the Progress Meter goals in May 2017, and has used the goals to drive its strategic planning efforts.

The goals are supported by elected officials, the business community, and educators across the state. Nearly 40 cities and towns have adopted the goals to drive local efforts to support education and elevate education as key to economic development. School districts, like Chandler and Gilbert, are adopting and using the goals in their strategic plans. Funders and philanthropic organizations are using the goals to guide their funding decisions.

Progress Made

While we have a long way to accomplish the Progress Meter goals by 2030, we are excited to see progress being made on each goal:

	Baseline	Today	Progress	Goal
Quality Early Learning	21% 2015-16	24% 2016-17	+3%	45%
3rd Grade Reading	40% 2015-16	44% 2016-2017	+4%	72%
8th Grade Math	36% 2015-16	38% 2016-17	+2%	69%
High School Graduation	76% 2015	80% 2016	+4%	90%
Opportunity Youth	15% 2015	14% 2016	+1%	7%
Post High School Enrollment	52% 2014-15	53% 2015-16	+1%	70%
Attainment	42% 2015-16	43% 2016-17	+2%	60%
Teacher Pay	50th 2016	49th 2017	Moved up one position	National Median by 2022

To help share how progress is made locally, we have collected 400 stories of success from schools, communities, higher education institutions and early childhood education programs. The stories are searchable by topic and location in the state. For examples of these promising practices, please visit <https://www.expectmorearizona.org/excellence-tour/>.

Contact: Erin Hart, COO, Expect More Arizona, erin@expectmorearizona.org, 602-381-2267



ARIZONA EDUCATION PROGRESS METER

WHERE WE STAND TODAY

QUALITY EARLY LEARNING



Percent of three and four year old children that are in quality early learning settings.

3RD GRADE READING



Percent of 3rd grade students who scored proficient or highly proficient on the AzMERIT English language arts assessment.

8TH GRADE MATH



Percent of 8th grade students who are prepared to be successful in high school math.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION



Percent of high school students who graduate in 4 years.

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH



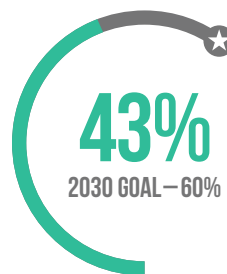
Percent of 16-24 year olds NOT going to school or working.

POST HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



Percent of high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education the semester after graduating high school.

ATTAINMENT



Percent of Arizona residents age 25-64 who have completed a 2-or 4-year degree or received an industry certificate.

TEACHER PAY



Arizona's ranking compared to other states for median elementary teacher pay.
*Adjusted for cost of living.

A SHARED VISION FOR AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION FOR ALL

We believe that every child deserves an excellent education, every step of the way, and Arizona voters agree that education is a top priority. The success of every child is vital to our state's economic prosperity, quality of life and civic health. We must close the achievement gap that leaves so many children behind, increase educational attainment overall and prepare a highly skilled workforce.

To fully understand how far we need to go, we must have reliable information that tells us where we are as a state on issues ranging from access to quality early learning to postsecondary attainment and everything in between. The Education Progress Meter provides a nonpartisan, shared source of information to inform where we stand and to help unify us around where we want to go so we can continue to make progress together.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EACH INDICATOR, SUCCESS STORIES FROM AROUND
THE STATE AND WAYS TO GET INVOLVED VISIT:
EXPECTMOREARIZONA.ORG/PROGRESS**

DATA SOURCES

QUALITY EARLY LEARNING:

First Things First, Arizona Department of Education, Arizona Department of Economic Security, 2016-17. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 2016.

3RD GRADE READING:

Arizona Department of Education, 2017 AzMERIT results.

8TH GRADE MATH:

Arizona Department of Education, 2017 AzMERIT results. (Students passing the 8th grade AzMERIT assessment, Algebra I end of course test, Geometry end of course test, or Algebra II end of course test.)

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION:

Arizona Department of Education, 2016 Graduation Rate Report.

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH:

U.S. Census Bureau, 1 Year Public Use Microdata Series Person File for Arizona, 2016.

POST HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT:

National Student Clearinghouse via Arizona Board of Regents, 2015-16. National Center for Education Statistics.

ATTAINMENT:

U.S. Census Bureau, 1-Year Public Use Microdata Series Person File for Arizona, 2016. Arizona Board of Regents, 2017.

TEACHER PAY:

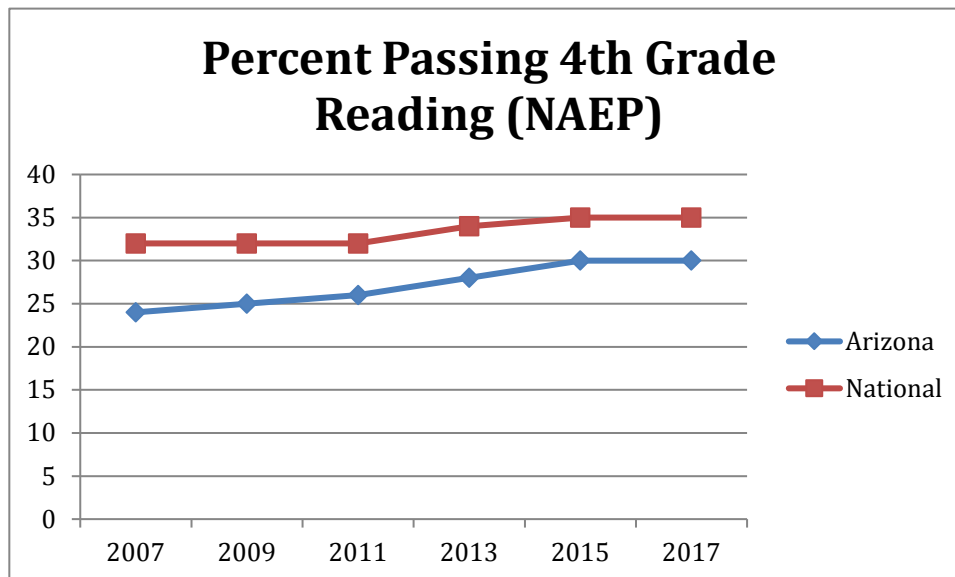
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Price Parities, 2017. Adjusted for cost of living by Morrison Institute for Public Policy at ASU.

**Current figures for median elementary teacher pay based on source data:
Arizona: \$44,990 United States: \$57,160*

Five Years After: The Impact of MOWR Patricia Welborn

In 2010 Arizona passed the MOWR legislation and implemented it in 2013. The MOWR legislation was intended to improve literacy among K-3 students and require third grade students to demonstrate reading proficiency as a condition for promotion to fourth grade. This was to be in a variety of ways through early detection of potential retention, implementation of interventions starting in Kindergarten and holding schools accountable for submitting literacy plans to the Department of Education. School Year 2016-2017 marked the first year that third grade students were retained due to reading deficiency.

Over the last decade, Arizona and NAEP assessments have shown improvement in AZ 3rd/4th grade reading proficiency. Data provided from NAEP show fourth grade reading proficiency in Arizona improved 6 percentage points over the last ten years. While this growth is encouraging, Arizona is still below the national average passing rate. It should also be noted that most of Arizona's growth on NAEP occurred between 2007–2013, before MOWR was implemented. Since 2013 the passing rate (28%) has increased 2 percentage points and since 2015 the passing rate has remained at 30%.



There has been some misinterpretation regarding Arizona's improvement in NAEP reading scores. The Move on When Reading: Overview presentation¹ stated that Arizona was the third most improved state in 4th grade reading NAEP scores². However, analysis of data on the NAEP website indicates that there were 12 other states

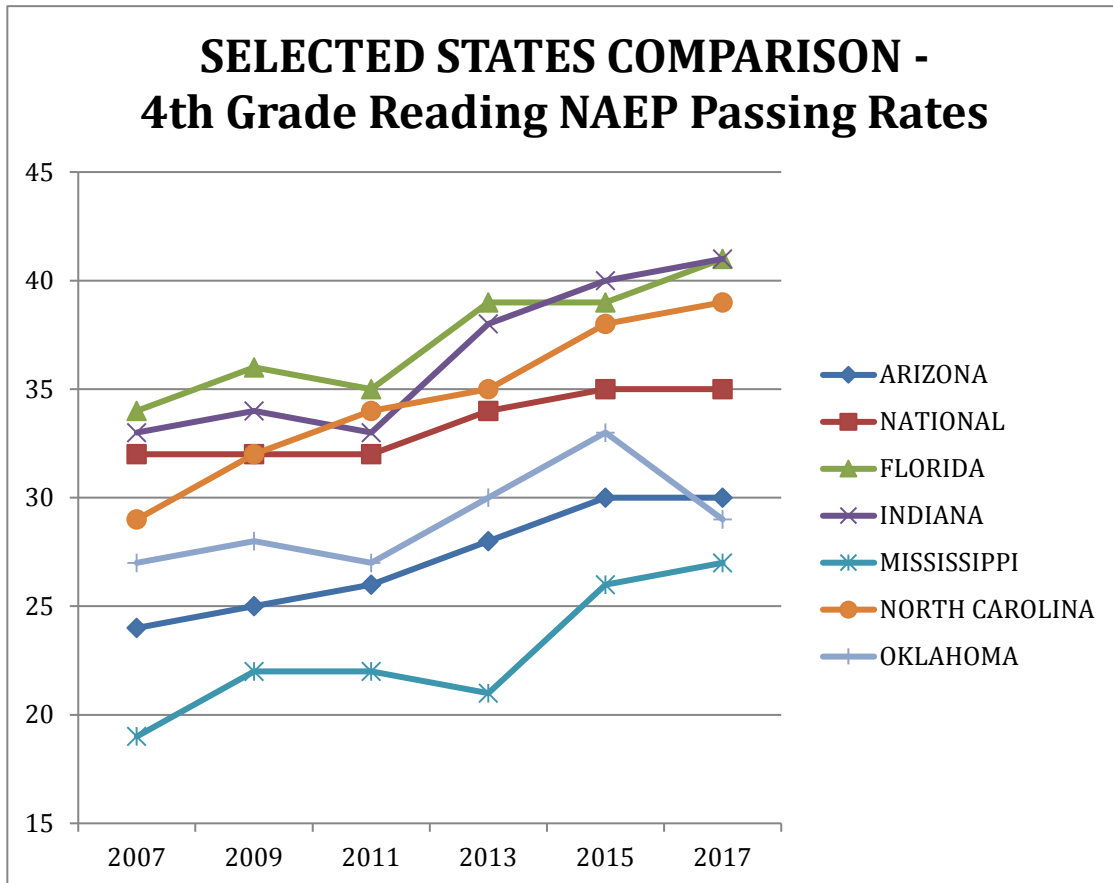
¹ Presented to the Board of Education by ADE staff April 24, 2018

² Based on an increase of six points (from 24 to 30) between the years 2007 – 2017.

(including the District of Columbia) that had increases of 7 – 14 points over the last ten years.

It is informative to look at Arizona’s performance in comparison to other states that have instituted similar comprehensive reading legislation and policy. Analysis conducted by Excel In Ed determined that five of the six states that implemented comprehensive reading policies (like MOWR) have demonstrated impressive growth in 4th grade reading proficiency. A few observations from the last ten years of NAEP scores:

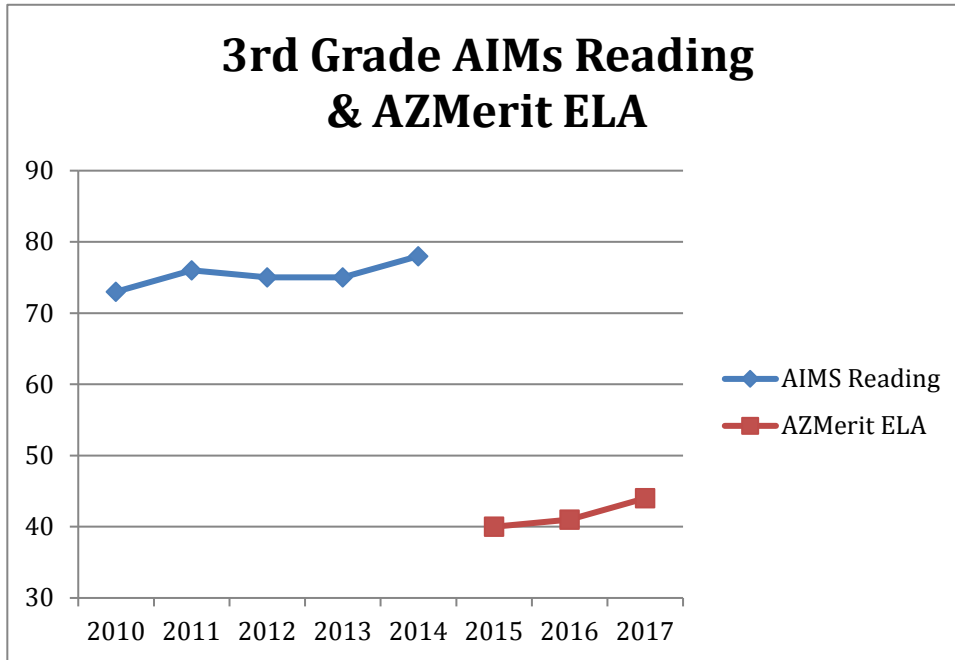
- North Carolina made the most dramatic progress, improving its passing rate 10 percentage points from 29% to 39%.
- Indiana and Mississippi both showed an increase of 8 percentage points over the ten years.
- Florida shows an increase of 7 percentage points. However since their MOWR legislation was implemented in 2002, the passing rate has increased 14 percentage points (started at 27%).
- Other than Oklahoma who scored an illogical 4-point drop in 2017, Arizona showed the smallest improvement in reading scores over the last ten years.



However, there have also been a handful of the 44 states without a “comprehensive literacy policy” that have made larger gains in 4th grade reading than Arizona. These

include California (10 points), Rhode Island (8), and Georgia, Nevada and Utah (7 points each).

Looking at Arizona’s own data from its statewide assessment, it is difficult to evaluate long-term performance in reading proficiency. It’s not relevant to compare reading scores from AIMS and AZMerit – different standards, assessments and cut scores.



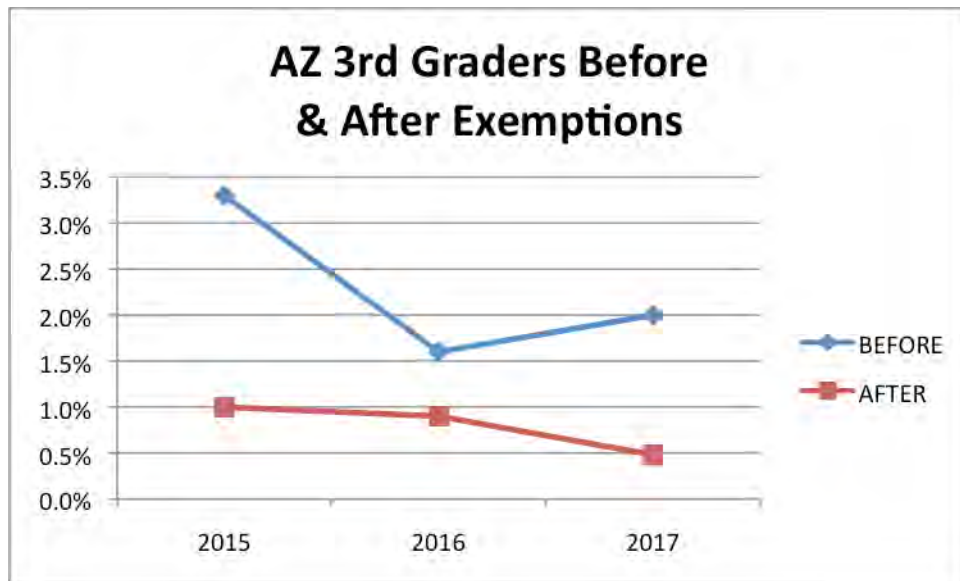
So we are left with utilizing data from the last three years of AZMerit ELA scores that show a 4-point increase from 40% to 44% passing. Still this is an average, and the breakout amount minimally to highly proficient students show the largest concentration of third graders scored minimally proficient on the ELA portion of the test.

3 rd Grade	<u>Minimally Proficient</u>	<u>Partially Proficient</u>	<u>Proficient</u>	<u>Highly Proficient</u>
3rd Grade ELA Cut Scores	44	12	30	13
	2395 - 2496	2497 - 2508	2509 - 2540	2541 - 2605

Furthermore, reading proficiency for purposes of MOWR is determined by a sub-score of the total ELA score that was set at 2446 by the Board of Education in 2015. Students not meeting this score are at risk of being retained in third grade unless they meet one of 4 exemption requirements. State statute requires that a third grade pupil may not be

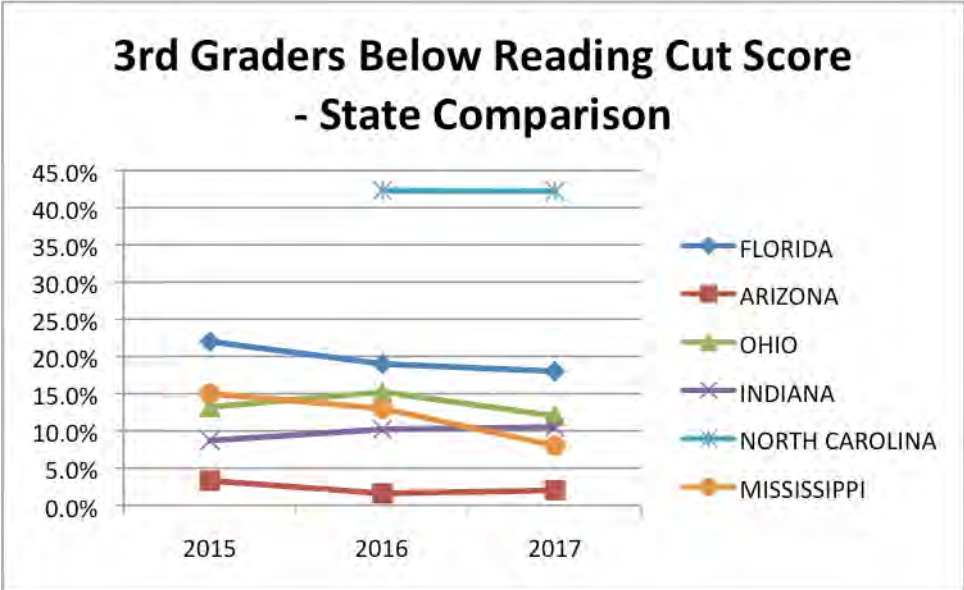
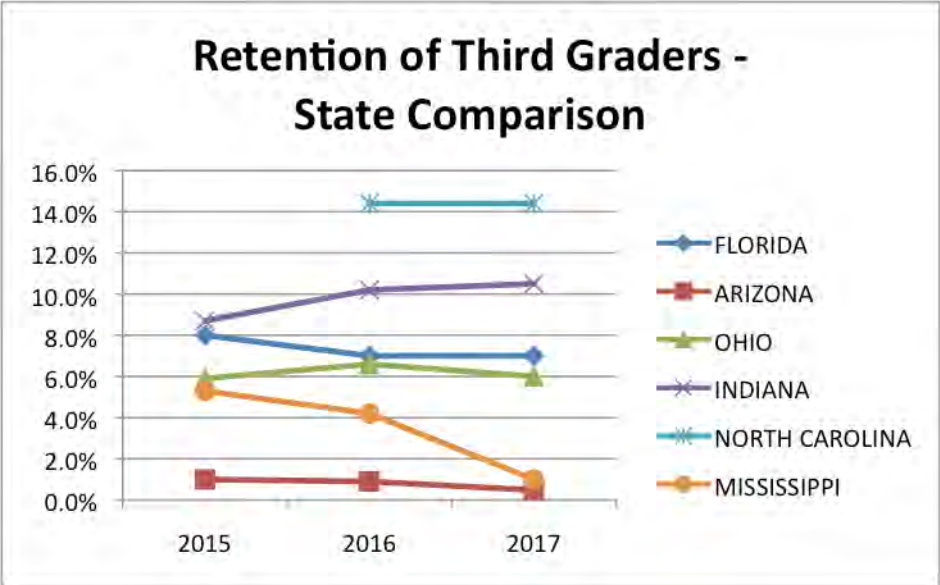
promoted if he/she demonstrates reading skills that “fall far below” the third grade level (or the equivalent as established by the board). One interpretation of this standard would be to set the reading cut score at the high end of the Minimally Proficient range (2496) rather than the mid-point where the current cut score is set.

Another factor to consider when evaluating the impact of the MOWR legislation is third grade retention due to reading deficiency. The chart below shows Arizona’s third grade retention rates (before and after exemptions³) for the past three years.



It is instructive to compare Arizona’s experience to other states that have implemented comprehensive literacy policies like MOWR. Comparable data exists for five other states – Florida, Mississippi, Indiana, North Carolina and Ohio. These states show retention rates before exemptions in the range of 8% to 42%. Arizona’s rate before exemption is significantly lower, in the range of 1.5% to 3.0%. Likewise retention rates after exemptions in the five states are significantly higher, in the range of 6% to 14%. In comparison, Arizona’s rate ranges from 1.0% to .5%.

³ Exemptions include ELL, SPED, reading impairment, demonstration of proficiency through alternate reading assessments, and summer remediation.



CONCLUSIONS

The intent of MOWR and its \$43.5 million in annual funding was to improve literacy rates among K-3 students in Arizona. It would be hard to make any other conclusion than in its first 5 years the policy has not made a significant impact. At the same time it is important to recognize that if a comprehensive literacy policy is to be effective there

must be a way for policymakers to measure results at the state level. Otherwise there is no meaningful measure of impact.

The question then becomes – what can be done? Below are a few ideas for consideration.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

1. Current legislation requiring the menu of assessments for elementary schools by the 19/20 school year, is not compatible with MOWR in that there will no longer be a “statewide” assessment for reading. This presents an opportunity to re-craft how MOWR is to be enforced.
 - a. Option 1 – Establish a statewide assessment solely to measure third grade reading skills. Consider alternates to the “high stakes test” approach.
 - b. Option 2 – Establish reading cut scores for every assessment/benchmark utilized by LEAs under menu of assessments.
2. The Arizona Board of Education has not reviewed the reading cut score for MOWR since it was first set in 2015. Although it is not clear whether AZMerit will exist beyond FY18/19, there is still an opportunity this year for the Board to raise the standard for demonstrating reading proficiency in AZ.

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-211, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-211. K-3 reading program; receipt and use of monies;
5 additional funding; report; program termination

6 A. The department of education shall administer a K-3 reading
7 program to improve the reading proficiency of pupils in kindergarten
8 programs and grades one, two and three in the public schools of this
9 state.

10 B. Each school district and charter school shall submit to the
11 department of education a plan for improving the reading proficiency of
12 its pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three. The
13 plan shall include baseline data on the reading proficiency of its pupils
14 in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three and a budget for
15 spending monies from both the K-3 support level weight and the K-3 reading
16 support level weight established in section 15-943. Each school district
17 and charter school shall annually submit to the department of education on
18 or before October 1 an updated K-3 reading program plan that includes data
19 on program expenditures and results, except that beginning in fiscal year
20 2016-2017, a school district or charter school that is assigned a letter
21 grade of A or B pursuant to section 15-241 shall submit this plan only in
22 odd-numbered years.

23 C. School districts and charter schools shall use monies generated
24 by the K-3 reading support level weight established in section 15-943 only
25 on instructional purposes **BASED ON THE PLAN SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO**
26 **SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION** intended to improve reading proficiency for
27 pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three with
28 particular emphasis on pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one and
29 two.

30 D. Each school district and charter school that is assigned a
31 letter grade of C, D or F pursuant to section 15-241 or that has more than
32 ten percent of its pupils in grade three who do not demonstrate sufficient
33 reading skills as established by the state board of education according
34 to the reading portion of the statewide assessment shall receive monies
35 generated by the K-3 reading support level weight established in section
36 15-943 only after the K-3 reading program plan of the school district or
37 charter school has been submitted, reviewed and recommended for approval
38 by the department of education and approved by the state board of
39 education. The state board of education must give approval to a school
40 district or charter school before any portion of the monies generated by
41 the K-3 reading support level weight may be distributed to the school
42 district or charter school pursuant to this subsection.

43 E. Pupils in a charter school that is in its first year of
44 operation and that is sponsored by the state board of education, the state
45 board for charter schools, a university under the jurisdiction of the

1 Arizona board of regents, a community college district or a group of
2 community college districts are eligible for the K-3 reading support level
3 weight.

4 F. The department of education shall solicit gifts, grants and
5 donations from any lawful public or private source in order to provide
6 additional funding for the K-3 reading program.

7 G. The state board of education may establish rules and policies
8 for the K-3 reading program, including:

9 1. The proper use of monies in accordance with subsection C of this
10 section.

11 2. The distribution of monies by the department of education in
12 accordance with subsection B of this section.

13 3. The compliance of reading proficiency plans submitted pursuant
14 to subsection B of this section with section 15-704.

15 H. Pursuant to subsection G of this section, the department of
16 education shall develop program implementation guidance for school
17 districts and charter schools to assist schools in administering an
18 effective K-3 EVIDENCE-BASED reading program plan. This guidance shall
19 include identifying and recommending appropriate program expenditures,
20 providing technical oversight and assistance for annually updating reading
21 program plans, selecting and adopting evidence-based reading curricula and
22 providing and promoting teacher professional development that is based on
23 evidence-based reading research. The department shall prioritize supports
24 and interventions, including enrollment in reading trainings and
25 professional development, for school districts and charter schools that
26 have the highest percentage of pupils who do not demonstrate sufficient
27 reading skills as established by the state board of education. The
28 department shall deposit any monies received for offering reading
29 trainings or professional development, ~~into~~ INCLUDING COACHING, IN the
30 department of education professional development revolving fund
31 established by section 15-237.01.

32 I. On or before December 15, the department of education shall
33 submit an annual report on the K-3 reading program to the governor, the
34 president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives
35 and shall provide a copy of this annual report to the secretary of state,
36 the state board of education and the chairpersons of the education
37 committees of the senate and the house of representatives. The report
38 shall contain all of the following:

39 1. Information on the improvement of K-3 reading in this state,
40 including achievement data statewide and achievement data at the school
41 district and charter school level. The information pursuant to this
42 paragraph shall include data and information on continued proficiency on
43 the statewide assessment in subsequent grades.

44 2. A description of the activities of the department to support
45 school districts and charter schools in improving K-3 reading.

1 3. Specific findings on methods by which the department may
2 continue to improve support and assistance for school districts and
3 charter schools in the administration of K-3 reading program plans.

4 4. Information and data on K-3 reading program plans throughout
5 this state and the expenditure of K-3 reading monies by school districts
6 and charter schools.

7 5. Data reported pursuant to section 15-701, subsection A,
8 paragraph 2, subdivision (d).

9 J. The program established by this section ends on July 1, 2022
10 pursuant to section 41-3102.

11 Sec. 2. Section 15-249.03, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
12 read:

13 15-249.03. Best practice examples of reading intervention and
14 remedial reading strategies; posting

15 The department of education shall prominently post on the website
16 maintained by the department best practice examples of EVIDENCE-BASED
17 reading intervention and remedial reading strategies used in school
18 districts and charter schools in this state. THE EXAMPLES SHALL BE
19 SELECTED FROM THOSE SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS THAT DEMONSTRATE
20 IMPROVEMENT ON THIRD GRADE READING PROFICIENCY AS MEASURED BY THE
21 STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTERED PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-741. THE SCHOOL
22 DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS SELECTED SHALL REPRESENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS
23 AND CHARTER SCHOOLS IN DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION, INCLUDING RURAL AND URBAN,
24 SIZE AND STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS.

25 Sec. 3. Section 15-249.09, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
26 read:

27 15-249.09. Early literacy program fund; report; program
28 termination; definitions

29 A. The early literacy ~~grant~~ program fund is established to provide
30 support to improve reading skills, literacy and proficiency for students
31 in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three in addition to
32 monies received pursuant to section 15-211. The fund shall be
33 administered by the department of education. The state board of education
34 shall develop policies and procedures to be administered by the department
35 of education.

36 B. Subject to review and approval by the state board of education,
37 the department of education shall award ~~grants on a three-year cycle~~ FUNDS
38 to eligible schools based on available monies on a per pupil basis. THE
39 PER PUPIL AMOUNT SHALL BE CALCULATED USING THE STUDENT COUNT FOR PUPILS IN
40 KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS AND GRADES ONE, TWO AND THREE.

41 C. ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS THAT RECEIVE FUNDS PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION
42 SHALL SUBMIT DATA ON EXPENDITURES AND RESULTS AND OTHER INFORMATION
43 REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION E OF THIS SECTION.

44 ~~C.~~ D. Eligible schools may use ~~grant~~ monies for eligible expenses
45 to increase the reading proficiency of students in kindergarten programs

1 and grades one, two and three. Eligible schools may also use ~~grant~~ monies
2 to provide a full-day kindergarten program that is structured to increase
3 reading proficiency. ~~Grant~~ Monies must be used to ~~supplement and not~~
4 ~~supplant activities~~ EXPAND, ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE COMPONENTS included in
5 a school's reading program plan submitted pursuant to section 15-211.

6 ~~D.~~ E. Subject to review and approval by the state board of
7 education, the department of education shall include a report on the early
8 literacy ~~grant~~ program in the K-3 reading program plan required by section
9 15-211. The report shall contain the following:

- 10 1. A description of the ~~grants~~ FUNDS awarded each year.
- 11 2. A summary of the funded activities.
- 12 3. Information on the recipient schools' progress toward
13 achievement goals.
- 14 4. Specific findings on ~~grant-funded~~ strategies and activities and
15 their level of effectiveness in improving reading proficiency in the
16 recipient schools.

17 ~~E.~~ F. The program established by this section ends on July 1, 2025
18 pursuant to section 41-3102.

19 ~~F.~~ G. For the purposes of this section:

20 1. "Eligible expenses" means expenses for evidence-based strategies
21 and interventions designed to improve the reading proficiency of students
22 in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three pursuant to
23 sections 15-211 and 15-704, including ~~reading~~ LITERACY coaches ~~or~~ AND
24 LITERACY specialists, reading curricula, KINDERGARTEN READINESS
25 ASSESSMENTS, SUMMER PROGRAMS or tutoring programs.

26 2. "Eligible school" means a public school with at least ninety
27 percent of students who are eligible for free and reduced-priced lunches
28 under the national school lunch and child nutrition acts (42 United States
29 Code sections 1751 through 1785).

30 3. "STUDENT COUNT" MEANS THE AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP FOR PUPILS IN
31 KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS AND GRADES ONE, TWO AND THREE, AS PRESCRIBED IN
32 SECTION 15-901 FOR THE CURRENT YEAR.

33 Sec. 4. Section 15-701, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by
34 Laws 2017, chapter 137, section 4, chapter 194, section 2 and chapter 210,
35 section 3, is amended to read:

36 15-701. Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate;
37 supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of
38 high school district; high school admissions;
39 academic credit; definition

40 A. The state board of education shall:

41 1. Prescribe a minimum course of study, as defined in section
42 15-101 and incorporating the academic standards adopted by the state board
43 of education, to be taught in the common schools.

44 2. Prescribe competency requirements for the promotion of pupils
45 from the eighth grade and competency requirements for the promotion of

1 pupils from the third grade incorporating the academic standards in at
2 least the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social
3 studies. The competency requirements for the promotion of pupils from the
4 third grade shall include the following:

5 (a) A requirement that a pupil not be promoted from the third grade
6 if the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the statewide
7 assessment that ~~demonstrates that the pupil's reading falls far below the~~
8 ~~third grade level or the equivalent~~ DOES NOT DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT
9 READING SKILLS as established by the board. A pupil may not be retained
10 if data regarding the pupil's performance on the statewide assessment is
11 not available before the ~~start~~ END of the ~~following~~ CURRENT academic year.
12 A pupil who is not retained due to the unavailability of test data must
13 receive EVIDENCE-BASED intervention and remedial strategies pursuant to
14 subdivision (c) of this paragraph if the third grade assessment data
15 subsequently ~~demonstrates that the pupil's reading ability falls far below~~
16 ~~the third grade level or the equivalent~~ DOES NOT DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT
17 READING SKILLS.

18 (b) A mechanism to allow a school district governing board or the
19 governing body of a charter school to promote ~~a pupil~~ from the third grade
20 ~~who obtains a score on the reading portion of the statewide assessment~~
21 ~~that demonstrates that the pupil's reading falls far below the third grade~~
22 ~~level for any of the following~~ A PUPIL WHO DOES NOT DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT
23 READING SKILLS PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION (a) OF THIS PARAGRAPH IF THE PUPIL:

24 (i) ~~A good cause exemption if the pupil~~ Is an English learner or a
25 limited English proficient student as defined in section 15-751 and has
26 had fewer than two years of English language instruction.

27 (ii) ~~A pupil who~~ Is in the process of a special education referral
28 or evaluation for placement in special education, ~~a pupil who~~ has been
29 diagnosed as having a significant reading impairment, including dyslexia,
30 or ~~a pupil who~~ is a child with a disability as defined in section 15-761
31 if the pupil's individualized education program team and the pupil's
32 parent or guardian agree that promotion is appropriate based on the
33 pupil's individualized education program.

34 (iii) HAS DEMONSTRATED OR SUBSEQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES SUFFICIENT
35 READING SKILLS OR ADEQUATE PROGRESS TOWARDS SUFFICIENT READING SKILLS OF
36 THE THIRD GRADE READING STANDARDS AS EVIDENCED THROUGH A COLLECTION OF
37 READING ASSESSMENTS APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, WHICH
38 INCLUDES AN ALTERNATIVE STANDARDIZED READING ASSESSMENT APPROVED BY THE
39 STATE BOARD.

40 ~~(iii)~~ (iv) ~~A pupil who~~ Receives intervention and remedial services
41 during the summer or A subsequent school year pursuant to subdivision (c)
42 of this paragraph and demonstrates sufficient progress ~~may be promoted~~
43 ~~from the third grade~~ based on guidelines issued pursuant to subsection B,
44 paragraph ~~5~~ 6 of this section.

1 (c) EVIDENCE-BASED intervention and remedial strategies developed
2 by the state board of education for pupils who are not promoted from the
3 third grade. A school district governing board or the governing body of a
4 charter school shall offer ~~at least~~ MORE THAN one of the intervention and
5 remedial strategies developed by the state board of education. The parent
6 or guardian of a pupil who is not promoted from the third grade and the
7 pupil's teacher and principal may choose the most appropriate intervention
8 and remedial strategies that will be provided to that pupil. The
9 intervention and remedial strategies developed by the state board of
10 education shall include:

11 (i) A requirement that the pupil be assigned ~~to a different teacher~~
12 for EVIDENCE-BASED reading instruction BY A DIFFERENT TEACHER WHO WAS
13 DESIGNATED IN THAT TEACHER'S MOST RECENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION IN ONE OF
14 THE TOP TWO PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-203,
15 SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 38.

16 (ii) Summer school reading instruction.

17 (iii) In the next academic year, intensive reading instruction that
18 occurs before, during or after the regular school day, or any combination
19 of before, during and after the regular school day.

20 (iv) SMALL GROUP AND TEACHER-LED EVIDENCE-BASED READING
21 INSTRUCTION, WHICH MAY INCLUDE COMPUTER-BASED OR online reading
22 instruction.

23 (d) A REQUIREMENT THAT A SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD OR CHARTER
24 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY THAT PROMOTES A PUPIL PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION (b) OF
25 THIS PARAGRAPH PROVIDE ANNUAL REPORTING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON
26 OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1 THAT INCLUDES INFORMATION ON THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
27 PUPILS SUBJECT TO THE RETENTION PROVISIONS OF SUBDIVISION (a) OF THIS
28 PARAGRAPH, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS PROMOTED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION
29 (b) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PUPILS RETAINED IN GRADE THREE
30 AND THE INTERVENTIONS ADMINISTERED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION (c) OF THIS
31 PARAGRAPH.

32 3. Provide for universal screening of pupils in preschool programs,
33 kindergarten programs and grades one through three that is designed to
34 identify pupils who have reading deficiencies pursuant to section 15-704.

35 4. Develop EVIDENCE-BASED intervention and remedial strategies
36 pursuant to paragraph 2, subdivision (c) of this subsection for pupils in
37 kindergarten programs and grades one through three who are identified as
38 having reading deficiencies pursuant to section 15-704.

39 5. Distribute guidelines for the school districts to follow in
40 prescribing criteria for the promotion of pupils from grade to grade in
41 the common schools. These guidelines shall include recommended procedures
42 for ensuring that the cultural background of a pupil is taken into
43 consideration when criteria for promotion are being applied.

44 B. School districts and charter schools shall provide annual
45 written notification to parents of pupils in kindergarten programs and

1 first, second and third grades that a pupil ~~who obtains a score on the~~
2 ~~reading portion of the statewide assessment that demonstrates the pupil is~~
3 ~~reading far below the third grade level~~ WHO DOES NOT DEMONSTRATE
4 SUFFICIENT READING SKILLS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION A OF THIS SECTION will
5 not be promoted from the third grade. ~~If the school has determined that~~
6 ~~the pupil is substantially deficient in reading before the end of grade~~
7 ~~three, the school district or charter~~ School DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS
8 SHALL IDENTIFY EACH PUPIL WHO IS AT RISK OF READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL IN
9 KINDERGARTEN AND GRADES ONE, TWO AND THREE, BASED ON LOCAL OR STATEWIDE
10 ASSESSMENTS, AND shall provide to the parent of that pupil a ~~separate~~
11 SPECIFIC written notification of the reading deficiency that includes the
12 following information:

13 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PUPIL'S SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.

14 ~~1.~~ 2. A description of the current reading services provided to
15 the pupil.

16 ~~2.~~ 3. A description of the available supplemental instructional
17 services and supporting programs that are designed to remediate reading
18 deficiencies. Each school district or charter school shall offer ~~at least~~
19 MORE THAN one EVIDENCE-BASED intervention strategy and ~~at least~~ MORE THAN
20 one remedial strategy DEVELOPED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION for pupils
21 with reading deficiencies. The notification shall list the intervention
22 and remedial strategies offered and shall instruct the parent ~~or guardian~~
23 to choose, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PUPIL'S TEACHER, the ~~strategy that~~
24 ~~will~~ MOST APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES TO be PROVIDED AND implemented for that
25 child.

26 ~~3.~~ 4. Parental strategies to assist the pupil to attain reading
27 proficiency.

28 ~~4.~~ 5. A statement that the pupil will not be promoted from the
29 third grade if the pupil ~~obtains a score on the reading portion of the~~
30 ~~statewide assessment that demonstrates the pupil is reading far below the~~
31 ~~third grade level~~ DOES NOT DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT READING SKILLS PURSUANT
32 TO SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 2, SUBDIVISION (a) OF THIS SECTION, unless the
33 pupil is exempt from mandatory retention in grade three or the pupil
34 qualifies for an exemption pursuant to subsection A, PARAGRAPH 2,
35 SUBDIVISION (b) of this section.

36 ~~5.~~ 6. A description of the school district or charter school
37 policies on midyear promotion to a higher grade.

38 C. Pursuant to the guidelines that the state board of education
39 distributes, the governing board of a school district shall:

40 1. Prescribe curricula that include the academic standards in the
41 required subject areas pursuant to subsection A, paragraph 1 of this
42 section.

43 2. Prescribe criteria for the promotion of pupils from grade to
44 grade in the common schools in the school district. These criteria shall
45 include accomplishment of the academic standards in at least reading,

1 writing, mathematics, science and social studies, as determined by
2 district assessment. Other criteria may include additional measures of
3 academic achievement and attendance.

4 D. The governing board may prescribe the course of study and
5 competency requirements for promotion that are in addition to or higher
6 than the course of study and competency requirements the state board
7 prescribes.

8 E. A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil
9 in grade in a common school on the basis of the prescribed criteria. The
10 governing board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher to promote or
11 retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-342,
12 paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the prescribed criteria.

13 F. A governing board may provide and issue certificates of
14 promotion to pupils whom it promotes from the eighth grade of a common
15 school. Such certificates shall be signed by the principal or
16 superintendent of schools. Where there is no principal or superintendent
17 of schools, the certificates shall be signed by the teacher of an eighth
18 grade. The certificates shall admit the holders to any high school in the
19 state.

20 G. Within any high school district or union high school district,
21 the superintendent of the high school district shall supervise the work of
22 the eighth grade of all schools employing no superintendent or principal.

23 H. A school district shall not deny a pupil who is between the ages
24 of sixteen and twenty-one years admission to a high school because the
25 pupil does not hold an eighth grade certificate. Governing boards shall
26 establish procedures for determining the admissibility of pupils who are
27 under sixteen years of age and who do not hold eighth grade certificates.

28 I. The state board of education shall adopt rules to allow common
29 school pupils who can demonstrate competency in a particular academic
30 course or subject to obtain academic credit for the course or subject
31 without enrolling in the course or subject.

32 J. A school district may conduct a ceremony to honor pupils who
33 have been promoted from the eighth grade.

34 K. For the purposes of this section, "dyslexia" means a condition
35 that:

36 1. Is neurological in origin.

37 2. Is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word
38 recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, including
39 difficulties that typically result from a deficit in the phonological
40 component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other
41 cognitive abilities and to the provision of effective classroom
42 instruction.

43 3. May include secondary consequences such as problems with reading
44 comprehension and reduced reading experience that may impede the growth of
45 vocabulary and background knowledge.

1 Sec. 5. Repeal

2 Section 15-701, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by Laws 2017,
3 chapter 67, section 2, is repealed.

4 Sec. 6. Section 15-704, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
5 read:

6 15-704. Reading proficiency; definitions

7 A. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
8 in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall select and
9 administer screening, ongoing diagnostic and classroom based instructional
10 reading assessments, including a motivational assessment, as defined by
11 the state board of education, to monitor student progress. Each school
12 shall use the diagnostic information to plan EVIDENCE-BASED appropriate
13 and effective INSTRUCTION AND intervention.

14 B. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
15 for pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall
16 conduct a curriculum evaluation and adopt an evidence-based reading
17 curriculum that includes the essential components of reading instruction.
18 All school districts and charter schools that offer instruction in
19 kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall provide ongoing
20 teacher training based on evidence-based reading research.

21 C. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
22 in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall devote
23 reasonable amounts of time to explicit EVIDENCE-BASED instruction and
24 independent reading in grades one through three.

25 D. A pupil in grade three who does not demonstrate proficiency on
26 the reading standards measured by the statewide assessment administered
27 pursuant to section 15-741 shall be provided core reading instruction and
28 intensive, evidence-based reading instruction as defined by the state
29 board of education until the pupil meets these standards.

30 E. The governing board of each school district and the governing
31 body of each charter school shall determine the percentage of pupils at
32 each school in grade three who do not demonstrate proficiency on the
33 reading standards prescribed by the state board of education and measured
34 by the statewide assessment administered pursuant to section 15-741. If
35 more than twenty percent of students in grade three at either the
36 individual school level or at the school district level do not demonstrate
37 proficiency on the standards, the governing board or governing body shall
38 conduct a review of its reading program that includes curriculum and
39 professional development in light of current, evidence-based reading
40 research.

41 F. Based on the review required in subsection E of this section,
42 the governing board or governing body and the school principal of each
43 school that does not demonstrate proficiency on the reading standards, in
44 conjunction with school council members, if applicable, shall develop
45 methods of best practices for teaching reading based on essential

1 components of reading instruction and supported by evidence-based reading
2 research. These methods shall be adopted at a public meeting and shall be
3 implemented the following academic year.

4 G. Subsections E and F of this section shall be coordinated with
5 efforts to develop and implement an improvement plan if required pursuant
6 to section 15-241.02.

7 H. For the purposes of this section:

8 1. "Essential components of reading instruction" means explicit and
9 systematic instruction in the following:

10 (a) PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS, INCLUDING phonemic awareness.

11 (b) Phonics ENCODING AND DECODING.

12 (c) Vocabulary development.

13 (d) Reading fluency AS DEMONSTRATED BY AUTOMATIC READING OF TEXT.

14 (e) Reading comprehension OF WRITTEN TEXT.

15 (f) WRITTEN AND ORAL EXPRESSION, INCLUDING SPELLING AND
16 HANDWRITING.

17 2. "Evidence-based reading research" means research that
18 demonstrates either:

19 (a) A statistically significant effect on improving student
20 outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on either:

21 (i) Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and
22 well-implemented experimental study.

23 (ii) Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and
24 well-implemented quasi-experimental study.

25 (iii) Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and
26 well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for
27 selection bias.

28 (b) A rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive
29 evaluation that an activity, strategy or intervention is likely to improve
30 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and that includes ongoing
31 efforts to examine the effects of these activities, strategies or
32 interventions.

33 3. "Reading" means a complex system of deriving meaning from ~~print~~
34 WRITTEN TEXT that requires all of the following:

35 (a) The skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech
36 sounds are connected to ~~print~~ WRITTEN TEXT.

37 (b) The ability to decode unfamiliar words.

38 (c) The ability to read fluently.

39 (d) Sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster
40 reading comprehension.

41 (e) The development of appropriate active strategies to construct
42 meaning from ~~print~~ WRITTEN TEXT.

43 (f) The development and maintenance of a motivation to read.

Move on When Reading

Annual Report

2017



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Section I: Executive Summary

The Move on When Reading (MOWR) legislation is designed to identify struggling readers and to provide them with specific, targeted interventions so that they are reading at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade. This annual report details the major elements of the program, provides a description of the activities undertaken by the Arizona Department of Education's MOWR team to improve K-3 literacy across the state, identifies further plans to improve K-3 literacy, and provides national, statewide, and school/district level data on K-3 literacy.

For further information on MOWR, please contact the ADE MOWR team.

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Early Identification and Targeted Intervention Lead to Grade-level Reading

Section II: Move on When Reading: An Overview

Purpose of the Legislation

The Move on When Reading (MOWR) legislation is designed to identify struggling readers and to provide them with specific, targeted interventions so that they are reading at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

History of the Legislation

The MOWR legislation was passed in 2010 and implemented in 2013 to support early literacy for all kindergarten through 3rd grade students across the state. The legislation allots up to 45 million dollars per year to be disseminated amongst schools with kindergarten through 3rd grade students. The program was administered by the Arizona State Board of Education until 2015. The Arizona State Board of Education received 1.5 million dollars each year to administer the program.

In October of 2015, the Arizona State Board of Education transferred responsibility for the MOWR program to the Arizona Department of Education. The Arizona Department of Education receives 500,000 dollars per year to administer the program. The MOWR team at the Arizona Department of Education consists of 1.5 full time employees, who provide technical assistance on early literacy to all elementary schools in Arizona. This is the smallest team for the administration of this type of legislation in the country.

In 2016, the State Board of Education brought together the K-3 Literacy Ad Hoc Committee. This committee, made of literacy experts from across the state, recommended changes to the MOWR legislation that were eventually adopted by the State Legislature. A description of those changes can be found here: <https://youtu.be/7TwQ8V1LL4w>.

Impact of Early Literacy

Literacy is a key to a full and successful adult life. The demands of the twenty-first century economy call for strong reading comprehension skills more than ever before. MOWR focuses on the use of evidence-based literacy assessments to identify a student's specific area of struggle with reading so that evidence-based strategies can be implemented to help the student read at or above grade level. The earlier a student's area of struggle is identified, the more successfully it can be addressed with targeted interventions. This is especially important in kindergarten through 3rd grade because, at 4th grade, students transition from learning to read to reading to learn. However, while reading scores in Arizona have steadily increased since 1998, only 30% of

Arizona's 4th grade students are reading at or above the Proficient level as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

It is important to understand the impact that early literacy instruction has on a student's future:

1. 60% of all American prison inmates are illiterate
2. 85% of all juvenile offenders have difficulties with reading
3. 75% of students identified with reading problems at 3rd grade still struggle with reading in 9th grade
4. 90% of high school dropouts were struggling readers in 3rd grade
5. Students who are reading below grade level at 3rd grade are 4 times more likely to not graduate from high school than their peers who are reading proficiently
6. 85-90% of struggling readers can grow to read at grade level with interventions implemented before the 3rd grade

It is clear that the consequences of reading below grade level negatively impact a child's future. However, early identification and targeted intervention, as called for in the MOWR legislation, can help each child learn to live a rich, literate life.

Requirements of the Legislation

MOWR facilitates early identification and targeted intervention by providing all schools with kindergarten through 3rd grade students with a systematic and comprehensive approach to literacy. The systematic approach called for by MOWR addresses struggling reader identification, assessment, strategic interventions, data collection, retention, and the appropriate use of funds to improve literacy. The components of MOWR are found in A.R.S. § [15-211](#), [15-701](#), and [15-704](#).

These statutes contain the following requirements:

1. The use of an evidence-based core reading program that addresses all five pillars of early literacy: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension
2. The use of evidence-based intervention programs for Tier II (At Risk), Tier III (Significantly At Risk), and Special Education students
3. The use of a comprehensive literacy assessment system to evaluate and monitor student progress in reading

4. The implementation of a professional development system to improve instruction in early literacy
5. Required parental notification of a student's area of struggle, the interventions being implemented at school, and strategies to be used at home
6. The retention of a student who fails to meet the cut score on the reading portion of the statewide assessment and does not meet one of the four special exemptions
7. The implementation of multiple interventions for students who are retained
8. The use of MOWR funds for the improvement of kindergarten through 3rd grade literacy

The Five Pillars of Early Literacy

A comprehensive literacy system includes direct and explicit instruction in the five pillars of early literacy.

1. Phonemic Awareness
 - a. Awareness of the individual sounds that make up words and the ability to manipulate those sounds
2. Phonics
 - a. Study of the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent
3. Fluency
 - a. The ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression and comprehension
 - i. Because fluent readers do not have to concentrate on decoding the words, they can focus their attention on what the text means.
4. Vocabulary
 - a. The words that one must understand to comprehend what is being heard or read
5. Comprehension
 - a. The ability to make meaning from a text, to accurately understand the information presented

A Comprehensive Assessment System

A balanced and comprehensive assessment system supports literacy achievement by providing data to inform decisions at every level of education. MOWR requires the following literacy assessment tools to identify and monitor students who struggle with reading.

1. Universal Screener
 - a. Brief tests administered to every student at specific times (usually within the first four weeks of school) to identify students who may struggle to acquire basic reading skills
2. Diagnostic Assessment
 - a. Targeted tests administered to students identified as at risk by the universal screener to gather specific information on the student's specific areas of struggle with reading
3. Progress Monitor
 - a. Brief assessments used continuously with struggling readers to determine the impact of interventions on student learning and to adjust instruction in response to student need

4. Benchmark Assessments
 - a. Tests administered periodically during the school year (usually once per quarter) to supply teachers with individual student data, to identify student readiness to succeed on a statewide test, and to evaluate ongoing programs
5. Summative Assessment
 - a. An end of year or end of course test, such as AzMERIT, used to evaluate the effectiveness of a program

Section III: Arizona Department of Education Activities to Support K-3 Literacy

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) MOWR team provides guidance documents, professional development, technical assistance, and serves in an advisory capacity to support K-3 literacy across the state.

Guidance Documents

To help facilitate understanding of MOWR and to assist schools with providing early identification and targeted interventions for struggling readers, ADE develops and disseminates guidance documents directly to all Arizona MOWR contacts. These documents, as well as other guidance documents, can also be found by all stakeholders on the [Move on When Reading](#) page of the ADE website.

These MOWR resources provide guidance on early literacy, best practices in reading instruction, and information about cognitive development, Dyslexia, MOWR legislative changes, MOWR requirements, use of MOWR funds, and submitting MOWR Literacy Plans, among other literacy topics.

To best reach all stakeholders in the field, the MOWR team has created resources in multiple formats: videos, webinars, face-to-face presentations, and documents.

- [Overview of the 2017 Legislative Changes to MOWR](#) (Video)
- [Overview of School and District MOWR responsibilities](#)
- [ADE Connect Setup for MOWR](#)
- [New Reporting Requirements for 2017](#)
- [2017-2018 School Literacy Plan Guidance](#)
- [2017-2018 LEA Literacy Plan Guidance](#)
- [K-3 Literacy Plan Checklist](#)
- [MOWR Literacy Assessment Data Submission](#)
- MOWR Sample Parent Letters
 - [Sample Letter 1](#)
 - [Sample Letter 2](#)
- [LEA K-3 Reading Budgets \(FY17 & FY18\)](#)
- [MOWR Overview 2017-2018](#)
- [Core Reading Program Guidance](#)
- [MOWR K-3 Literacy Plan School Level Recorded Webinar](#)
- [MOWR K-3 Literacy Plan LEA Level Recorded Webinar](#)
- [Essential Components of a Literacy Plan](#)
- [K-5 Literacy Self-Assessment](#)
- [A Comprehensive K-3 Reading Assessment Plan: Guidance for Leaders](#)
- [New Exemption to Retention 2017-2018](#)
- [Developing a Thriving Reader from the Early Years: A Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices](#)
- [Building Blocks to Becoming a Reader \(Family Resource\)](#)
- [Dyslexia Resources](#)
- [Dyslexia Handbook](#)

- [Read on Arizona Early Literacy Guide for Families](#)
- [Structuring the 90 Minute Reading Block \(Video\)](#)
- [K-3 Literacy for Administrators](#)
- [Appropriate Use of MOWR Funds to Support K-3 Literacy](#)
- [Using Assessment Data to Drive Instruction](#)

Professional Development

Teaching Reading Effectively Overview

As part of its efforts to improve early literacy instruction, ADE offers the Teaching Reading Effectively (TRE) training. The content of the TRE training includes current research and evidence based practices that are necessary to develop a student’s oral language, decoding and encoding skills, academic vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The TRE training is designed to empower teachers to use evidence-based strategies to improve reading instruction. The TRE training was created for K-3 general education teachers, K-5 special education teachers, literacy coaches, and leaders and is designed to improve classroom instruction and school wide literacy programs.

The primary units of the TRE training include:

- Foundations of Reading
- Learning to Read and Spell: A National Problem
- The Structure of Language
- Graphophonemic Awareness
- Teaching Word Identification and Spelling Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension and Writing

Once a teacher has completed the five-day TRE training, he/she can take the Teaching Reading Effectively – Trainer of Trainers (TRE-TOT) course. This course is designed to deepen each participant’s understanding of early literacy so that he/she is qualified to deliver the TRE training locally at a school or district. These teachers take the knowledge of early literacy that they have acquired and use it to empower the teachers at their school or district to strengthen their literacy instruction for all students.

From 2013-2015, the State Board of Education allotted 500,000 dollars to the ADE solely to facilitate the delivery of the TRE and TRE-TOT trainings across the state, retaining 1 million dollars for the administration of the MOWR legislation. When the State Board of Education transferred full responsibility of the MOWR program to the ADE, 500,000 dollars were allotted for both the

delivery of the TRE trainings and the administration of the MOWR program. This reduction in funding has reduced the number of trainings that can be offered by the ADE across the state.

TRE Data

In 2016-2017, TRE trainings were offered in the following counties:

- Apache
- Coconino
- Maricopa
- Mohave
- Pima
- Pinal
- Yavapai

During FY 2017, 1,122 educators received literacy instruction through TRE and TRE-TOT trainings.

In each TRE training, each participant takes a pre-test and a post-test that assesses his/her understanding of foundational concepts of literacy. The results of the pre- and post-tests illustrate the impact of the training on participants’ levels of understanding.

TRE Pre- and Post-test Data

Average Pre-test Participant Score	Average Post-test Participant Score	Average Participant Growth
38%	86%	48%

The TRE training provides proven results in expanding educator understanding on the foundational elements of early literacy.

Other Professional Development Opportunities

In addition to the TRE and TRE-TOT trainings, the K12 Standards section of the ADE, which includes the MOWR team of 1.5 employees, offers other professional development opportunities focused on K-5 literacy. These trainings are offered in face-to-face and webinar format. Additionally, LEAs can request for an ADE trainer to travel to their region to deliver the training for only the cost of mileage and lodging.

- [Multisensory Grammar](#)

- Teachers learn multisensory approaches to teaching grammatical concepts such as syntax and parts of speech
- [K-3 Writing Foundations](#)
 - Teachers learn how to best teach the progression of handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction skills to students
- [K-5 ELA Standards: Syllables \(Part I and Part II\)](#)
 - Teachers will learn the role that syllables play in teaching students to read, write, and spell
- [K-5 ELA Standards: Morphemes \(Part I and Part II\)](#)
 - Teachers will learn the role that word meanings and word attack skills play in teaching students to read, write, spell, and determine the meaning of unfamiliar words
- [Understanding and Identifying Topic, Main Idea, and Topic Sentence When Reading](#)
 - Teachers will learn how to instruct students to identify the main idea and key details in a passage to increase comprehension
- [School-Level Literacy Plan Guidance Webinar](#)
 - Guides MOWR coordinators through a step-by-step process for building their school literacy plans
- [LEA-Level Literacy Plan Guidance Webinar](#)
 - Guides MOWR coordinators through a step-by-step process for building their comprehensive district literacy plans

Technical Assistance

In addition to the guidance documents and professional development the MOWR team provides to educators across the field, it also provides technical assistance to all schools with K-3 students. The technical assistance comes in two primary forms: literacy guidance and assistance with the building and submission of the MOWR literacy plans.

In particular, the MOWR team was among the first teams in ADE to provide guidance on how to meet ESSA evidence-level requirements. The new requirement for 2017 that core reading programs meet ESSA evidence levels resulted in a heightened need for technical support. For further information on this requirement, see the following video: <https://youtu.be/7TwQ8V1LL4w>.

In September and October 2017 alone, the MOWR team of 1.5 employees fielded over 935 emails and over 500 phone calls while providing technical assistance to 450 districts and charters across the state.

Advisory Capacity

While offering guidance documents, professional development, and technical assistance, the MOWR team also serves as literacy advisors for several professional groups and committees.

- ADE Dyslexia Advisory Committee
 - This interagency committee built the dyslexia resources and the Dyslexia Handbook that can be found on the MOWR webpage. These resources are designed to help educators and families gain a greater understanding of dyslexia and what instructional techniques work best with dyslexic students.
- ADE Literacy Leadership Committee
 - This committee, led by the MOWR team, brings together representatives from all sections in the ADE that lead literacy initiatives: MOWR, K12 Standards, Office of English Language Acquisition Services, Special Education, Early Childhood, Title I, and Title II. This group examines the ADE's systematic approach to early literacy and looks for ways to combine strengths, resources, and knowledge.
- Arizona English Teachers Association (AETA)
 - The Director of the MOWR team serves as a non-voting Board member for the AETA. He represents the interests of MOWR at these meetings, presents on the program, presents on early literacy, and gains valuable feedback from the field. The MOWR team also presents at the annual AETA conference.
- Arizona State Board of Education K-3 Literacy Ad Hoc Committee
 - This committee reviews the MOWR legislation and makes formal suggestions to the Arizona State Board of Education and Arizona State Legislature on elements and interpretations of the legislation.
- Conference on English Literature
 - This organization, a committee of the National Council of Teachers of English, consists of English content leaders from states across the country. It builds and shares resources and serves in an advisory capacity on national issues involving the teaching of English language arts.
- ExcelinEd Literacy Group
 - A national group of literacy professionals that meets quarterly to discuss current research in literacy practices, k-3 literacy legislation around the nation, and to combine resources for guidance to the field.
- Language and Literacy Action Committee
 - The MOWR team serves on this statewide committee, which shares and builds resources to address early literacy needs around the state.
- Read on Arizona Language and Literacy Professional Development Committee
 - The MOWR team serves on this statewide committee, which brings together stakeholders from around the state who are involved with early literacy initiatives.

This group aims to create a unified, statewide approach to improving early literacy in Arizona.

Section IV: Further MOWR Initiatives Given Increased Funding

The MOWR team currently consists of 1.5 full time employees, which is the smallest team of this type in the country. The average 3rd grade reading legislation team in other states consists of 7-10 full-time employees. Provided sufficient funding for increased staffing, the MOWR team would institute the following practices to further assist Arizona LEAs in improving K-3 literacy.

1. Review of evidence-based reading materials
 - a. Given sufficient funding and staffing, the MOWR team would review core reading programs and reading intervention programs to compile a list for LEAs of programs that meet ESSA evidence-level requirements. This would increase the quality of programs used for reading instruction and intervention across the state.
2. Regional technical assistance
 - a. Given sufficient funding and staffing, the MOWR team would offer specific technical assistance to regions of the state. Each region would have an assigned MOWR team member as a point of contact who would perform in-person outreach. This would increase the level of support and accountability for elementary schools in Arizona.
3. Increased professional development opportunities
 - a. Given sufficient funding, or even the equivalent funding received by the State Board of Education when it oversaw the program, the MOWR team could increase the number of Teaching Reading Effectively trainings offered throughout the state.
 - b. Currently, the budget allows for 22 TRE trainings around the state. With increased funding and additional staff, this number could double, which would also allow for dedicated trainings for LEAs with the highest number of struggling readers.
 - c. Additionally, the cost of the TRE training for participants (\$80.00 for the five-day training) could be reduced to make it more available to schools across the state.
4. Increased professional development offerings
 - a. Given sufficient funding and staffing, the MOWR team could expand its professional development offerings to meet more literacy needs across the state.
 - b. These trainings could focus on high areas of need, such as training in working with dyslexic students and struggling adolescent readers.
5. Input on statewide assessment
 - a. Given sufficient funding and staffing, the MOWR team could serve in an advisory capacity for the design of the statewide reading assessment, working to make it even more aligned to state standards and literacy skills.
6. Building of a literacy website as a hub for teachers, parents, and students

- a. Given sufficient funding and staffing, the MOWR team will build a literacy website that brings together current research, ADE literacy initiatives, statewide literacy initiatives, and parental guidance in literacy.

Section V: Achievement Data

Each year, LEAs with kindergarten through 3rd grade students submit MOWR literacy plans to the Arizona Department of Education. These plans contain literacy data collected from benchmark and summative assessments. LEAs use this data to make programmatic decisions to improve student outcomes.

State and National Assessment Data

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national assessment that allows educational achievement to be compared across states. It was established by Congress in 1969 to create a national yardstick for accurately evaluating the progress of American students.

Over the course of 25 years, reading scores for Arizona 4th grade students have improved on NAEP, though they are below the national average.

NAEP Data

1998		2013		2015	
Arizona	National Average	Arizona	National Average	Arizona	National Average
206	213	213	221	215	221

The increase in scores on NAEP since the advent of the MOWR legislation (2013-2015) is comparative to an increase of ½ a grade level for 4th grade Arizona students.

Statewide Summative Assessment Data

Each year, students in grades 3-11 take the AzMERIT exam, which assesses their skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Data from this assessment is used to measure the effectiveness of student mastery of course goals, to determine the effectiveness of a recently concluded educational program, and/or to meet local, state, and federal requirements.

The following table details the performance of 3rd grade students on the Spring 2017 AzMERIT exam.

2017 AzMERIT Data

3 rd Grade AzMERIT: Percent Passing	3 rd Grade AzMERIT: Highly Proficient	3 rd Grade AzMERIT: Proficient	3 rd Grade AzMERIT: Partially Proficient	3 rd Grade AzMERIT: Minimally Proficient
44%	14%	30%	12%	44%

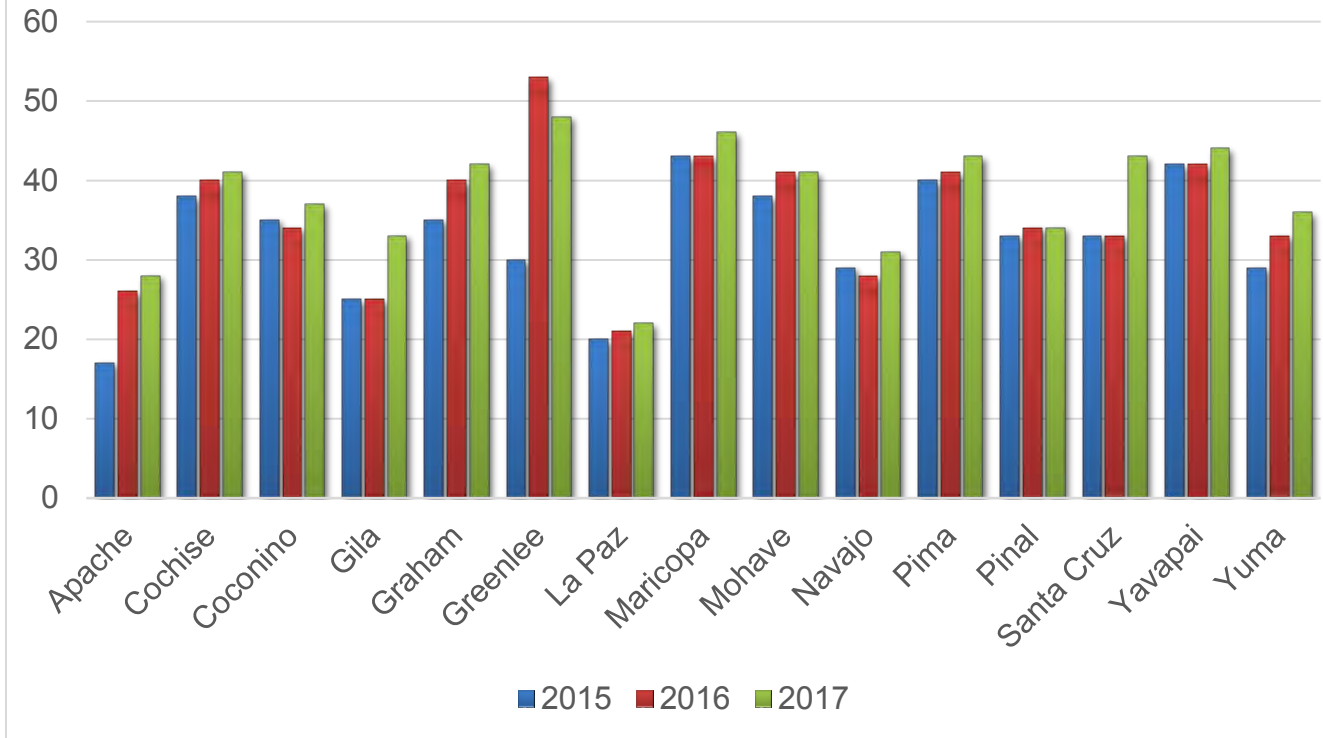
The following table shows a comparison of 3rd grade AzMERIT scores for the Spring 2016 and the Spring 2017 exams.

AzMERIT Statewide Comparative Data

	Percent Passing		Percent Highly Proficient		Percent Proficient		Percent Partially Proficient		Percent Minimally Proficient	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Grade 3	41	44	12	14	29	30	14	12	45	44

The following graph shows a comparison of 3rd grade AzMERIT scores for each county in Arizona between 2015 and 2017. As the graph indicates, scores have risen incrementally over the last three years of AzMERIT administration.

3rd Grade AzMERIT Percent Passing by County



Measure of Interim Progress

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) calls for each state to set progress goals in reading and math for student sub-groups to measure and improve progress. The following table details the long-term and interim goals for sub-groups in 3rd grade reading.

3rd Grade ELA									
Sub Groups	Baseline	2018	2021	2024	2027	2030	2033	2036	2039
FAY and non-FAY	41	47	55	59	66	72	78	84	90
FAY only	43	49	55	61	67	72	78	84	90
Black or African-American	32	39	47	54	61	68	76	83	90
Hispanic or Latino	31	38	46	53	61	68	75	83	90
American Indian or Alaska Native	21	30	38	47	56	64	73	81	90
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	46	52	57	63	68	74	79	85	90
Multiple Races	52	57	62	66	71	76	81	85	90
White (non-Hispanic)	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90
Asian	67	70	73	76	79	81	84	87	90
ELL (Plus FEP 1-4)	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
Economically Disadvantaged	30	38	45	53	60	68	75	83	90
SPED	15	24	34	43	53	62	71	81	90

Data from the reading portion of the Spring 2017 AzMERIT exam illustrates the progress made towards the long-term goal for each sub-group.

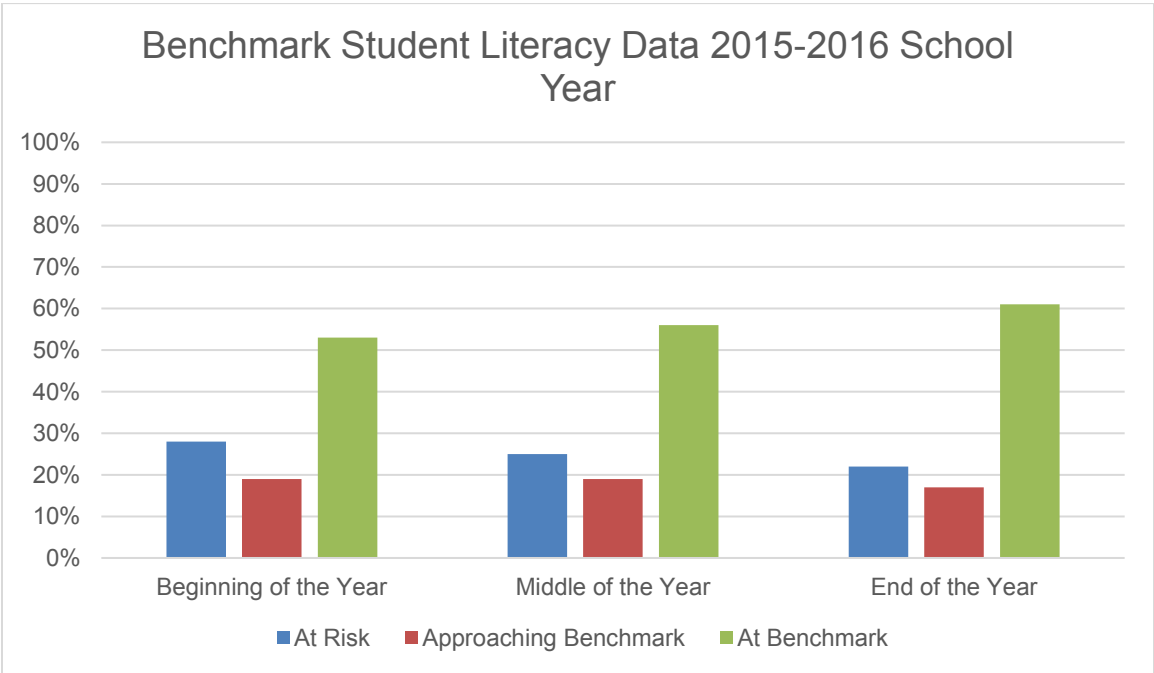
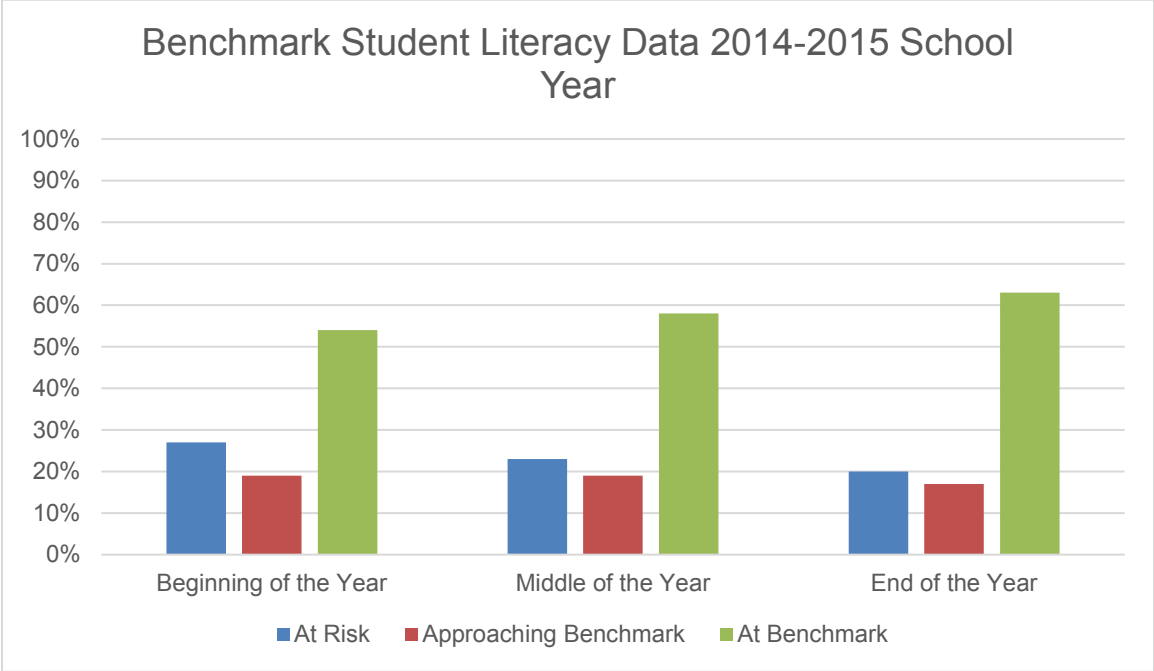
Measurement of Interim Progress Data

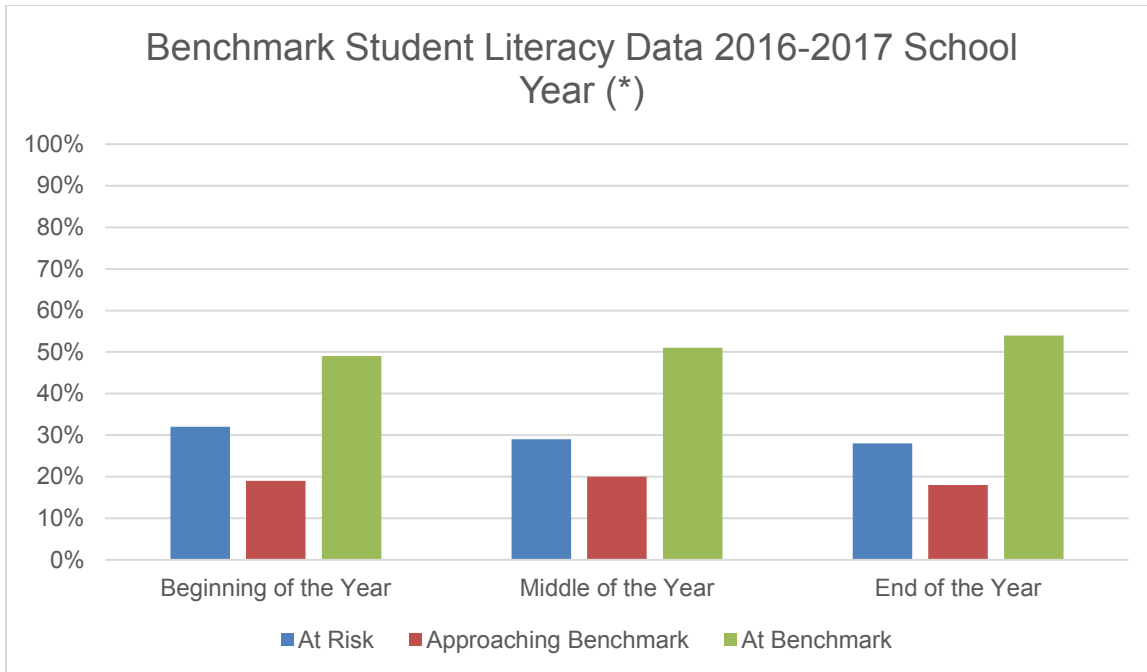
Sub-group	Measurement of Interim Progress (2017 AzMERIT)
Black or African-American	No change from 2016
Hispanic/Latino	Increase from 2016
American Indian/Alaska Native	Decrease from 2016
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Increase from 2016
Multiple Races	Decrease from 2016
White (non-Hispanic)	Increase from 2016
Asian	Increase from 2016
ELL (Plus FEP 1-4)	No change from 2016
Economically Disadvantaged	Increase from 2016
SPED	Increase from 2016

Statewide Benchmark Assessment Data

Three times per year, LEAs submit literacy data from their benchmark assessment tools to illustrate student growth from the beginning, to the middle, to the end of the school year.

As the graphs below illustrate, for the past three school years under the MOWR requirements, the number of at-risk students has decreased over the course of the year each year. Additionally, the number of students reading at benchmark has increased over the course of the year each year.





*Note: Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, schools with letter grades of A or B are only required to submit literacy plans and literacy data every other year. The data for 2016-2017 reflects only schools with letter grades of C, D, or F.

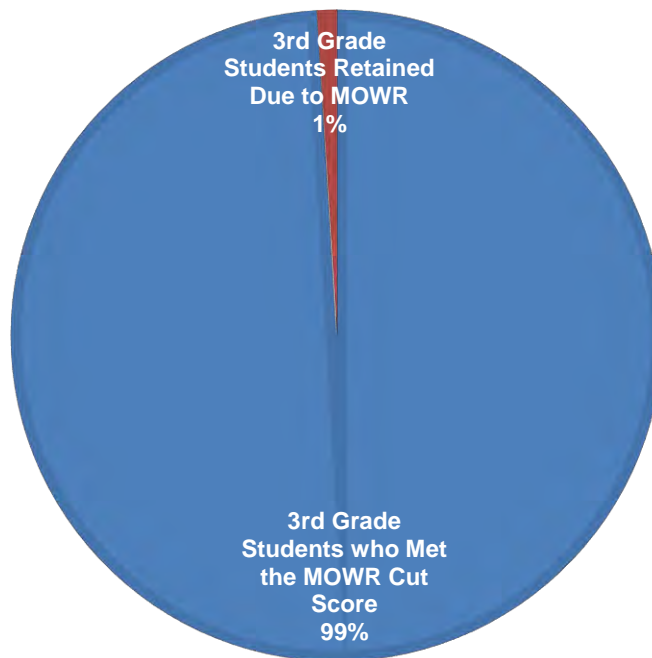
Move on When Reading Retention Data

Per A.R.S. § 15-701, a 3rd grade student who does not meet the cut score established by the Arizona State Board of Education on the reading portion of the statewide AzMERIT exam is to be retained. During the 2016-2017 school year,

- 2% of 3rd grade students (1,744 of 87,164 students) in the state failed to meet the MOWR cut score (before exemptions).
- 52% of the students who failed to meet the MOWR cut score on the AzMERIT exam met one of the four exemptions to retention and were promoted to the 4th grade (902 of 1,744 students).
- 1% of 3rd grade students (842 of 87,164 students) in the state failed to meet the MOWR cut score and were retained (after exemptions).

3RD GRADE STUDENTS RETAINED DUE TO MOVE ON WHEN READING

- 3rd Grade Students who Met the MOWR Cut Score
- 3rd Grade Students Retained Due to MOWR



Four Exemptions to 3rd Grade Retention

If a student does not meet the cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT exam, he or she is to be retained to receive the extra time and attention to acquire the necessary literacy skills to move on to 4th grade. However, the MOWR legislation was designed with the understanding that some students face unique challenges to learning, so there are four exemptions to the retention requirement in the MOWR legislation.

1. The student is an English language learner or limited English proficient student and has had fewer than 2 years of English language instruction.
2. The student is in the process of a special education referral or evaluation, and/or the student has been diagnosed as having a significant reading impairment, including dyslexia.

3. The student has an identified disability and has an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and the IEP team (including the parents) agrees that promotion is appropriate.
4. The student has demonstrated or subsequently demonstrates sufficient reading skills or adequate progress towards sufficient reading skills on the 3rd grade reading standards as evidenced through a collection of assessments approved by the Arizona State Board of Education. *Note – This exemption does not take effect until the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

The following table details the percentages of 3rd grade students who failed to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT and qualified for one of the good-cause exemptions.

MOWR Retention and Exemption Data

Total 3 rd Grade Students Who Failed to Meet the MOWR Cut Score on AzMERIT (Before Exemptions)	English Language Learners with Less Than 2 Years of Instruction	Student in the process of an IEP referral or with an IEP	Student with an Identified Reading Disability	Final Count of 3 rd Grade Students Retained Due to MOWR (After exemptions)
1,744	258 (15%)	151 (9%)	493 (28%)	842

LEA Data on 3rd Grade Retention

Students who fail to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT exam and who do not qualify for an exemption are to be retained in 3rd grade to receive the extra time they need to learn to read at grade level.

LEAs with the Smallest and Largest Percentages of Retained 3rd Grade Students:

- 60% of LEAs did not have a single 3rd grade student who failed to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT exam.
- 94% of LEAs had fewer than 5% of their students fail to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT exam (before exemptions).
- 3% of LEAs had 50% or more of their students fail to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the AzMERIT exam (before exemptions).

LEAs with the Largest Percentage of Retained 3rd Grade Students (*)

LEA	% of Retained 3 rd Grade Students Before Exemptions	% of Retained 3 rd Grade Students After Exemptions
Empower College Prep	97% (58 of 60 students)	73% (44 of 60 students)
Baboquivari Unified School District # 40	93% (80 of 86 students)	93% (80 of 86 students)
Research Based Education Corp. (Paulden Community School)	93% (14 of 15 students)	53% (8 of 15 students)
San Carlos Unified District	85% (121 of 143 students)	65% (93 of 143 students)
Eloy Elementary District	84% (86 of 102 students)	59% (60 of 102 students)
Concordia Charter School, Inc.	82% (14 of 17 students)	6% (1 of 17 students)
Starshine Academy	75% (6 of 8 students)	75% (6 of 8 students)
Window Rock Unified District	70% (86 of 123 students)	47% (58 of 123 students)
Bisbee Unified District	70% (39 of 56 students)	68% (38 of 56 students)
San Fernando Elementary District	67% (2 of 3 students)	67% (2 of 3 students)
Phoenix Education Management, LLC (Sabis International School)	62% (64 of 103 students)	0% (0 of 103 students)

*Note: Data do not reflect the number of students who attended summer school and were subsequently promoted to 4th grade after demonstrating sufficient progress towards reading proficiently.

A strong core reading program addresses the five pillars of early literacy: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. A strong core reading program paired with direct and explicit instruction should meet the needs of at least 85% of students in learning to read. The following table indicates the most frequently used core reading programs in Arizona during the 2017-2018 school year.

Core Reading Programs in Arizona 2016-2017

Program: Trophies Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Program: Journeys Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Program: Reading Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Program: Reading Street Publisher: Pearson
17% (217 Schools)	13% (165 Schools)	13% (158 Schools)	9% (112 Schools)

Research and legislation support that K-3 students should spend 90 minutes or more per day engaged in both learning to read and in strengthening their reading skills. The following table indicates the average time frames for the reading blocks for K-3 students in Arizona during the 2017-2018 school year.

Reading Block Duration in Arizona 2016-2017

Less than 90 minutes per day	90-120 minutes per day	More than 120 minutes per day
0%	70%	30%

An effective literacy intervention program addresses a student’s specific area of struggle as identified by the universal screener and diagnostic assessment. The following table indicates the most frequently used literacy intervention programs in Arizona during the 2017-2018 school year.

Reading Intervention Programs in Arizona 2016-2017

Program: Read Naturally Publisher: Read Naturally	Program: Phonics for Reading Publisher: Curriculum Associates	Program: Foundations Publisher: Wilson Language	Program: Six-Minute Solution Publisher: Sopris West
20% (249 Schools)	13% (158 Schools)	12% (149 Schools)	11% (140 Schools)

A universal screener is a brief test administered to every student at specific times (usually within the first four weeks of school) to identify students at risk of struggling to acquire basic reading

skills. The following table indicates the most frequently used universal screeners in Arizona during 2016-2017.

Universal Screeners in Arizona 2016-2017

Assessment: DIBELS Next Publisher: University of Oregon	Program: Galileo Publisher: Assessment Technology Incorporated	Program: AIMSWeb Publisher: Pearson	Program: NWEA/MAP Publisher: NWEA
62% (766 Schools)	15% (183 Schools)	7% (86 Schools)	6% (79 Schools)

Benchmark assessments are administered periodically during the school year (usually once per quarter) to supply teachers with individual student data, to identify student readiness to succeed on a statewide test, and to evaluate ongoing programs. The following table indicates the most frequently used benchmark assessments in Arizona during 2016-2017.

Benchmark Assessments in Arizona 2016-2017

Assessment: DIBELS Next Publisher: University of Oregon	Program: Galileo Publisher: Assessment Technology Incorporated	Program: NWEA/MAP Publisher: NWEA	Program: AIMSWeb Publisher: Pearson
53% (651 Schools)	31% (384 Schools)	9% (109 Schools)	6% (83 Schools)

Section VII: Move on When Reading Expenditures

During the 2016-2017 school year, MOWR funds were spent in four primary categories: K-3 Staffing, K-3 Instructional Materials/Programs, K-3 Assessment Materials, and K-3 Professional Development.

MOWR Expenditure Data (FY17)

Total MOWR Funding Released	K-3 Staffing	K-3 Instructional Materials	K-3 Assessment Materials	K-3 Professional Development
\$44,885,472.64	94%	4%	1%	1%

The majority of MOWR funding received by LEAs in 2016-2017 (FY17) was spent on staffing, which includes salaries for teachers, literacy interventionists, and paraprofessionals.

For the 2017-2018 school year, LEAs estimate that they will apply MOWR funding in the following percentages.

MOWR Estimated Expenditure Data (FY18)

Total MOWR Funding (Estimated)	K-3 Staffing (Estimated)	K-3 Instructional Materials (Estimated)	K-3 Assessment Materials (Estimated)	K-3 Professional Development (Estimated)
\$44,818,039.36	82%	12%	3%	3%

The shift to an increased percentage of funding being estimated for use in purchasing K-3 Instructional Materials may be explained by the new requirement that core reading programs used by LEAs must meet the Every Student Succeeds Act requirements for being evidence-based. This new requirement has prompted many LEAs to review and update their core reading programs.

Section VIII: Bibliography

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K-3 Reading

Cari Miller, Policy Director, K-3 Reading

Early Literacy: State Supports

Helping states develop and implement K-3 Reading policies that ensure all students enter fourth grade with the foundational reading skills they need to learn, graduate and succeed

-  **Policy Resources:** We provide states with model legislation, fundamental principles and the latest research.
-  **Hands-on Technical Support:** In 2017, we engaged in development, adoption, or implementation in 26 states.
-  **State Impact Studies:** We partner with states to perform quantitative and qualitative research designed to evaluate the effectiveness of existing K-3 reading programs and identify areas for improvement.
 - 2017 states: CO, FL, NC, NV, OH, SC
-  **Customized Communications Support:** We support successful implementation by partnering with states to provide intensive, customized communications support, including communications toolkits, digital shorts and social media playbooks.
 - 2017 states: CO, NC, SC, NV
-  **K-3 Reading Networking Group:** ExcelinEd regularly convenes states with K-3 reading leaders to share lessons learned and best practices.
 - Currently includes 42 state literacy directors and select program administrators from 13 states (AZ, CO, FL, ID, IN, MS, MI, OH, OK, NV, NC, SC, TN)



2017 Customized Communications Tools

Colorado

Customized tools: [social media playbook](#), [graphics](#), [three videos](#)



North Carolina

Customized tools: [flyer](#), [communications toolkit](#), [logo](#), [social media playbook](#) and [social media graphics](#)



Nevada

Customized tools: [social media playbook](#), [graphics](#), [design work](#), [eight videos](#) (4 each in English, Spanish)



South Carolina

Customized tools: [graphics](#), [social media playbook](#), [three videos](#)

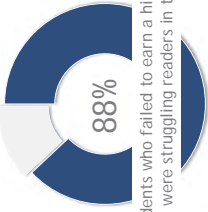


Early Literacy Initiatives

Participating States

STATES	K-3 NETWORKING GROUP	POLICY IMPACT STUDIES	CUSTOMIZED COMMUNICATIONS
Arizona		★	★
Colorado		2017	2017, 2018, 2019
Florida		2017	
Idaho			
Indiana		2018	
Michigan			2018, 2019
Mississippi		★	★
North Carolina		2017	2017, 2018, 2019
Nevada		2017	2017, 2018, 2019
Ohio		2017	★
Oklahoma		★	★
South Carolina		2017	2017, 2018, 2019
Tennessee			

Reading is Both an Education and Economic Problem




Of students who failed to earn a high school diploma were struggling readers in third grade



7 out of every 10 inmates cannot read above a fourth grade level

Students who are not reading proficiently in third grade:

4 X  Are four times more likely to not to graduate high school.

6X  African American and Hispanic students not reading proficiently in third grade are six times more likely to drop out or fail to graduate from high school.

High School Dropouts:

Aren't eligible for 90% of the jobs in the economy

Make-up nearly 50% of all heads-of-households on welfare.

Reading is the Foundation for All Learning



Catch Students Early



Early identification



Intensive reading intervention happens K-3



Retention is a last resort

K-3 Reading Fundamental Principles



Assessment/Parent Notification

- Universal statewide early literacy screening/progress monitoring
- Parent notification

Instruction/Intervention

Individual reading plans for students identified with a reading deficiency, including:

- Evidence-based interventions during school and/or before/after school
- Summer Reading Camps
- Home reading strategies or programs for parents
- Regularly monitor student progress

Supports

- Job-embedded training for current teachers via statewide training and reading coaches
- Preparing teacher candidates to have the knowledge and skill to teach all kids to read
- Funding and reprioritization of existing local, state and federal funds for early literacy

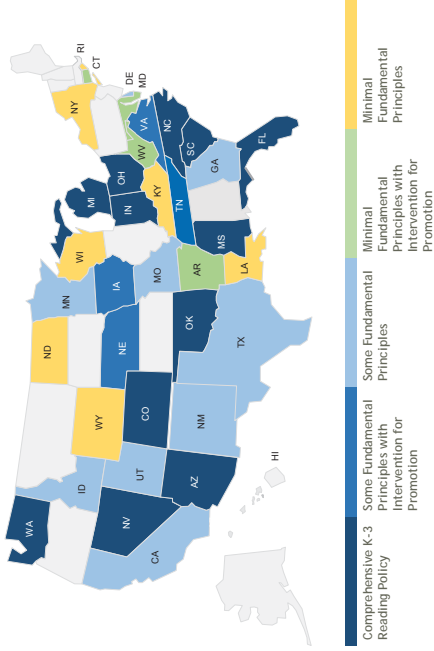
Retention/Intervention

- Retention for students severely below grade level (cut score matters)
- Ensure one test on one day is NOT the sole determining factor (state test, alt test, portfolio)
- Good cause exemptions for “some” students
- Retention means more intensive interventions with a highly effective teacher



K-3 Reading Policy Landscape & Impact

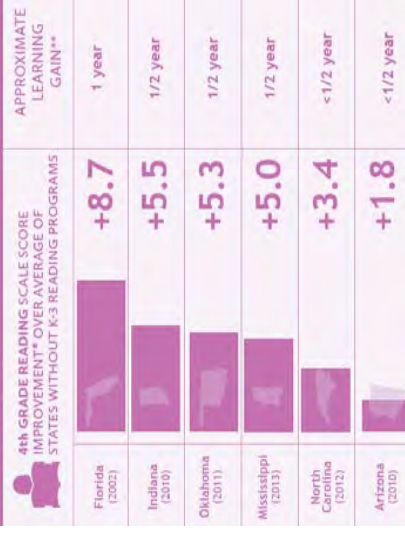
K-3 Reading Policy By State



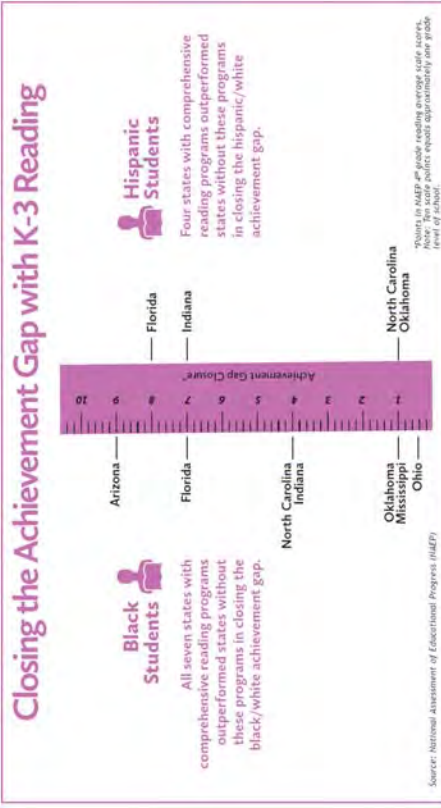
K-3 Reading Policies Help Students Advance



After multiple years of implementing comprehensive K-3 Reading policies, students in six states are making faster improvements on NAEP fourth-grade reading than states without the policy.



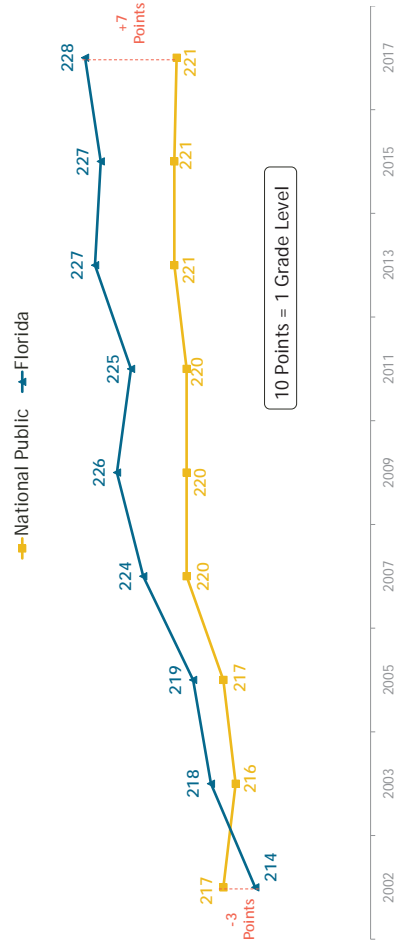
Closing the Achievement Gap



NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress

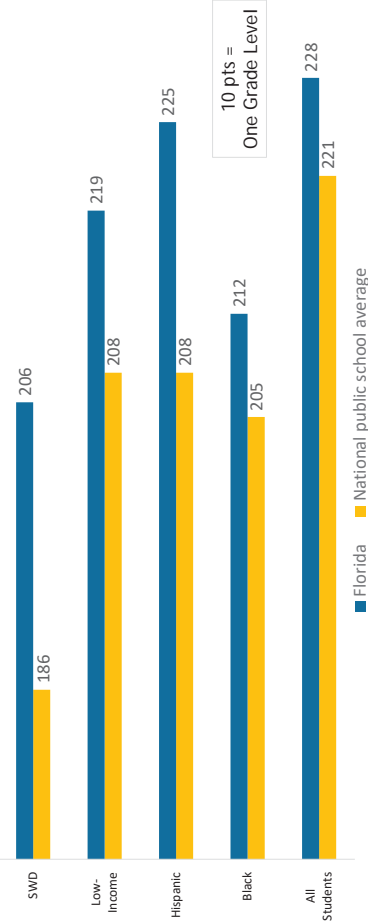


Average NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores, 2002-2017



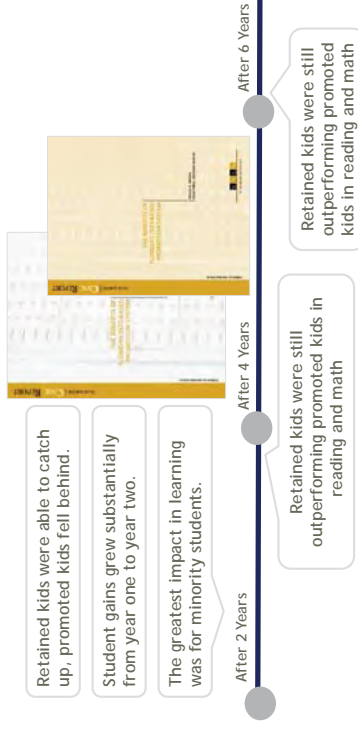
Florida 4th Grade Reading Performance on 2017 NAEP

Florida students outperformed the national average in EVERY subgroup for fourth grade reading



Independent Research Shows that This Policy Works

"Retained students reported a greater sense of school connectedness... even three years after the retention decision." -RAND



Newest Research on Florida's K-3 Reading Policy



- Significant learning gains in the early grades
- Increased performance within third grade
- A reduction in retentions in later grades
- Same-grade comparisons confirm retained kids still outperform promoted kids in reading and math through 8th grade
- Retained kids, when compared to similar promoted kids, graduate with a higher GPA and take less remediation courses in high school.
- Higher probability of graduating with a regular diploma
- Generates educational and opportunity costs well below a full year when subsequent grade progression is taken into account.
- The expected net increase in later earnings due to the policy far outweigh the cost of the program to taxpayers

The Effects of Test-Based Retention on Student Outcomes Over Time: Regression discontinuity evidence from Florida
Guido Schwerdt, Martin P. West, Marcus A. Winters & The Costs and Benefits of Test-Based Promotion, Marcus Winters 2017



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K-3 Reading Policy Impact

North Carolina

Teachers perspective

- 84% of teachers agreed that their knowledge of and skill in using reading assessments to drive instruction increased.
- 80% of teachers agreed professional development improved their knowledge of research-based reading instruction.
- 72% of teachers agreed that there was an increase in learning time for struggling readers to get the help they needed to be successful.
- Nearly 75% of teachers reported their schools have increased efforts to engage parents.

South Carolina

Teachers perspective

- 85% of teachers agreed that RTs has improved K-3 reading outcomes;
 - 86% of teachers agreed that there was increased time for instruction and intervention for students with reading deficiencies; and
 - 81% increased their efforts to engage parents and guardians of struggling readers.
- "I think this is helping teachers to see that we are ALL accountable for teaching our students to read, and that being strong readers is so closely linked to success in life."



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K-3 Reading Policy Impact

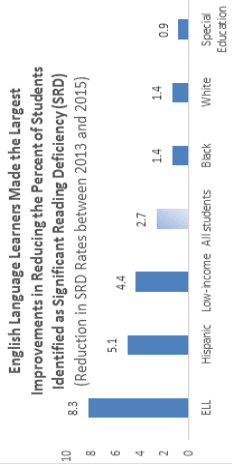
Nevada

Teachers perspective

- 77% of teachers agreed that efforts to engage parents of struggling readers has increased.
- 75% of teachers agreed that the assessments that they use help improve their instruction to meet student needs.
- 74% of teachers support RBG3 requirement to eliminate social promotion to help ensure struggling readers get the time they need with interventions to be successful in fourth grade and beyond.
- 72% of teachers agreed that the Learning Strategist provides support that helps them improve their reading instruction.
- 68% of teachers agreed that their school has increased learning time for struggling readers.

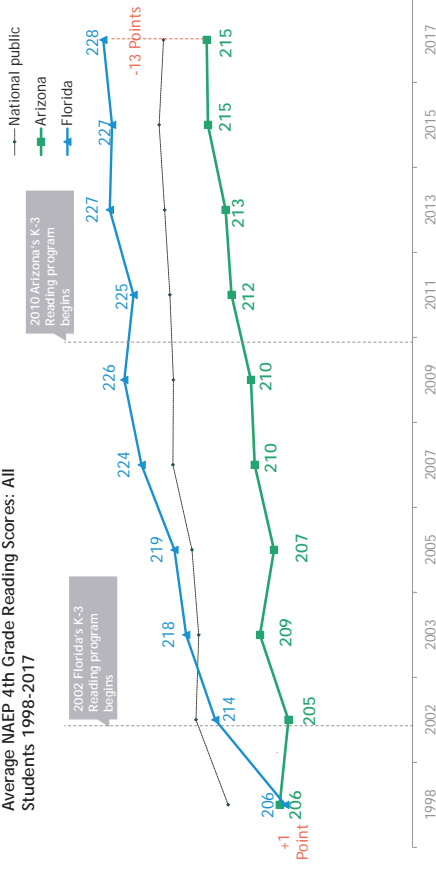
Colorado

Fewer students were identified with a significant reading deficiency in every subgroup from spring 2013 to 2015.



NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress

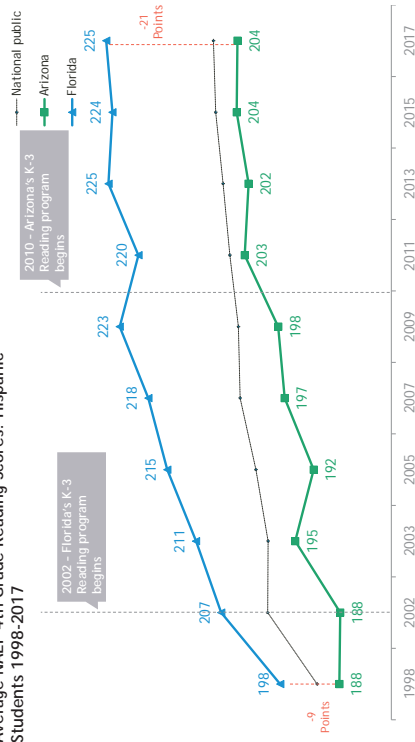
Average NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores: All Students 1998-2017



NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress



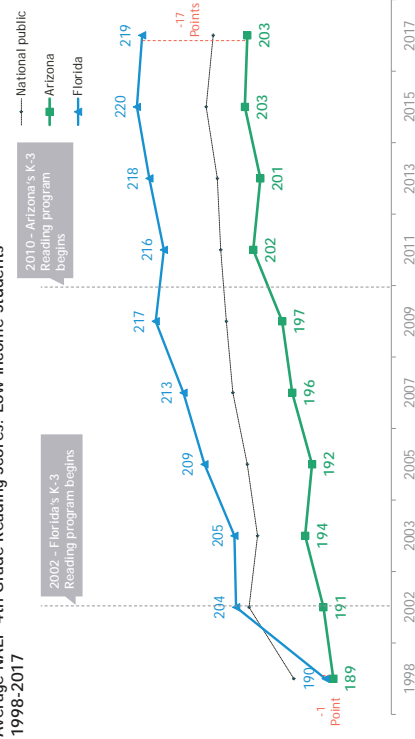
Average NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores: Hispanic Students 1998-2017



NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress



Average NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores: Low-Income Students 1998-2017



Arizona's Move on When Reading (MOWR) Legislation



MOWR focuses on early identification and intervention for struggling readers to ensure grade level reading by the end of third grade.

- School Literacy Plans - plan to strategically address the literacy needs of all students.
- The school's role - Requires every school/district who serves K-3 students to:
 1. Use funding to build the literacy skills of K-3 grade students.
 2. Provide a literacy assessment system that assesses and monitors student progress.
 3. Adopt and implement an evidence-based reading curriculum that addresses the fab five
 4. Provide high quality teacher training in evidence-based reading instruction
 5. Devote time to explicit and systematic literacy instruction and independent reading
- Early Identification and Parent Notification - written notification to parents of K-3 students who have been identified as having a substantial reading deficiency, prescribing evidence-based interventions that will be provided and strategies for parents to use at home

Arizona's Move on When Reading (MOWR) Legislation



- One test on one day isn't the sole determining factor for promotion - state test, alt. test(s)
- Student Retention - students scoring below the cut score for promotion and don't qualify for a good cause exemption
- Exemptions - recognizing the special needs of students
- Interventions for Retained Students - Students who are retained must receive more than one of the following interventions:
 1. summer reading instruction
 2. intensive reading instruction before, during, and/or after the regular school day
 3. small-group, teacher-led reading instruction that may include computer based or online instruction
 4. assignment to a different teacher whose most recent performance evaluation is in one of the top two performance classifications

Cut Score for Promotion

When establishing cut scores for promotion, states consider:

- Setting an aspirational but attainable cut score
 - Target students that truly need an entire year of intensive intervention
 - Policy decision or standards-setting committee
 - Approach:
 - Use of entire ELA assessment
 - Use of the reading portion of the ELA assessment
 - Must have enough items to ensure validity and reliability of the results
 - Communication is key
 - Alternative assessment cut score alignment
- AZ legislation:** A pupil may not be promoted from the third grade if the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the statewide assessment that does not demonstrate sufficient reading skills as established by the board.

2017 AZMERIT 3rd Grade ELA Results

Level 1 (minimal proficiency)	Level 2 (partially proficient)	Level 3 (proficient)	Level 4 (highly proficient)
44%	12%	30%	13%

AzMERIT Cut Scores
Scale Score Ranges

AzMERIT ELA	Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Highly Proficient
Grade 3	2395--2496	2497--2508	2509--2540	2541--2605
Grade 4	2400--2509	2510--2522	2523--2558	2559--2610
Grade 5	2419--2519	2520--2542	2543--2577	2578--2629
Grade 6	2431--2531	2532--2552	2553--2596	2597--2641
Grade 7	2438--2542	2543--2560	2561--2599	2600--2648
Grade 8	2448--2554	2555--2576	2577--2603	2604--2658
Grade 9	2454--2554	2555--2576	2577--2605	2606--2664
Grade 10	2458--2566	2567--2580	2581--2605	2606--2668
Grade 11	2465--2568	2569--2584	2585--2607	2608--2675

Source: <https://www.azed.gov/assessment/resources/>



State Tests and Cut Score Establishment Practices

State	1 st Year of Full Implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process/Alt Tests
Florida	2002-2003	<p>Any student scoring Level 1, out of 5 levels on Florida's ELA test, are at-risk of retention</p> <p>Year 1: 23% of students were subject to retention, and 14% were officially retained (after good cause exemptions were applied).</p> <p>In 2016-2017, 18% scored Level 1. 7% of students retained after exemptions were applied.</p>	<p>Cut score established by legislation. Alternative assessment/cut scores established by rule:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> SAT9 – 50thile SAT10 – 45thile <p>Rule revised to allow district-selected tests that met certain criteria (.85 reliability). Added the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) – 50th Percentile Terranova – 50th Percentile <p>Changed criteria in rule (.80 reliability) so existing district tests could be used (Fewer, Better Test):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> NWEA MAP – 50th Percentile STAR Enterprise – 50th Percentile I-Ready – 50th Percentile (must use 2016-2017 norms) I-Station – 50th Percentile



State Test, Alternative Assessment and Cut Score Establishment

State	1 st Year of Full Implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process
Mississippi	2014-2015	<p>Students must score above the LOWEST 2 levels on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) for promotion (4 levels: minimal, basic, proficient, advanced)</p> <p>Projected that 22% will be at-risk of retention prior to good cause exemptions being applied</p>	<p>Legislation requires all students in the two lowest achievement levels be subject to retention in 2018-2019. MS uses the reading portion of MAAP for promotion/retention decisions. The passing score on the reading portion of the 3rd grade MAAP, was determined by a standard-setting process.</p> <p>The MKAS2-Mississippi K-3 Assessment Support System will continue to serve as the alternative assessment (may be administered twice).</p>



State Test, Alternative Assessment and Cut Score Establishment



State	First Year of Full Implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process
North Carolina	2013-2014	Requires students to score "proficient" on state reading test, which means they must score Level 3 or above to be promoted (5 levels, 1-5) 32% were at risk of retention before good cause exemptions were applied. NC also has performance based good cause exemptions that include alt. test and test-based portfolio.	Cut score for promotion established by legislation. Alternative assessments/cut scores: 1. MAP – Lexile Level 725 or higher (207 scale score) 2. SRI – Lexile Level 725 or higher 3. STAR Reading – Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 scale score) 4. ITBS – Lexile Level 725 or higher (Level 9 Test at 71 st percentile) 5. i-Station Benchmarks – Lexile Level 725 or higher (258 scale score) 6. i-Ready – Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 scale score) 7. Discovery Ed – Lexile Level 725 or higher (1505 scale score) 8. Imagine Learning – Lexile Level 725 or higher

State Test, Alternative Assessment and Cut Score Establishment



State	First year of full implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process
Oklahoma	2013-2014	Students scoring proficient or higher on OSTP meet promotion criteria; however new legislation allows for state-approved screening assessment results to be used for promotion (must score end-of-third grade proficiency or higher for promotion). OK reestablished the cut score with the new assessment and will be applied in 2017-2018 school year. The projection is that 21% of students will be at risk of retention prior to good cause exemptions being applied.	Committee and Bookmarking process was used to set cut score for promotion; OK also has a state-approved list of screeners/alt tests that can be used for promotion. There are cut scores established for each to determine if a student is ready for promotion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ainsweb (K-3) • DIBELS Next (K-3) • Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (K-3) • iReady Diagnostic (K-3) • Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) (K-3) • mCLASS DIBELS Next (K-3) • STAR Early Learning Enterprise (K-3) • Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests, Third Edition (K-3) Alternative assessments and cut scores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAT 10 – 45%ile • ITBS Complete Battery Form A, C or E, Level 9, Reading Comprehension-45%ile • ITBS Core Battery, Form A, C, or E, Level 9, Reading Comprehension-45%ile Percentile • Terranova, Third Edition Complete Battery Level 13, Reading – 45%ile

State Test, Alternative Assessment and Cut Score Establishment



State	First year of full implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process
Ohio	2012-2013	Ohio requires students score above the "limited" level on state test for promotion. Ohio, as required by legislation, raises the bar for promotion each year (raised to a higher scale score) until the cut score for promotion is "proficiency". The first year of the policy roughly 6% were retained after good cause exemptions were applied.	Initial cut score established by legislation was students score above the "limited" level were promoted. The SBE was required to determine the cut score (not lower than the "limited" level of skill), then annually adjust it upwards until the retention requirements apply to students who do not receive at least a "proficient" score. (5 levels: limited, basic, proficient, accelerated, advanced). The actual cut score for promotion each year is a policy decision. In 2017-18 the cut score on the Grade 3 ELA test is a 672 scale score (in "basic" range). Alternative assessments and cut scores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iowa Assessments- Form F, Reading Test Part 1 and Part 2, Level 9 (Grade 3) – 176 Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading Assessments – 196 Terra Nova 3 Terra Nova, Third Edition Reading Grade 3 – 617 STAR Reading – 959 (reported in the new STAR unified scale)

State Test, Alternative Assessment and Cut Score Establishment



State	First year of full implementation	Cut Score for Promotion	Cut Score Setting Process
Nevada	2019-2020	Legislation requires State Board to determine "passing" score. Law/language: Retained if the pupil does not obtain a score in the subject area of reading on the state assessment that meets the passing score prescribed by the State Board.	Nevada is in the initial stage of setting a cut score for promotion on SMARTER Balanced. Current Department discussions lean toward setting the cut score for promotion at "above the lowest level" (4 levels on state test) on SMARTER Balanced. <u>Using current impact data, this would mean roughly 28% would be at risk of retention prior to good cause exemptions being applied.</u> Considering use of statewide screener/progress monitoring tool, NWEA MAP, for use as the alternative assessment for promotion. Plan to align cut score for promotion to SMARTER Balanced.



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Thank You!

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Move on When Reading Literacy Plan Analysis

May 10th, 2018

Arizona State Board of Education

Robert Vagi, Ph.D.

Introduction

- ▶ Collaboration between Read On Arizona and the Arizona Department of Education
- ▶ Sought to better understand how Move on When Reading programs and interventions are related to 3rd grade literacy
- ▶ Research Questions:
 1. *Are specific core literacy programs associated with higher rates of 3rd grade reading achievement?*
 2. *Are specific universal screening tools associated with higher rates of 3rd grade reading achievement?*
 3. *To what extent are school and district characteristics (i.e. poverty, enrollment, etc.) associated with different rates of 3rd grade reading achievement?*

Data and Methods

- ▶ School-level data from the 2015-2016 school year
- ▶ Only included schools for which complete data were available
- ▶ Main outcomes:
 - ▶ Percent passing 3rd grade AzMERIT English Language Arts (ELA)
 - ▶ Percent at performance level 1 on 3rd grade AzMERIT English Language Arts (ELA)
- ▶ Final sample included 953 schools
- ▶ Examined differences using two sets of analyses: those that accounted for other factors that might also affect student achievement and those that did not

Question 1: Are specific core literacy programs associated with higher rates of 3rd grade literacy?

- ▶ Core Literacy Programs: Target all students and incorporate various skills into one coherent program to ensure that students are successful in reading.
- ▶ Only examined programs used by 5% or more of schools:
 1. Houghton Mifflin Reading
 2. Journeys, MacMillian/McGraw-Hill Reading
 3. Reading Street
 4. Storytown
 5. Treasures
 6. Trophies
- ▶ Also examined the number of core literacy programs used in 3rd grade

Question 1: Are specific core literacy programs associated with higher rates of 3rd grade literacy?

- ▶ No statistically significant differences between schools that used each core literacy program and those that did not
- ▶ The relationships between the number of core literacy programs used in 3rd grade and the percent of students passing and at performance level 1 were not statistically significant.

Question 2: Are specific universal screening tools associated with higher rates of 3rd grade literacy?

- ▶ Universal Screening Tool:
 - ▶ Focus on skills that are highly-predictive of academic success
 - ▶ Used to identify struggling learners and monitor progress
- ▶ Only examined tools used by 5% or more of schools:
 1. AIMS Web
 2. DIBELS
 3. DIBELS Next
 4. Galileo
- ▶ Also examined the number of screening tools used in 3rd grade
- ▶ Only examined percent at performance level 1

Question 2: *Are specific universal screening tools associated with higher rates of 3rd grade literacy?*

- ▶ No statistically significant differences between schools that used each universal screening tool and those that did not
- ▶ The relationship between the number of universal screening tools used in 3rd grade and the percent of students at performance level 1 was not statistically significant.

Question 3: *To what extent are school and district characteristics associated with different rates of 3rd grade literacy?*

- ▶ Examined the following characteristics:
 - ▶ Charter status
 - ▶ School and district enrollment
 - ▶ School and district percent free- and reduced-price lunch
 - ▶ School and district percent minority enrollment
 - ▶ Rural locale
- ▶ Analysis examined all characteristics simultaneously to account for any shared relationships
- ▶ Examined both percent passing and percent at performance level 1

Question 3: *To what extent are school and district characteristics associated with different rates of 3rd grade literacy?*

- ▶ School-Level Percent Free- and Reduced-Price Lunch:
 - ▶ A ten-percentage point increase was associated with a two-percentage point decrease in the number of students passing AzMERIT.
 - ▶ A ten-percentage point increase was associated with a two-percentage point increase in the number of students at performance level 1.
- ▶ School-Level Percent Minority Enrollment:
 - ▶ A ten-percentage point increase in minority enrollment was associated with a four-percentage point decrease in the number of students passing AzMERIT.
 - ▶ A ten-percentage point increase in minority enrollment was associated with a four-percentage point increase of students at performance level 1.
- ▶ District-Level Percent Minority Enrollment:
 - ▶ A ten-percentage point increase in minority enrollment was associated with a two-percentage point increase in the number of students passing AzMERIT at the school-level.
- ▶ Rural Schools:
 - ▶ On average, rural schools had three percent fewer students pass AzMERIT when compared with non-rural schools.

Conclusion

- ▶ Core Reading Programs and Universal Screening Tools:
 - ▶ Nonsignificant relationships don't mean that programs aren't helping students.
 - ▶ No evidence that a specific program offers an advantage over others.
- ▶ Poverty and minority enrollment are associated with lower rates of achievement independent of each other.
- ▶ More investigation needed for district-level minority enrollment.
- ▶ Rural schools have lower average achievement even after accounting for things like poverty, minority enrollment, charter status, etc.
- ▶ More usable data would allow further research.



Arizona State Board of Education

POLICY # 001 PRINCIPLES OF AGREEMENT ADOPTED OCTOBER 27, 2014

Philosophical Agreements:

1. A through F achievement profile will examine solely academically relevant information.
2. Multiple measures of performance provide more information about a school's quality than a single test score.
3. The achievement profile must recognize academic growth as an essential element of measurement: Schools must not be penalized for low scores if significant gains are made over the course of the academic year. However, at least one year's of growth must remain the expectation to ensure student's stay on pace to graduate prepared.
4. "A" schools must be truly excellent in their preparation of students for college and work as measured throughout the P-20 and career readiness system.
5. All schools must have the opportunity to achieve "A" status.
6. The system must meaningfully balance simplicity with transparency.
7. Arizona's A-F achievement profile should align with and reinforce the State Board of Education's policy goals for academic achievement.

Technical Agreements:

1. The A-F achievement profile shall provide timely, valid, and reliable information.
2. The state shall produce information for schools that identifies the students included in each measure.
3. School should receive data and accompanying technical documents so the schools may replicate and validate the findings.
4. The achievement profile should reflect both growth of students not at grade level, as well as students at or above grade level.
5. The achievement profile will reflect students' mastery of standards.
6. The achievement profile will utilize multiple years of data as available and appropriate.
7. The achievement profile will utilize postsecondary success measures

Implementation Agreements:

1. In order to ensure that each new measure captures the intent, the state should pilot portions of the achievement profile.
2. The state should verify the achievement profile to comply with technical requirements and/or statutes and State Board of Education rules.
3. The state will present the achievement profile and other agreed to measures of school quality to parents, educators, and policy makers in a timely, informative, and easy to understand format. This includes releasing formula or other updates to how the annual profiles are determined prior to the start of the school year the profile will reflect.
4. A coalition of technical and policy stakeholders must be consulted to create, evaluate and refine the methodologies used in the achievement profile to ensure transparency, feedback from the field and community, and compliance with Agreements.

Policy #002

Arizona's Key Values in Selecting a New Statewide Assessment

Adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education March 6, 2014

The Arizona State Board of Education (the Board) is responsible for prescribing the minimum course of study for public schools, adopting statewide academic standards, and selecting a statewide assessment to measure the Arizona academic standards. These Board adopted measures are considered by governing boards and charter schools as they fulfill their local responsibility to prescribe curricula, criteria for the promotion of students, and any course of study or competency requirements greater than those prescribed by the Board.

ARS §15-741 requires the Board to adopt and implement a test to measure pupil achievement. A new statewide assessment in math and English language arts must be selected for use in school year 2014-2015, as the contract for the current test is expiring. Complying with the state procurement process, the Board intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the new assessment in Spring 2014 and complete the selection process before the start of school year 2014-2015. Further information about the process can be found at <http://www.azed.gov/state-board-education/new-statewide-assessment/>.

The Board is committed to adopting a new assessment best aligned with Arizona's values and needs. Incorporating feedback from parents, educators, and business and community leaders, the following key values shall be the basis for the requirements of the RFP for the selection of the new statewide assessment.

It is essential that the new statewide assessment:

1. Align to the academic standards adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education
2. Supply criterion referenced summative assessments for grades 3 through 8, and criterion referenced end of course assessments in identified high school math and English language arts courses for implementation in the 2014-15 school year
3. Measure student mastery of the Arizona standards and progress toward college and career readiness
4. Assess, without bias, a range of basic knowledge and lower level cognitive skills and higher order, analytical thinking skills in writing, analysis, and problem-solving across subjects, using multiple assessment methods
5. Provide valid, reliable and timely data to educators and policy makers to advance the academic success of Arizona students and inform the State's accountability measures (A-F School Letter Grades, Move on When Reading, Principal and Teacher Evaluations)
6. Communicate results to students, parents and educators, in a clear and timely manner to guide instruction
7. Provide an accurate perspective of the quality of learning occurring within classrooms and schools
8. Offer educators, students, and families critical tools to improve student achievement, including, but not limited to, formative and interim assessments, sample items and practice tests
9. Allow meaningful national or multistate comparisons of school and student achievement
10. Use 21st Century technology to deliver the assessment, as available infrastructure allows
11. Ensure clarity, transparency, accuracy and security in all aspects of assessment development, deployment, scoring and reporting
12. Provide for content and psychometric evaluation and validation
13. Establish the involvement of Arizona stakeholders – educators, students, parents, institutions of higher education, and business – in the development of the test, test related materials, and achievement levels indicative of college and career readiness
14. Demonstrate accessibility for all students, with optimal access for English language learners and students with special needs
15. Respect Arizona's local control of the selection of classroom instructional materials and recognize that the State Board will not consider any assessment which requires the adoption of a statewide curriculum
16. Deliver the requirements in a cost efficient manner, with accurate and descriptive cost information



Arizona State Board of Education

Policy #012
MENU OF ASSESSMENTS POLICY
(A.R.S. 15-741.02)
REVISED February 26, 2018

A. Definitions.

In this Section, the following definitions apply:

1. "Board" means the Arizona State Board of Education.
2. "Department" means the Arizona Department of Education.
3. "Menu of Assessments" means a list of locally procured, nationally recognized high school assessments that may be selected by a local education agency to meet the requirements prescribed in A.R.S. § 15-741.02.
4. "Nationally recognized high school assessment" means an assessment that is accepted by universities for the purposes of awarding college credit or admissions.

B. Procedures.

1. The Board shall establish and maintain a Menu of Assessments for high school testing to measure pupil achievement of Arizona's academic standards that includes nationally recognized high school assessments which meet the requirements of this policy as set forth below.
2. Notwithstanding any other procedure of this policy, a local education agency that is using a nationally recognized assessment, an early college credit examination adopted pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-249.06 or an assessment adopted pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-792.03 that is not on the Menu of Assessments by March 1, 2018 may request that the assessment be added to the Menu of Assessments and the Board shall approve the assessment.
3. The Board, in cooperation with the Department, shall annually evaluate locally procured assessments for consideration of their inclusion on the Menu of Assessments and shall notify local education agencies by May 1 of the results of the evaluation.

4. An assessment may be considered for inclusion on the Menu of Assessments upon a showing by the assessment provider the following criteria have been met through a narrative explanation:
 - a. Provides evidence that the assessment is a high-quality assessment;
 - b. Demonstrates that the assessment meets or exceeds the level of rigor of the Board's adopted academic standards; and
 - c. Demonstrates that the assessment scores can be scaled for state accountability programs.
5. Providers shall submit an evaluation from an independent third party approved by the Board that shows the assessment meets the requirements prescribed in paragraph B(4). All costs of the independent third-party evaluators shall be paid by the assessment provider.
6. If a third-party evaluation establishes that the proposed assessment sufficiently meets the criteria, the Department shall submit the proposed assessment to the Secretary of Education in accordance with the requirements for peer review under section 1111(a)(4) of ESSA demonstrating that any such assessment meets the requirements of section 1111(b)(2)(B) of ESSA.
7. If a third-party evaluation establishes that the proposed assessment sufficiently meets the criteria, the Board shall consider the assessment for approval.
8. Upon Board approval, a proposed assessment shall be included on the Menu of Assessments.
9. Prior to administering an assessment pursuant to this policy, a local education agency shall submit annual notification to the Board and the Department by July 1. The local education agency shall submit the notification to **inbox@azsbe.az.gov** and **testing@azed.gov**. The notification shall:
 - a. Indicate the school and the assessment the local education agency will administer in the upcoming school year pursuant to this policy;
 - b. Indicate when the assessment provider expects to provide assessment scores to the local education agency. If the assessment provider has not informed the local education agency of when assessment scores are expected to be provided, the assessment provider shall notify the local education agency and the Department as soon as practicable; and
 - c. Be signed by the superintendent or designee of the local education agency.

10. Local education agencies that adopt a locally procured assessment pursuant to this policy shall provide the necessary reasonable accommodations for a student who is an English language learner and the necessary accommodations and modifications for a student as required by the student's individualized education program team.

11. The assessment provider for any assessment included on the Menu of Assessments shall provide a copy of the assessment scores to the Department when scores are provided to its partnering local education agency and shall notify the local education agency of when the assessment scores are expected to be provided.

12. A local education agency that selects an assessment from the Menu of Assessments pursuant to this policy shall administer the selected assessment at the school identified in the notification prescribed in paragraph 9 for at least three consecutive academic years. Upon request by a local education agency, the Board may allow a local education agency to opt out of the requirement of this paragraph. A local education agency that is permitted to opt out pursuant to this paragraph shall administer another assessment from the Menu of Assessments or the statewide assessment.

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-third Legislature
Second Regular Session
2018

CHAPTER 275
SENATE BILL 1411

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 15-241 AND 15-241.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-241, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-241. School, charter school and school district
5 accountability; annual achievement profiles;
6 classification; letter grade system; profiles;
7 appeals process; failing schools tutoring fund;
8 definition

9 A. ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1 OF EACH YEAR, the department of
10 education shall compile ~~an annual achievement profile~~ for each public
11 school and local education agency, AND SHALL RECOMMEND TO THE STATE BOARD
12 OF EDUCATION, AN ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE THAT CONSISTS OF AN
13 EDUCATIONAL DASHBOARD THAT REFLECTS THE ACHIEVEMENT FOR EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL
14 AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY ON THE ACADEMIC AND EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
15 INDICATORS PRESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION. THE DEPARTMENT
16 SHALL PROVIDE ANY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED BY THE STATE BOARD OF
17 EDUCATION TO MAKE FINAL ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE.

18 B. Each school, charter holder and school district shall submit to
19 the department any data that is required and requested and that is
20 necessary to compile the achievement profile. A school or local education
21 agency that fails to submit the information that is necessary is not
22 eligible to receive monies from the classroom site fund established by
23 section 15-977.

24 C. The annual achievement profile compiled by the department AND
25 RECOMMENDED TO THE BOARD shall be used to determine a standard measurement
26 of acceptable academic progress for each school and local education agency
27 and a school and local education agency classification pursuant to
28 subsection ~~F~~ G of this section. Any disclosure of educational records
29 compiled by the department of education pursuant to this section shall
30 comply with the family educational rights and privacy act of 1974 (20
31 United States Code section 1232g).

32 D. The annual achievement profile for schools and local education
33 agencies shall include, at a minimum, the following academic AND
34 EDUCATIONAL performance indicators:

35 1. Multiple measures of academic performance or other academically
36 relevant indicators of school quality that are appropriate to assess the
37 educational impact of a school during the academic year as determined by
38 the state board of education.

39 2. Academic progress on ~~statewide~~ assessments adopted pursuant to
40 ~~section~~ SECTIONS 15-741 AND 15-741.02 in English language arts and
41 mathematics.

42 3. Academic progress on the English language learner assessments
43 administered pursuant to section 15-756, subsection B and sections
44 15-756.05 and 15-756.06.

1 4. Progress toward college and career readiness for all schools and
2 local education agencies that offer instruction in any of grades nine
3 through twelve.

4 5. ACADEMIC PROGRESS ON ASSESSMENTS ADMINISTERED PURSUANT TO
5 SECTION 15-741.02.

6 6. MULTIPLE MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OR OTHER RELEVANT
7 INDICATORS OF SCHOOL QUALITY THAT ASSESS A SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL IMPACT,
8 SUCH AS GRADUATION RATES AND ATTENDANCE RATES.

9 E. IF NEITHER THE SCHOOL NOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETS THE MINIMUM
10 STUDENT COUNT AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND APPROVED BY THE STATE
11 BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR ANY OF THE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS PRESCRIBED IN
12 SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION, THEN THE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SHALL NOT BE
13 FACTORED INTO THE LETTER GRADE ASSIGNED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

14 ~~F.~~ F. Subject to final adoption by the state board of education,
15 the department shall determine the criteria for each school and local
16 education agency classification ~~table~~ ON EACH PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OF THE
17 ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE PRESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION
18 using a researched-based methodology AND SHALL RECOMMEND TO THE STATE
19 BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR FINAL ADOPTION THE CRITERIA FOR EACH SCHOOL AND
20 LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY CLASSIFICATION. The DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL
21 DEVELOP THE methodology developed in collaboration with a coalition of
22 qualified technical and policy stakeholders APPOINTED BY THE BOARD. THE
23 DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND UPON REQUEST, STUDENT OR
24 STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR DATA NEEDED TO DETERMINE AND CALCULATE THE
25 METHODOLOGY AND FINAL LETTER GRADES. ~~;~~ At a minimum, THE METHODOLOGY
26 shall include the performance of pupils at all achievement levels, account
27 for pupil mobility, account for the distribution of pupil achievement at
28 each school and local education agency and include longitudinal indicators
29 of academic performance. For the purposes of this subsection,
30 "researched-based methodology" means the systematic and objective
31 application of statistical and quantitative research principles to
32 calculate the indicators used to determine A through F letter grades.

33 ~~F.~~ G. The annual achievement profile shall ~~be used to determine a~~
34 ~~school and local education agency classification~~ USE CLASSIFICATIONS based
35 on an A through F letter grade system adopted by the state board of
36 education in which a letter grade of A reflects an excellent level of
37 performance and a letter grade of F reflects a failing level of
38 performance. THE A THROUGH F LETTER GRADE SYSTEM SHALL BE APPLIED TO EACH
39 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OF THE ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE PRESCRIBED IN
40 SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION AND SHALL ASSIGN AN OVERALL LETTER GRADE FOR
41 THE PUBLIC SCHOOL OR LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY. The A through F letter grade
42 system shall indicate expected standards of performance for all schools ON
43 EACH PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OF THE ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE PRESCRIBED IN
44 SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION and the manner in which schools may rise
45 above or fall below those expected standards of performance. The state

1 board of education may also assign a school a letter grade of F ON EACH
2 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OF THE ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE PRESCRIBED IN
3 SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION if the state board of education determines
4 that the school is among the "persistently lowest-achieving schools" in
5 the state ON THE MAJORITY OF THE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OF THE ANNUAL
6 ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE under the federal school accountability requirements
7 pursuant to section 1003(g) of the elementary and secondary education act
8 (20 United States Code section 6303).

9 ~~G.~~ H. The classification ON EACH PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OF THE
10 ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE for each school and the criteria used to
11 determine classification pursuant to subsections ~~E and~~ F AND G of this
12 section shall be included on the school report card prescribed in section
13 15-746.

14 ~~H.~~ I. Subject to final adoption by the state board of education,
15 the department of education shall use achievement profiles appropriately
16 to assess the educational impact of accommodation schools, alternative
17 schools and extremely small schools, may develop profiles for schools that
18 participate in the board examination system prescribed in chapter 7,
19 article 6 of this title and schools that participate in Arizona online
20 instruction pursuant to section 15-808 and may develop other exceptions as
21 prescribed by the state board of education for the purposes of this
22 section.

23 ~~I.~~ J. The department of education shall establish a process,
24 INCLUDING A DEADLINE FOR WHEN REQUESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED, for a school or
25 local education agency to correct student data used to determine the
26 school's or local education agency's annual achievement profile. IF A
27 CORRECTION TO STUDENT DATA IS REQUIRED, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOTIFY THE
28 SCHOOL OR LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY OF THE DATA CORRECTION PROCESS AND SHALL
29 ANNUALLY PROCESS STUDENT DATA CORRECTION REQUESTS. The state board of
30 education shall establish an appeals process to allow a school or local
31 education agency to appeal the school's or local education agency's final
32 letter grade, OR A LETTER GRADE APPLIED TO A PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
33 PRESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION D OF THIS SECTION, based on mitigating factors,
34 INCLUDING ACHIEVEMENT PROFILE DESIGNATIONS BASED ON INCORRECT DATA,
35 identified by the board DEPARTMENT. ~~The board may delegate the~~
36 ~~administration of the appeals process to the department of education.~~

37 ~~J.~~ K. The failing schools tutoring fund is established consisting
38 of monies collected pursuant to section 42-5029, subsection E and section
39 42-5029.02, subsection A, paragraph 8 as designated for this purpose. The
40 department of education shall administer the fund. The department of
41 education may use monies from the fund to purchase materials designed to
42 assist students to meet the Arizona academic standards and to achieve a
43 passing score on assessments adopted by the state board of education.

44 ~~K.~~ L. For the purposes of this section, "academic progress" means
45 measures of both proficiency and academic gain.

1 sponsoring board and explain why the improvement plan has not been
2 submitted.

3 D. If a school is assigned a letter grade of D pursuant to section
4 15-241 for a third consecutive year, the department of education shall
5 visit the school site to confirm the classification data and to review the
6 implementation of the school's improvement plan. The school shall be
7 assigned a letter grade of F unless an alternate letter grade is assigned
8 after an appeal pursuant to section 15-241, subsection ~~F~~ J. A school that
9 is assigned a letter grade of D for fewer than three consecutive years may
10 also be assigned a letter grade of F if the state board of education
11 determines that there is no reasonable likelihood that the school will
12 achieve an average level of performance within the next two years.

13 E. The superintendent of public instruction and the county
14 educational service agency shall collaborate to assign a solutions team to
15 a school assigned a letter grade of D pursuant to section 15-241 or a
16 school assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 based on
17 academic need and available resources. County educational service
18 agencies may enter into agreements to provide services to schools from
19 other counties. Any other school, subject to available resources, may be
20 assigned a solutions team pursuant to a mutual agreement between the
21 department of education or the county education service agency, or both,
22 and the school. The solutions team shall be composed of master teachers,
23 fiscal analysts and curriculum assessment experts who are certified by the
24 state board of education as Arizona academic standards technicians. The
25 department of education or the county educational service agency may hire
26 or contract with administrators, principals and teachers who have
27 demonstrated experience in improving academic outcomes and may use these
28 personnel as part of the solutions team. The department of education shall
29 work with staff at the school to assist in curricula alignment and shall
30 instruct teachers on how to increase pupil academic progress, considering
31 the school's annual achievement profile. The solutions team shall
32 consider the existing improvement plan to assess the need for changes to
33 curricula, professional development and resource allocation and shall
34 present a statement of its findings to the school administrator and
35 district superintendent. Within forty-five days after the presentation of
36 the solutions team's statement of findings, the school district governing
37 board, in cooperation with each school within the school district that is
38 assigned a letter grade of D and its assigned solutions team
39 representative, shall develop and submit to the department of education
40 and the county educational service agency an action plan that details the
41 manner in which the school district will assist the school as the school
42 incorporates the findings of the solutions team into the improvement plan.
43 The department of education shall review the action plan and shall either
44 accept the action plan or return the action plan to the school district
45 for modification. If the school district does not submit an approved

1 action plan within forty-five days, the state board of education may
2 direct the superintendent of public instruction to withhold up to ten
3 percent of state monies that the school district would otherwise be
4 entitled to receive each month until the plan is submitted to the
5 department of education and the county educational service agency, at
6 which time those monies shall be returned to the school district.

7 F. The parent or guardian of a pupil may apply to the department of
8 education, in a manner determined by the department of education, for a
9 certificate of supplemental instruction from the failing schools tutoring
10 fund established by section 15-241. Pupils attending a school assigned a
11 letter grade of D or F may select an alternative tutoring program in
12 academic standards from a provider that is certified by the state board of
13 education. To qualify, the provider must state in writing a level of
14 academic improvement for the pupil that includes a timeline for
15 improvement that is agreed to by the parent or guardian of the pupil. The
16 state board of education shall annually review academic performance levels
17 for certified providers and may remove a provider at a public hearing from
18 an approved list of providers if that provider fails to meet its stated
19 level of academic improvement. The state board of education shall
20 determine the application guidelines and the maximum value for each
21 certificate of supplemental instruction. The state board of education
22 shall annually complete a market survey in order to determine the maximum
23 value for each certificate of supplemental instruction. This subsection
24 does not require this state to provide additional monies beyond the monies
25 provided pursuant to section 42-5029, subsection E, paragraph 7 or section
26 42-5029.02, subsection A, paragraph 7.

27 G. Within sixty days after receiving notification of a school being
28 assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241, the school
29 district governing board shall evaluate needed changes to the existing
30 school improvement plan, consider recommendations from the solutions team,
31 submit a copy of the plan to the superintendent of public instruction and
32 the county educational service agency and supervise the implementation of
33 the plan. Within thirty days after submitting the improvement plan to the
34 superintendent of public instruction and the county educational service
35 agency, the governing board shall hold a public meeting in each school
36 that has been assigned a letter grade of F and shall present the
37 respective improvement plans that have been developed for each school.
38 The governing board, within thirty days after receiving notice of the
39 classification, shall provide written notification of the classification
40 to each residence in the attendance area of the school. The notice shall
41 explain the improvement plan process and provide information regarding the
42 public meeting required by this subsection.

43 H. A school that has not submitted an improvement plan pursuant to
44 subsection G of this section is not eligible to receive monies from the
45 classroom site fund established by section 15-977 for every day that a

1 plan has not been received by the superintendent of public instruction
2 within the time specified in subsection G of this section plus an
3 additional ninety days. The state board of education shall require the
4 superintendent of the school district to testify before the board and
5 explain the reasons that an improvement plan for that school has not been
6 submitted.

7 I. If a charter school is assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to
8 section 15-241, the department of education shall immediately notify the
9 charter school's sponsor. The charter school's sponsor shall either take
10 action to restore the charter school to acceptable performance or revoke
11 the charter school's charter. Within thirty days, the charter school
12 shall notify the parents of the students attending the school of the
13 classification and of any pending public meetings to review the issue.

14 J. The department of education shall evaluate a school that has
15 been assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 to determine
16 whether the school, charter holder or school district failed to properly
17 implement its school improvement plan, align the curricula with academic
18 standards, provide teacher training, prioritize the budget or implement
19 other proven strategies to improve academic performance. After visiting
20 the school site pursuant to subsection D of this section, the department
21 of education shall submit to the state board of education a recommendation
22 either to proceed pursuant to subsections E, F and G of this section or
23 that the school be subject to a public hearing to determine whether the
24 school failed to properly implement its improvement plan and the reasons
25 for the department's recommendation. If the school is a charter school,
26 the department shall submit a report to the sponsor of the charter school.
27 The sponsor shall make a determination pursuant to subsection N of this
28 section.

29 K. If the department recommends a public hearing, the state board
30 of education shall meet and may provide by a majority vote at the public
31 hearing for the continued operation of the school as allowed by this
32 subsection. The state board of education shall determine whether
33 governmental, nonprofit and private organizations may submit applications
34 to the state board to fully or partially manage the school. The state
35 board's determination shall include:

36 1. Whether and to what extent the local governing board may
37 participate in the operation of the school, including personnel matters.

38 2. Whether and to what extent the state board will participate in
39 the operation of the school.

40 3. Resource allocation pursuant to subsection M of this section.

41 4. Provisions for the development and submittal of a school
42 improvement plan to be presented in a public meeting at the school.

43 5. A suggested time frame for the alternative operation of the
44 school.

1 L. The state board of education shall periodically review the
2 status of a school that is operated by an organization other than the
3 school district governing board to determine whether the operation of the
4 school should be returned to the school district governing board. Before
5 the state board makes a determination, the state board or its designee
6 shall meet with the school district governing board or its designee to
7 determine the time frame, operational considerations and appropriate
8 continuation of existing improvements that are necessary to ensure a
9 smooth transition of authority from the other organization back to the
10 school district governing board.

11 M. If an alternative operation plan is provided pursuant to
12 subsection K of this section, the state board of education shall pay for
13 the operation of the school and shall adjust the school district's
14 district additional assistance pursuant to section 15-961, base support
15 level pursuant to section 15-943, monies distributed from the classroom
16 site fund established by section 15-977 and transportation support level
17 pursuant to section 15-945 to accurately reflect any reduction in district
18 services that are no longer provided to that school by the district. The
19 state board may modify the school district's revenue control limit, the
20 district support level and the general budget limit calculated pursuant to
21 section 15-947 by an amount that corresponds to this reduction in
22 services. The state board shall retain the portion of state aid that
23 would otherwise be due the school district for the school and shall
24 distribute that portion of state aid directly to the organization that
25 contracts with the state board to operate the school.

26 N. If the sponsor of a charter school determines that a charter
27 holder failed to properly implement its improvement plan, the sponsor of
28 the charter school shall revoke the charter school's charter.

29 O. If there are more than two schools in a district and more than
30 one-half, or in any case more than five, of the schools in the district
31 are assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 for more than
32 two consecutive years, in the next election of governing board members the
33 election ballot shall contain the following statement immediately above
34 the listing of governing board candidates:

35 Within the last five years, (number of schools) schools
36 in the _____ school district have been assigned a letter
37 grade of D or F.

38 P. At least twice each year the department of education shall
39 publish in a newspaper of general circulation in each county of this state
40 a list of schools that are assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to
41 section 15-241.

42 Q. The state board of education shall adopt guidelines to include
43 supplementary training in reading instruction for teachers who provide
44 instruction to pupils in a kindergarten program or grade one, two or three
45 in an improvement plan pursuant to subsection A of this section.

1 R. In addition to any other corrective procedures prescribed in
2 this section and sections 15-241 and 15-241.01, a school that has been
3 assigned a letter grade of D or F for two consecutive years shall
4 implement a science, technology, engineering and mathematics intervention
5 strategy under the supervision of the state board of education.

6 S. In addition to any other corrective procedures prescribed in
7 this section, a school district that has been assigned a letter grade of D
8 or F pursuant to section 15-241 for two consecutive years shall implement
9 a parent involvement strategy. The parent involvement strategy shall be
10 included in the school improvement plan for each applicable school within
11 the district, as prescribed in subsection A or G of this section, as
12 applicable.

13 T. The department of education shall publish criteria for a
14 school's or school district's exit status from a previous assignment of a
15 letter grade of F in accordance with this section. The criteria shall
16 prescribe the actions and results necessary to be deemed to have complied
17 with this section regarding school improvement, including the proper
18 implementation of a school improvement plan pursuant to subsection J of
19 this section. These criteria shall be provided to a school or school
20 district if it is assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR MAY 2, 2018.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE MAY 2, 2018.



STATE OF ARIZONA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

<p>ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION</p> <p>By</p> <p>MARK BRNOVICH ATTORNEY GENERAL</p> <p>July 25, 2018</p>	<p>No. I18-007 (R17-015)</p> <p>Re: Whether Arizona's A through F School Accountability Plan may implement a floating weight or impact indicator system</p>
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To: Paul Boyer
Arizona House of Representatives

Question Presented

Can the Arizona State Board of Education include "floating weights" within its A through F School Accountability Plan?

Summary Answer

Yes. Under previous federal regulations, floating weights were not permitted to be used in States' school accountability plans. Congress, however, subsequently disapproved those regulations pursuant to the Congressional Review Act. Presently, no federal regulation governs the question and the relevant federal and state statutes do not bar floating weights. Thus, the State Board of Education may choose to include floating weights within its A through F School Accountability Plan.

Background

In 2016, the Arizona Legislature substantially amended Arizona Revised Statutes (“A.R.S.”) § 15-241 governing public school and local education agency (“LEA”) accountability. Section 15-241 requires the Arizona Department of Education (the “Department”) to “compile an annual achievement profile for each public school” and LEA that “shall be used to determine a standard measurement of acceptable academic progress.” A.R.S. § 15-241(A), (C).

The annual achievement profile is used to give each school and LEA an A through F letter grade. A.R.S. § 15-241(F). The Department determines the criteria used to compile the annual achievement profile, subject to final adoption by the State Board of Education (the “State Board”), using a “researched-based methodology.” A.R.S. § 15-241(E). The statute directs the Department to develop the methodology “in collaboration with a coalition of qualified technical and policy stakeholders” and to “include the performance of pupils at all achievement levels, account for pupil mobility, account for the distribution of pupil achievement at each school and [LEA] and include longitudinal indicators of academic performance.” *Id.*

The A through F letter grade system takes into account both the academic proficiency of students in a school or LEA and their growth or improvement. These factors may be weighted equally across all schools or differently at each school, based on the characteristics of a school’s student body. The latter system is referred to as a “floating weight” system. In a floating weight system, growth may be weighted more heavily if most of a school’s students are behind and need to reach proficiency. For another school, proficiency may be weighted more heavily if most of

that school’s students are proficient at the beginning of the measurement period. Thus, the weight “floats” between growth and proficiency based on the characteristics of a school.¹

When the State Board was considering the criteria for the A through F School Accountability Plan in early 2017, a recently adopted federal regulation required that States, “[w]ithin each grade span, afford the same relative weight to each indicator among all schools” Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act—Accountability and State Plans, 81 Fed. Reg. 86076-01, 86227 (Nov. 29, 2016) (Notice of Final Rulemaking re *inter alia* 34 C.F.R. § 200.18(b)(3)) (the “2016 Version of § 200.18”). Under this regulation, States could not incorporate a floating weight system into their school accountability plans. Congress, however, disapproved that regulation on March 27, 2017, pursuant to the Congressional Review Act and it did not take effect. Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Pub. L. No. 115-13, 131 Stat 77 (2017); *see also* 5 U.S.C. § 801(b)(1). The United States Department of Education has since promulgated rules that reinstate the version of the rule in existence before the Congressional disapproval of the 2016 Version of § 200.18. *See* 82 Fed. Reg. 31690-01, 31692 (July 7, 2017).

Analysis

I. ARIZONA LAW REGARDING THE A THROUGH F SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN DOES NOT ADDRESS USE OF FLOATING WEIGHTS.

Arizona Revised Statutes § 15-241 governs the components of each school or LEA’s annual achievement profile, which is used to assign A through F letter grades. A.R.S. § 15-241(F) (“The annual achievement profile shall be used to determine a school and [LEA] classification based on an A through F letter grade system adopted by the state board of

¹ “Academic progress” means “measures of both proficiency and academic gain.” A.R.S. § 15-241(K). For purposes of this Opinion, “growth” has the same meaning as academic gain.

education.”).² The annual achievement profile must include the following academic performance indicators: “[m]ultiple measures of academic performance . . . as determined by the state board of education,” “[a]cademic progress on statewide assessments . . . in English language arts and mathematics,” “[a]cademic progress on . . . English language learner assessments,” and “[p]rogress toward college and career readiness for all schools and [LEAs] that offer instruction in any of grades nine through twelve.” A.R.S. § 15-241(D). Subject to adoption by the State Board, the Department is responsible for “determin[ing] the criteria for each school and [LEA] classification label using a researched-based methodology.” A.R.S. § 15-241(E). “The methodology developed . . . shall include the performance of pupils at all achievement levels, account for pupil mobility, account for the distribution of pupil achievement at each school and [LEA] and include longitudinal indicators of academic performance.” *Id.*

Nothing in A.R.S. § 15-241, however, addresses the weight to be assigned to any of the academic performance or progress indicators included in the annual achievement profile. Nor does the statute address whether the weights assigned must be the same from school to school. In short, if “systematic and objective application of statistical and quantitative research principles” support the use of floating weights, the State Board may incorporate them into the A through F School Accountability Plan. *Id.* (defining “researched-based methodology”).

II. CURRENT FEDERAL REGULATIONS DO NOT BAR USE OF FLOATING WEIGHTS IN THE A THROUGH F SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, provides federal funding to state educational agencies. One of the requirements for this funding is submission of a state plan that meets the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 6311.

² In 2018, the Legislature further amended A.R.S. § 15-241. *See* 2018 Ariz. Sess. Laws ch. 275, § 1. Those changes, which will become effective on or about August 3, 2018, do not affect the analysis in this Opinion.

The state plan “shall demonstrate that the State educational agency, in consultation with local educational agencies, has implemented a set of high-quality student academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science.” 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2)(A). 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2) sets forth detailed requirements for these academic assessments. It does not, however, address the issue of floating weights.

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education proposed a revised regulation, 34 C.F.R. § 200.18, to implement 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2). The regulation would have barred floating weights,³ but Congress rejected the agency’s proposal. Under the Congressional Review Act, an agency promulgating a rule must submit to Congress: (1) “a copy of the rule,” (2) a concise general statement relating to the rule,” and (3) “the proposed effective date of the rule.” 5 U.S.C. § 801(a)(1)(A)(i)–(iii). Within 60 days of submission to Congress, a majority of both Houses may enact a “joint resolution of disapproval” of the proposed regulation. 5 U.S.C. § 801(b)(1). The effect of such disapproval is that the regulation “shall have no force or effect.” 5 U.S.C. § 802(a). That is exactly what happened with the 2016 Version of § 200.18. Pub. L. No. 115-13, 131 Stat 77 (2017). As a result, the prior version of the regulation is again in effect and the U.S. Department of Education is barred from reissuing its revised regulation “in substantially the same form.” 5 U.S.C. § 801(b)(2).

The Congressional Review Act’s effect on the Department of Education’s proposed 2016 regulation resolves the question presented in this Opinion. Because Congress rejected the

³ As previously mentioned, the 2016 Version of § 200.18(b)(3) provided that States must “[w]ithin each grade span, afford the same relative weight to each indicator among all schools.” 81 Fed. Reg. 86076-01, 86227 (Nov. 29, 2016). In its response to comments on the 2016 Version of § 200.18, the Department of Education stated that the regulation required uniform weighting of indicators within each grade span because without it, “the methodology for differentiating schools and identifying them for support and improvement could be unreliable from district to district, or worse, biased against particular schools or set lower expectations for certain schools, based on the population of students they serve.” *Id.* at 86130.

Department of Education's only proposed prohibition on floating weights, neither the current version of 34 C.F.R. § 200.18 nor the statute that it implements, 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2), presents any barrier to the use of floating weights.

Conclusion

In sum, the State Board, with the assistance of the Department, has discretion and authority to adopt an A through F School Accountability Plan that meets the requirements of A.R.S. § 15-241. Neither that statute nor federal law governing such plans bars the use of floating weights as a component of the plan. As such, if floating weights are supported by a researched-based methodology, the State Board has discretion to incorporate them into its A through F School Accountability Plan.

Mark Brnovich
Attorney General

ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS THE STATES

May 10, 2018

Julie Woods & Alyssa Rafa



**EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES**

Your education policy team.



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How we do it



RESEARCH



REPORT



COUNSEL



CONVENE

Outline

- **Accountability: Big Picture**
 - ◆ History
 - ◆ Multiple Systems, Purposes & Users

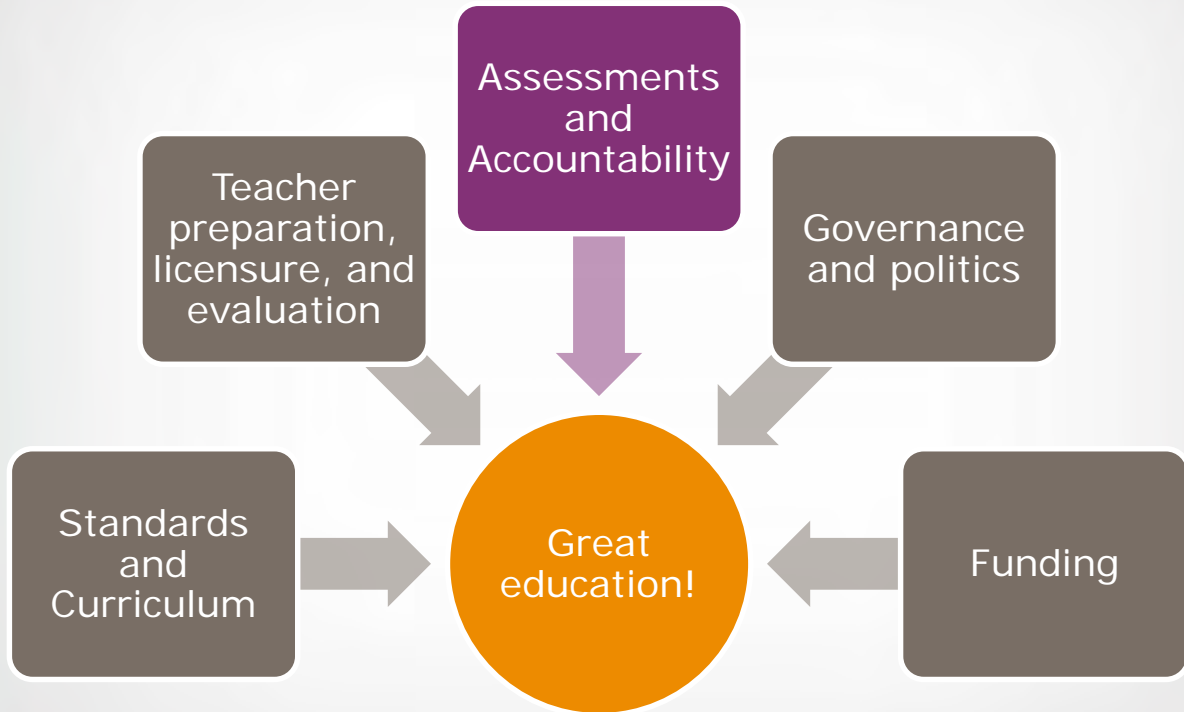
- Measuring Outcomes
 - ◆ ESSA Requirements
 - ◆ Common Measures
 - ◆ Common Ratings

- Implementation Details & Challenges
 - ◆ N-sizes and student subgroups
 - ◆ Poverty and performance links
 - ◆ Accountability and funding links

What makes a great school?



What are we talking about?



National History

- No Child Left Behind Era 2002-2015
 - ◆ Inputs→Outcomes
 - ◆ Adequate Yearly Progress
 - ◆ Unintended Consequences
 - ◆ Waivers
- Every Student Succeeds Act 2015-Present
 - ◆ State Flexibility
 - ◆ Regulations Rescinded
 - ◆ State Plan Approvals—where are we now?

Arizona's Accountability History

2000: AZLEARNS

2010: Passed A-F Law

2015: 2-year Transition Period

2016: Ad Hoc Committee

2017: ESSA State Plan Approval

Multiple Systems

Key differences between accountability and accreditation

Accreditation systems:

- ✓ Used by 26 states in some form
- ✓ Certify that schools meet specific operations, programs and sometimes performance standards
- ✓ Tend to include input such as student-teacher ratios and physical classroom size
- ✓ Typically focus on individual schools, although some states accredit districts
- ✓ Typically crafted and overseen by state boards of education

Accountability systems:

- ✓ Used by all states in some form
- ✓ Include academic standards, assessments, rewards and sanctions
- ✓ Typically focus on both schools and districts
- ✓ Typically driven by state legislatures

New Jersey is using the shift from *NCLB* to *ESSA* as an opportunity to align its accountability and support systems to more accurately and fairly measure student, school and district performance.

Current:



Path forward:



Through this realignment and redesign, New Jersey will:

- Ensure that accountability and supports systems are aligned but not duplicated
- Remove overly burdensome practices that do not directly support student success
- Provide communities with a more comprehensive overview of their district's and school's attributes

Source: New Jersey ESSA plan submission, 2017

Multiple Purposes & Users

- School Performance

- ◆ Measure
- ◆ Report
- ◆ Improve



Balancing Tradeoffs

Simplicity for the sake of transparency ↔ Complexity for the sake of honoring multiple facets of student performance

Goals based on current performance ↔ Aspirational goals

Limited number of targets (at summative level) ↔ Multiple targets (at indicator level)

Single summative rating ↔ Multiple summative ratings ↔ No summative rating

Indicators for reporting ↔ Indicators for accountability

Single year ↔ Multiple year

Inputs ↔ Outcomes

Status ↔ Improvement

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers, 2016

Indicators in Multiple Systems

Table 1
Types of Indicators That May Be Included in an Accountability and Improvement System

Federal indicators, used for federal and state accountability	Measures used for monitoring and identifying schools for intervention as required by ESSA. Data must meet ESSA's requirements for being valid and reliable, and for meaningfully differentiating schools statewide, as well as being disaggregated by student subgroup.
State-reported indicators, used for state and local information and improvement	Measures publicly available in a comparable way across districts and schools to inform ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement processes. May be used to inform state or regional support (but not to identify schools for intervention in the federally required system).
State-supported indicators, used for local information and improvement	Tools and measures provided by the state that districts or schools may choose to use to evaluate, monitor, and improve school and classroom practices and student learning.
Locally selected indicators, used for local information and improvement	Measures schools and districts may develop or select and adopt for their own purposes to guide their monitoring and improvement efforts.

Source: Adapted from *Preparing all students for college, career, life, and leadership in the 21st century: Superintendent's Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement*, 2016, California Department of Education.

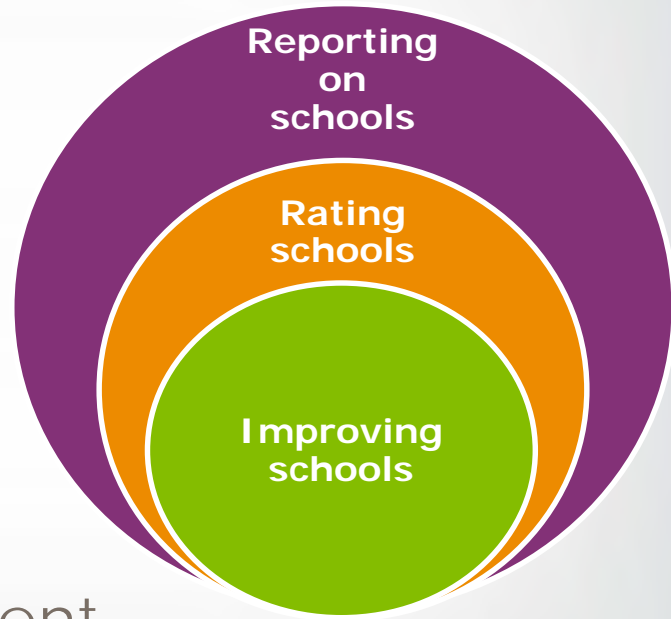
Source: Learning Policy Institute, 2017

Outline

- Accountability: Big Picture
 - ◆ History
 - ◆ Multiple Systems, Purposes & Users
- **Measuring Outcomes**
 - ◆ ESSA Requirements
 - ◆ Common Measures
 - ◆ Common Rating Systems
- Implementation Details & Challenges
 - ◆ N-sizes and student subgroups
 - ◆ Poverty and performance links
 - ◆ Accountability and funding links

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- State & local report cards
- “System of annual meaningful differentiation”
- Identify schools for support & improvement

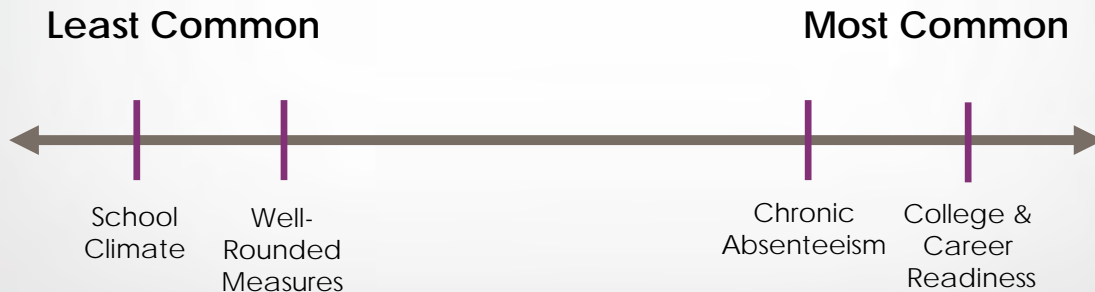


Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Accountability Indicators

- **Achievement** – math & ELA tests – ES, MS, HS
 - ◆ State option: plus growth for HS
- **Other academic indicator** – ES, MS
 - ◆ State option: growth
- **High school graduation rate** – 4-year
 - ◆ State option: plus extended year cohort rate
- **English language proficiency** – ES, MS, HS
- **School quality/student success** – ES, MS, HS
 - ◆ At least one per grade span

Common Accountability Measures

- Achievement
- Growth
- High school graduation rate
- English language proficiency/progress
- School quality/student success



Arizona's Measures & Weights

9-12 Recommendation #2 from Advisory Ad Hoc



Category	Component	Weight	Points/Percent
Proficiency	ELA, Math, and Science Proficiency (0, .6, 1.0, 1.3)	30%	30%
Growth	SGP/SGT on ELA, Math	10% SGP 10% SGT	20%
ELL	ELL Proficiency on AZELLA	5%	10%
	ELL Growth on AZELLA	5%	
College and Career Ready	Student level scoring On a variety of self reported data	20%	20%
Graduation Rate	4-year	10	20%
	5-year	8	
	6-year	5	
	7-year	1	

K-8 Recommendation from the Ad Hoc



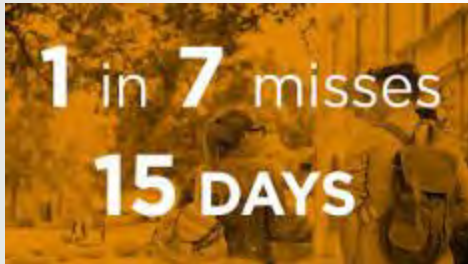
Category	Component	Weight	Points/Percent
Proficiency	ELA, Math, and Science Proficiency (0, .6, 1.0, 1.3) 3 Years FAY	30%	30%
Growth	SGP/SGT on ELA, Math	25% SGP 25% SGT	50%
ELL	ELL Proficiency on AZELLA	5%	10%
	ELL Growth on AZELLA	5%	
Acceleration /Readiness	Grades 5, 6, 7, 8 HS EOC combined, Grade 3 ELA MP, Chronic Absenteeism, Inclusion of students with high incident and low incident disabilities in general education; improved growth of subgroups	10%	10%

[2017 A-F Letter Grade Accountability System:](#)
[Traditional Schools Business Rules](#)

Compared to the Nation: Measures

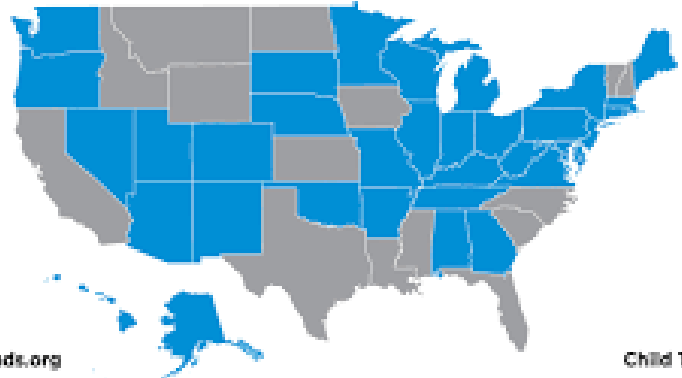
- Common measures
- School quality & student success:
 - ◆ K-8: Math scores (5-8), reading/literacy in grade 3, chronic absenteeism, inclusivity, achievement gap
 - ◆ High school: College and career readiness
- See: [ECS 50-State Accountability Database](#)

Accountability Indicators: Chronic Absenteeism



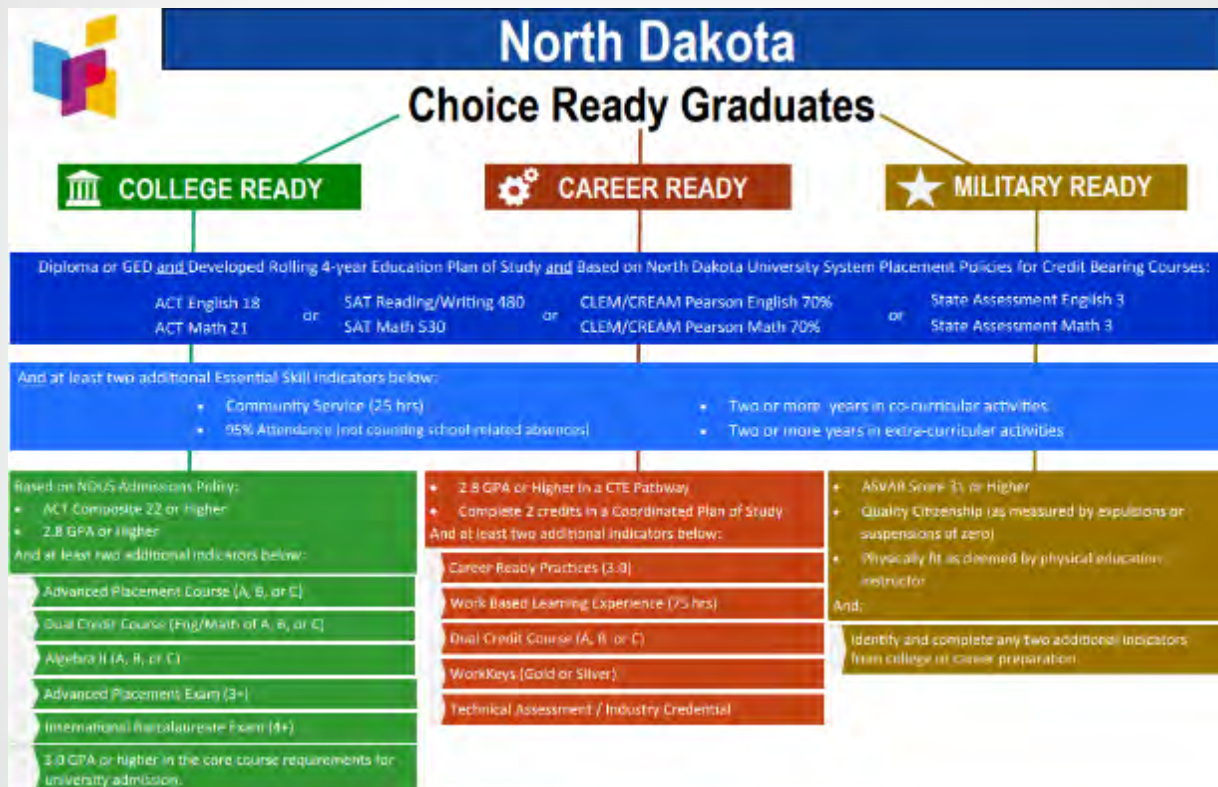
- 36 states + D.C.
- Definition
- State Nuance

Most states will use chronic absenteeism as an indicator for school quality and student success.



Child Trends' Analysis of State ESSA Plans, 2017

North Dakota "Choice Ready Graduates"



Source: North Dakota ESSA Plan, 2017

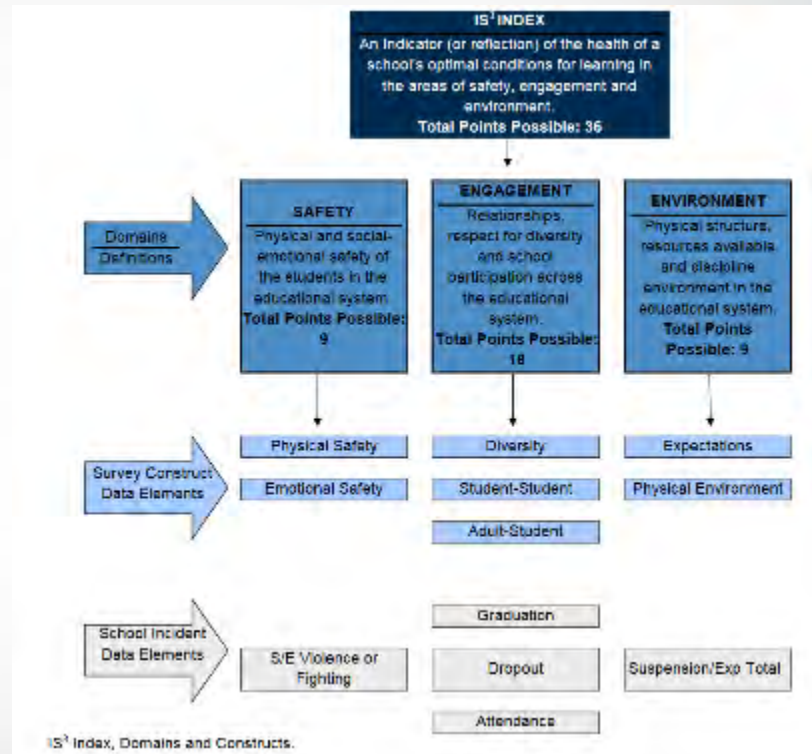
Accountability Indicators: Well-Rounded



- Science, Social Studies Proficiency
 - ◆ Approx. 17 states
- Measuring a Well-Rounded Education
 - ◆ Arts, physical fitness, civics, etc.
 - ◆ At least 9 states

Accountability Indicators: School Climate Surveys

- 6 States Measuring School Climate
- How do we measure climate?
 - ◆ Surveys
 - ◆ Outcome Measures
 - ▶ Chronic Absenteeism
 - ▶ Suspension rates



Source: Iowa ESSA Plan, 2017

Accountability Indicators: Social-Emotional Learning

Table 2
Where Measures of SEL and School Climate Might Fit in an Accountability System

	Federal indicators, used for federal and state accountability	State-reported indicators, used for state and local information and improvement	State-supported indicators, used for local information and improvement	Locally selected indicators, used for local information and improvement
Students' social-emotional competencies				
Student surveys of their own social-emotional competencies		*	X	X
Teachers' observations of students' social-emotional competencies			X	X
Performance assessments of students' social-emotional competencies			X	X
School climate and supports for SEL				
Student surveys of school climate, learning opportunities, and support for SEL	X	X	X	X
Teacher and/or parent surveys of school climate and conditions		X	X	X
Observations of teacher practices			X	X
School quality reviews examining school practices		X	X	X
SEL implementation rubrics			X	X
Student outcomes related to school climate and supports				
Suspension rates	X	X	X	X
Chronic absenteeism rates	X	X	X	X

* A state may choose to implement a statewide survey of school climate and learning supports that includes questions about students' social-emotional competencies. We recommend that data on these constructs be used for local information, and not for state accountability.

Source: Learning Policy Institute, 2017

Compared to the Nation: Weights

- “Much greater weight” on academic indicators
- Achievement & growth
- Other academic indicators
- School quality/student success

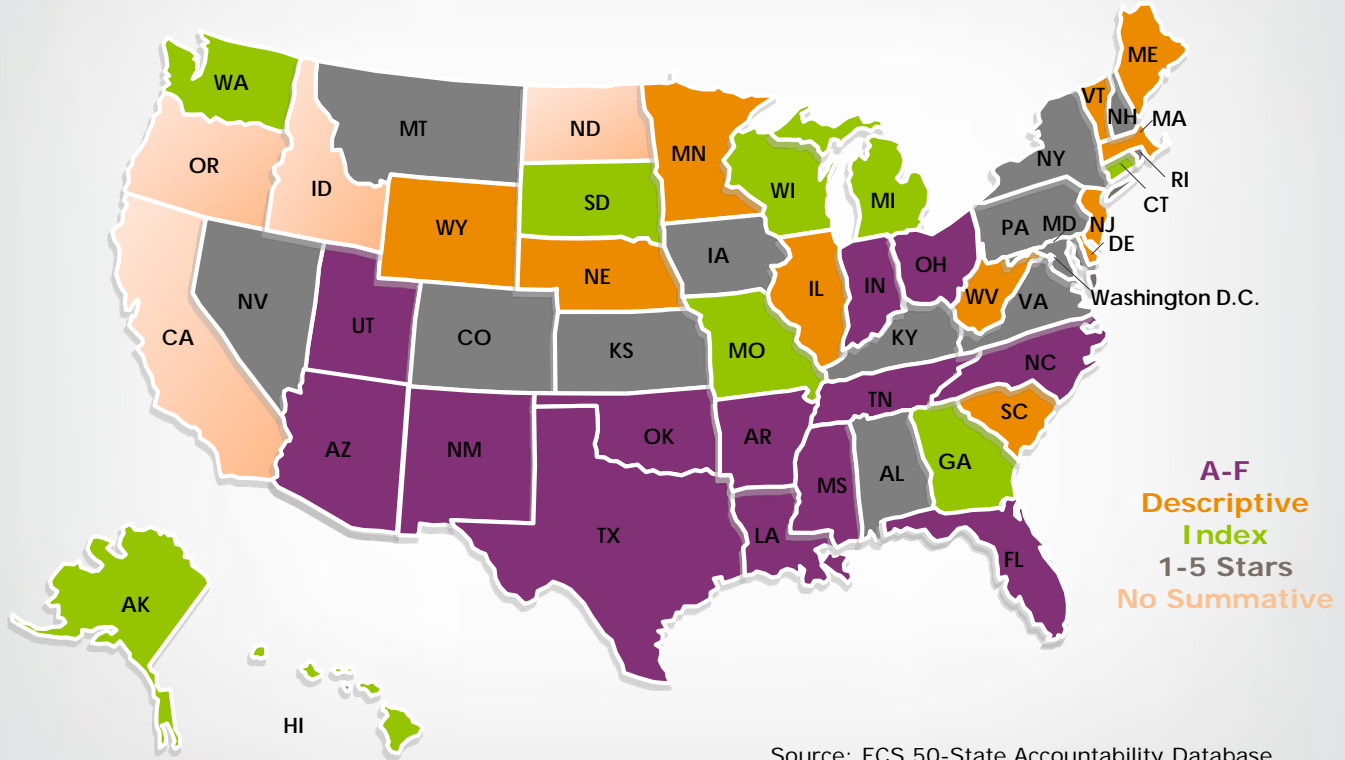


Common Rating Systems

- A-F
- Descriptive (Excellent, Average, Needs Improvement)
- Index (0-100, 1-5)
- 1-5 Stars
- Dashboard/No Summative



Common Rating Systems



School Report Cards

2016-2017

School Name Report Card

Address Street

Address City, State, Zip



OVERALL GRADE

School name performance score average component card selection during the 2016-17 school year



Teacher Growth Learning Goals



LMI



STUDENT PROFICIENCY

Students proficient in math or English language arts

34%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

C



STUDENT GROWTH

Students growth in math or English language arts

41.5%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

B



GRADUATION RATE

Students graduating or transferring to postsecondary learning institution

81%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

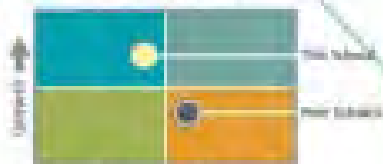
A

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS



PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

(with similar schools)



ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS

Progress of English learners toward English language proficiency

34%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

D



SCHOOL QUALITY/STUDENT SUCCESS

School quality and student success assessment

100%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

A



ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION

Students participating in statewide testing

88.35%
Component Grade

COMPONENT GRADE

A

Michigan Draft ESSA Plan: No Final Rating



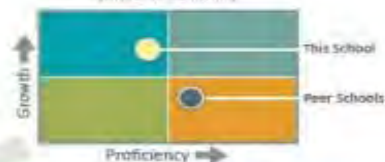
2016-2017
School Name Report Card

Address Street
Address City, State, Zip



Student Groups
Meeting Goals

PERFORMANCE COMPARISON
(with Similar Schools)



STUDENT PROFICIENCY
Students proficient in math or English language arts.

36%
PROFICIENCY RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

C



ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS
Progress of English learners toward English language proficiency.

34%
PROGRESS RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

D



STUDENT GROWTH
Student growth in math or English language arts.

41.5%
GROWTH RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

B



SCHOOL QUALITY/STUDENT SUCCESS
School quality and student success attainment.

100%
SUCCESS RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

A



GRADUATION RATE
Students graduating on time/within 4 years of first entering high school.

81%
GRADUATION RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

A



ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION
Students participating in statewide testing.

88.35%
PARTICIPATION RATE

COMPONENT GRADE

A

Michigan Draft ESSA Plan: Dashboard

2016-2017

School Name Report Card

Address Street

Address City, State, Zip



Student Groups Meeting Goals



Key Indicators



STUDENT PROFICIENCY

Students proficient in math or English language arts.

36%
SCHOOL VALUE

38%
STATE VALUE



STUDENT GROWTH

Student growth in math or English language arts.

41.5%
SCHOOL VALUE

35%
STATE VALUE



GRADUATION RATE

Students graduating on time/within 4 years of first entering high school.

81%
SCHOOL VALUE

78%
STATE VALUE



ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS

Progress of English learners toward English language proficiency.

34%
SCHOOL VALUE

40%
STATE VALUE



SCHOOL QUALITY/STUDENT SUCCESS

School quality and student success attainment.

100%
SCHOOL VALUE

90%
STATE VALUE



ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION

Students participating in statewide testing.

88.35%
SCHOOL VALUE

85%
STATE VALUE

Additional Indicators

Postsecondary Readiness



Access/Equity



School Climate/Culture



Student Factors



Educator Engagement



Advanced Coursework



Remedial enrollment

Access to technology

Climate/Student Surveys (student, parent, teacher)

Dropout rate

Professional development opportunities

AP course completion
AP test taking/Passing

Postsecondary entrance rate

Art access

Support Titles (counselors, school nurses, librarians, etc.)

Student mobility

Appropriate placement of educators

CTE program completion

Postsecondary completion rate

Early learning access in public school system

Suspension (new data collection)

Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism

Dual enrollment course completion

College-ready graduation rate from high school

Achievement gap indicators

Expulsion

Extracurriculars

IB completion

LinkCrews (Special Education)

Michigan Merit Curriculum completion

Class Size

Exploring Rating Systems & Report Cards

- What is the purpose?
 - Who is the target audience?
 - Easily accessible?
 - Understandable?
-
- Explore [California Dashboard](#)

ESSA Funding Transparency Requirement

- Per-pupil spending for each school & district
 - ◆ Includes teacher salaries
- Explore the connection between money spent and student achievement
- Challenges and opportunities
- See: [ESSA Funding Transparency](#)

Outline

- Accountability: Big Picture
 - ◆ History
 - ◆ Multiple Systems, Purposes, & Users

- Measuring Outcomes
 - ◆ ESSA Requirements
 - ◆ Common Measures
 - ◆ Common Rating Systems

- **Implementation Details & Challenges**
 - ◆ N-sizes and student subgroups
 - ◆ Poverty and performance links
 - ◆ Accountability and funding links

Challenges & Opportunities

- Data collection
- Data presentation
- Comparability, validity, reliability of metrics
- Equity and inclusion
- Incentives, rewards, and consequences

N sizes & Student Sub-groups

Minimum number (N) of students needed to form a student sub-group:

- Racial Groups
- Ethnic Groups
- SES
- Disability status
- English Learners



Source: Alliance for Excellent Education (2016)

Effect of Poverty on School Performance/Rating

Grades by School Poverty Percentage

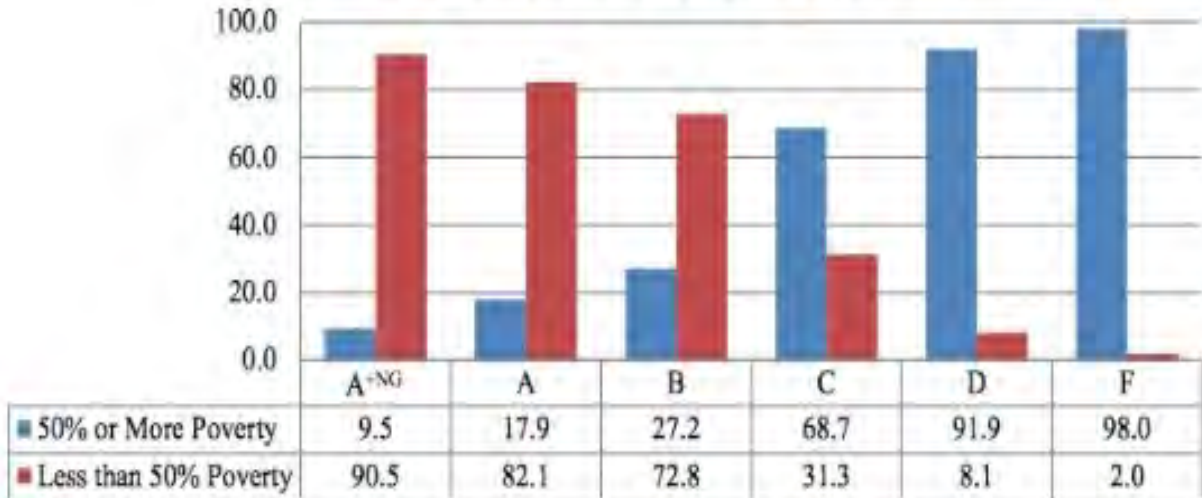


Figure 14. Bar graph showing school performance grades by school poverty percentage

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Effect of Poverty on School Performance/Rating

Table 2: Distribution of A-F school ratings on Ohio's report card components, 2015-16

	Achievement			Graduation Rate		
	A or B	C	D or F	A or B	C	D or F
Low Poverty	39%	36%	25%	97%	2%	2%
Mid Poverty	8%	30%	62%	71%	18%	11%
High Poverty	1%	5%	94%	20%	12%	68%

	Gap Closing			Prepared for Success		
	A or B	C	D or F	A or B	C	D or F
Low Poverty	21%	5%	73%	16%	63%	21%
Mid Poverty	4%	1%	96%	1%	29%	70%
High Poverty	1%	0%	99%	0%	5%	95%

	K-3 Literacy		
	A or B	C	D or F
Low Poverty	9%	24%	67%
Mid Poverty	6%	16%	78%
High Poverty	2%	5%	92%

Source: [Ohio Department of Education](#)

Note: Low Poverty = schools with 0-32.9% economically disadvantaged students (ED); Mid Poverty = 33-66% ED; High Poverty = 66.1-100% ED.

Photo: [The Fordham Institute](#)

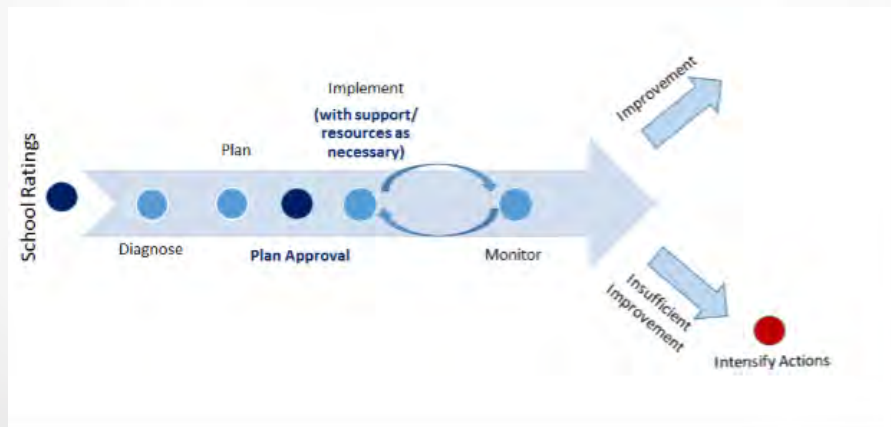
How to fairly treat high and low performers

- Financial incentives
- Growth vs. achievement



Support Low-Performing Schools

- Funding
 - ◆ Up to 7% of Title I funds
- Technical support, research, governance



Reward High-Performing Schools

Funding

- ◆ Arkansas (A.C.A. § 6-15-2107)
- ◆ Alabama (Ala. Code § 16-6C-3)
- ◆ Arizona (\$38 million for high achieving districts based only on student test scores)

Flexibility

- ◆ Tennessee (T. C. A. § 49-2-703)
- ◆ North Dakota (NDCC, 15.1-06-08.1)

Local Empowerment & Engagement

- Colorado's school and district accountability committees
 - ◆ C.R.S.A. § 22-11-402
- North Dakota's education law waiver
 - ◆ Senate Bill 2186 (2017)

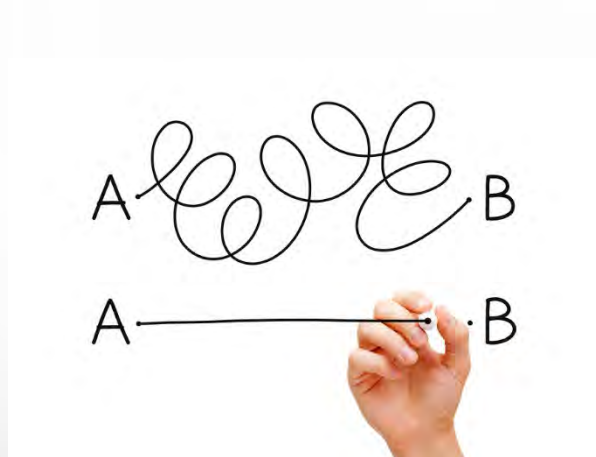
Links to Key ECS Resources

- [50-State Accountability Database](#)
- [Funding Transparency Under ESSA](#)
- [Process is Key to State Plans](#)
- [ESSA Quick Guides](#)
- [Turnaround Strategies](#)
- [Equity: Key Questions to Consider](#)

Questions?

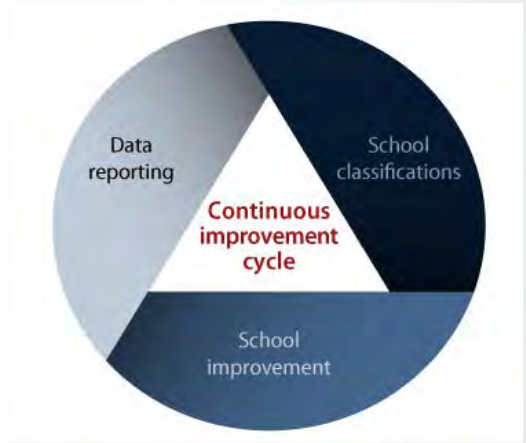
Alyssa Rafa – arafa@ecs.org

Julie Woods – jwoods@ecs.org



School Improvement & State Interventions

- What is school improvement?
- Spectrum of state intervention
 - ◆ Local \leftrightarrow State Control
- Funding & Resources



Categories of State Intervention

- School improvement plans
- Staffing changes
- Financial incentives or interventions
- Reforms to the day-to-day operations
- Governance or operational changes
- School closure

Source: REL central (2016) Summary of research on the association between state interventions in chronically low-performing schools and student achievement

1 sponsoring board and explain why the improvement plan has not been
2 submitted.

3 D. If a school is assigned a letter grade of D pursuant to section
4 15-241 for a third consecutive year, the department of education shall
5 visit the school site to confirm the classification data and to review the
6 implementation of the school's improvement plan. The school shall be
7 assigned a letter grade of F unless an alternate letter grade is assigned
8 after an appeal pursuant to section 15-241, subsection ~~†~~ J. A school that
9 is assigned a letter grade of D for fewer than three consecutive years may
10 also be assigned a letter grade of F if the state board of education
11 determines that there is no reasonable likelihood that the school will
12 achieve an average level of performance within the next two years.

13 E. The superintendent of public instruction and the county
14 educational service agency shall collaborate to assign a solutions team to
15 a school assigned a letter grade of D pursuant to section 15-241 or a
16 school assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 based on
17 academic need and available resources. County educational service
18 agencies may enter into agreements to provide services to schools from
19 other counties. Any other school, subject to available resources, may be
20 assigned a solutions team pursuant to a mutual agreement between the
21 department of education or the county education service agency, or both,
22 and the school. The solutions team shall be composed of master teachers,
23 fiscal analysts and curriculum assessment experts who are certified by the
24 state board of education as Arizona academic standards technicians. The
25 department of education or the county educational service agency may hire
26 or contract with administrators, principals and teachers who have
27 demonstrated experience in improving academic outcomes and may use these
28 personnel as part of the solutions team. The department of education shall
29 work with staff at the school to assist in curricula alignment and shall
30 instruct teachers on how to increase pupil academic progress, considering
31 the school's annual achievement profile. The solutions team shall
32 consider the existing improvement plan to assess the need for changes to
33 curricula, professional development and resource allocation and shall
34 present a statement of its findings to the school administrator and
35 district superintendent. Within forty-five days after the presentation of
36 the solutions team's statement of findings, the school district governing
37 board, in cooperation with each school within the school district that is
38 assigned a letter grade of D and its assigned solutions team
39 representative, shall develop and submit to the department of education
40 and the county educational service agency an action plan that details the
41 manner in which the school district will assist the school as the school
42 incorporates the findings of the solutions team into the improvement plan.
43 The department of education shall review the action plan and shall either
44 accept the action plan or return the action plan to the school district
45 for modification. If the school district does not submit an approved

1 action plan within forty-five days, the state board of education may
2 direct the superintendent of public instruction to withhold up to ten
3 percent of state monies that the school district would otherwise be
4 entitled to receive each month until the plan is submitted to the
5 department of education and the county educational service agency, at
6 which time those monies shall be returned to the school district.

7 F. The parent or guardian of a pupil may apply to the department of
8 education, in a manner determined by the department of education, for a
9 certificate of supplemental instruction from the failing schools tutoring
10 fund established by section 15-241. Pupils attending a school assigned a
11 letter grade of D or F may select an alternative tutoring program in
12 academic standards from a provider that is certified by the state board of
13 education. To qualify, the provider must state in writing a level of
14 academic improvement for the pupil that includes a timeline for
15 improvement that is agreed to by the parent or guardian of the pupil. The
16 state board of education shall annually review academic performance levels
17 for certified providers and may remove a provider at a public hearing from
18 an approved list of providers if that provider fails to meet its stated
19 level of academic improvement. The state board of education shall
20 determine the application guidelines and the maximum value for each
21 certificate of supplemental instruction. The state board of education
22 shall annually complete a market survey in order to determine the maximum
23 value for each certificate of supplemental instruction. This subsection
24 does not require this state to provide additional monies beyond the monies
25 provided pursuant to section 42-5029, subsection E, paragraph 7 or section
26 42-5029.02, subsection A, paragraph 7.

27 G. Within sixty days after receiving notification of a school being
28 assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241, the school
29 district governing board shall evaluate needed changes to the existing
30 school improvement plan, consider recommendations from the solutions team,
31 submit a copy of the plan to the superintendent of public instruction and
32 the county educational service agency and supervise the implementation of
33 the plan. Within thirty days after submitting the improvement plan to the
34 superintendent of public instruction and the county educational service
35 agency, the governing board shall hold a public meeting in each school
36 that has been assigned a letter grade of F and shall present the
37 respective improvement plans that have been developed for each school.
38 The governing board, within thirty days after receiving notice of the
39 classification, shall provide written notification of the classification
40 to each residence in the attendance area of the school. The notice shall
41 explain the improvement plan process and provide information regarding the
42 public meeting required by this subsection.

43 H. A school that has not submitted an improvement plan pursuant to
44 subsection G of this section is not eligible to receive monies from the
45 classroom site fund established by section 15-977 for every day that a

1 plan has not been received by the superintendent of public instruction
2 within the time specified in subsection G of this section plus an
3 additional ninety days. The state board of education shall require the
4 superintendent of the school district to testify before the board and
5 explain the reasons that an improvement plan for that school has not been
6 submitted.

7 I. If a charter school is assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to
8 section 15-241, the department of education shall immediately notify the
9 charter school's sponsor. The charter school's sponsor shall either take
10 action to restore the charter school to acceptable performance or revoke
11 the charter school's charter. Within thirty days, the charter school
12 shall notify the parents of the students attending the school of the
13 classification and of any pending public meetings to review the issue.

14 J. The department of education shall evaluate a school that has
15 been assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 to determine
16 whether the school, charter holder or school district failed to properly
17 implement its school improvement plan, align the curricula with academic
18 standards, provide teacher training, prioritize the budget or implement
19 other proven strategies to improve academic performance. After visiting
20 the school site pursuant to subsection D of this section, the department
21 of education shall submit to the state board of education a recommendation
22 either to proceed pursuant to subsections E, F and G of this section or
23 that the school be subject to a public hearing to determine whether the
24 school failed to properly implement its improvement plan and the reasons
25 for the department's recommendation. If the school is a charter school,
26 the department shall submit a report to the sponsor of the charter school.
27 The sponsor shall make a determination pursuant to subsection N of this
28 section.

29 K. If the department recommends a public hearing, the state board
30 of education shall meet and may provide by a majority vote at the public
31 hearing for the continued operation of the school as allowed by this
32 subsection. The state board of education shall determine whether
33 governmental, nonprofit and private organizations may submit applications
34 to the state board to fully or partially manage the school. The state
35 board's determination shall include:

36 1. Whether and to what extent the local governing board may
37 participate in the operation of the school, including personnel matters.

38 2. Whether and to what extent the state board will participate in
39 the operation of the school.

40 3. Resource allocation pursuant to subsection M of this section.

41 4. Provisions for the development and submittal of a school
42 improvement plan to be presented in a public meeting at the school.

43 5. A suggested time frame for the alternative operation of the
44 school.

1 L. The state board of education shall periodically review the
2 status of a school that is operated by an organization other than the
3 school district governing board to determine whether the operation of the
4 school should be returned to the school district governing board. Before
5 the state board makes a determination, the state board or its designee
6 shall meet with the school district governing board or its designee to
7 determine the time frame, operational considerations and appropriate
8 continuation of existing improvements that are necessary to ensure a
9 smooth transition of authority from the other organization back to the
10 school district governing board.

11 M. If an alternative operation plan is provided pursuant to
12 subsection K of this section, the state board of education shall pay for
13 the operation of the school and shall adjust the school district's
14 district additional assistance pursuant to section 15-961, base support
15 level pursuant to section 15-943, monies distributed from the classroom
16 site fund established by section 15-977 and transportation support level
17 pursuant to section 15-945 to accurately reflect any reduction in district
18 services that are no longer provided to that school by the district. The
19 state board may modify the school district's revenue control limit, the
20 district support level and the general budget limit calculated pursuant to
21 section 15-947 by an amount that corresponds to this reduction in
22 services. The state board shall retain the portion of state aid that
23 would otherwise be due the school district for the school and shall
24 distribute that portion of state aid directly to the organization that
25 contracts with the state board to operate the school.

26 N. If the sponsor of a charter school determines that a charter
27 holder failed to properly implement its improvement plan, the sponsor of
28 the charter school shall revoke the charter school's charter.

29 O. If there are more than two schools in a district and more than
30 one-half, or in any case more than five, of the schools in the district
31 are assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241 for more than
32 two consecutive years, in the next election of governing board members the
33 election ballot shall contain the following statement immediately above
34 the listing of governing board candidates:

35 Within the last five years, (number of schools) schools
36 in the _____ school district have been assigned a letter
37 grade of D or F.

38 P. At least twice each year the department of education shall
39 publish in a newspaper of general circulation in each county of this state
40 a list of schools that are assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to
41 section 15-241.

42 Q. The state board of education shall adopt guidelines to include
43 supplementary training in reading instruction for teachers who provide
44 instruction to pupils in a kindergarten program or grade one, two or three
45 in an improvement plan pursuant to subsection A of this section.

1 R. In addition to any other corrective procedures prescribed in
2 this section and sections 15-241 and 15-241.01, a school that has been
3 assigned a letter grade of D or F for two consecutive years shall
4 implement a science, technology, engineering and mathematics intervention
5 strategy under the supervision of the state board of education.

6 S. In addition to any other corrective procedures prescribed in
7 this section, a school district that has been assigned a letter grade of D
8 or F pursuant to section 15-241 for two consecutive years shall implement
9 a parent involvement strategy. The parent involvement strategy shall be
10 included in the school improvement plan for each applicable school within
11 the district, as prescribed in subsection A or G of this section, as
12 applicable.

13 T. The department of education shall publish criteria for a
14 school's or school district's exit status from a previous assignment of a
15 letter grade of F in accordance with this section. The criteria shall
16 prescribe the actions and results necessary to be deemed to have complied
17 with this section regarding school improvement, including the proper
18 implementation of a school improvement plan pursuant to subsection J of
19 this section. These criteria shall be provided to a school or school
20 district if it is assigned a letter grade of F pursuant to section 15-241.

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**EDUCATION
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Your education policy team.

JUL 2018

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STATE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

JULIE WOODS AND ALYSSA RAFA

"How do we improve lower-performing schools?"

Education Commission of the States has received this question frequently since its founding over 50 years ago. While research and experience point to many strategies that may be effective — including high standards, quality curriculum, assessments, well-prepared teachers and students who are physically and mentally present — the ultimate responsibility for supporting improvement falls on state, district and community leaders.

Because state leaders who are informed and knowledgeable make better policy decisions, Education Commission of the States designed this brief to equip leaders with the knowledge they need to meet the great responsibility of ensuring a high-quality education for all students.

While the hard work of school improvement is often accomplished at the local level, state leaders play a crucial supporting role. Generally, state leaders can leverage policy to create an optimal environment for improvement in their state. In particular, state leaders may be best equipped to ensure equity statewide by focusing support and drawing resources to those schools or districts that need them most.

A recent Education Commission of the States' Thinkers Meeting brought together national experts and top education policy leaders (see the full list at the end of this brief) for a discussion of strategies to address lower-performing schools. This two-day meeting resulted in the key questions outlined in this brief.

Education Commission of the States' Thinkers Meetings convene some of the best and brightest minds on education policy issues and facilitate discussions around what is working and what state leaders can consider.

See examples of previous Thinkers Meeting papers [here](#) and [here](#).

What you will find in this brief:

Questions in four key areas that provide a road map for digging into your school improvement systems and orienting yourself to the process and context within your state. This brief also includes links to key related resources to further assist your efforts.

What you will not find in this brief:

All the answers. The following questions will guide you to a better understanding of the key aspects of your state's school improvement system so that you can collaborate with other leaders to develop unique solutions to unique problems.

To successfully address school improvement in your state, couple the core ideas (see box below) with knowledge of your state's systems. The following questions guide you to a better understanding of your state's accountability and school improvement systems, your roles and responsibilities in those systems, and how your state measures and builds on success.

CORE IDEAS

During this School Improvement Thinkers Meeting, attendees identified several key lessons about education policymaking for state leaders. These core ideas are reinforced by the **work** of Education Commission of the States and **others**, recently and **throughout history**. In short, the must-haves for every state are:

- A **vision** for education for all students: An ambitious north star that aligns with your state's values and helps leaders prioritize competing interests and set goals.
- **Goals**: Short-term, long-term and interim goals that get your state, its districts and schools, and its students closer to achieving the vision.
- **Trust** and **political will**: Leaders in different branches and levels of government trust one another's intentions and use their political capital to commit to long-term success over temporary political gain.
- **Coherence**: All stakeholders in your state, from those setting policy (state and local leaders) to those implementing policy (teachers, students and parents), are on the same page about where you're going and why.
- **Alignment**: All the pieces of education — teacher preparation and professional development, textbooks and curriculum, and standards and assessments — align for the most efficient, effective and fair education system.
- Clearly defined **roles** and **support systems**: All involved parties in your state understand the scope of their responsibilities, as well as who they can go to for help.



KEY QUESTIONS: Understanding the Basics

First, understand the systems and structures within which lower-performing schools can improve in your state.

Vision

- Does your state have a comprehensible [vision](#) for public education? How does your state make the vision easily accessible and publicly available?
- How does the vision address your state’s commitment to [equity](#) in educational opportunities and outcomes?
- How do your state accountability system and longitudinal data system measure student and school progress toward that vision?

Performance and progress

- What are your [state accountability system’s](#) performance and progress measures? How are they weighted?
- How are lower-performing schools categorized, and how do interventions and supports differ for each category?
- What triggers the identification of a school as in need of support and improvement?

Improvement strategies

- How does your state provide assistance to schools or districts in crafting a feasible improvement plan with a clear scope and defined action steps?
- What kind of support and resources does your state provide to lower-performing schools to help them improve? Who provides support?
- When schools or districts submit an improvement plan, who reviews it? What are the criteria for approval or rejection of that plan?
- When schools and districts struggle to improve after identification, what are the next, more rigorous steps to help them improve?
- How does your state use improvement plans to learn how to better support schools and districts?
- Do your state’s policies permit [state-led interventions](#), such as innovation zones or takeovers, in lower-performing schools or districts?

If you are unsure of the answers to the questions above, who can you ask for more information? What support do they say they need from you?

KEY TERMS

Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools; 1) the lowest-performing 5 percent of all Title I schools, 2) all public high schools that graduate less than two-thirds of their students and 3) all public schools with a subgroup(s) performing at a level equal to the lowest 5 percent of schools and that do not show progress under a targeted support and improvement plan.

Targeted Support and Improvement schools; at least one subgroup of students consistently underperforms.

ESSA encourages states to use [evidence-based strategies](#) to address the needs of their lower-performing schools.

ESSA requires state accountability plans to include **five indicators**, or **measures of school performance**; 1) proficiency on assessments, 2) growth in proficiency in grades below high school or another academic indicator, 3) high school graduation rates, 4) progress of English learners toward proficiency and 5) at least one measure of school quality or student success.

Each of the academic indicators is given a **weight**, or how much the measure contributes to an overall rating of school performance.

KEY QUESTIONS: Roles, Relationships and Communication

Next, understand how to promote a more effective school improvement process in your state by ensuring that leaders operate with clearly defined roles, strong relationships and clear channels of communication.

Communication

- As a state policymaker, how do you effectively message your state's education vision and aligned strategies? When speaking about school improvement, how do you convey urgency while acknowledging that improvement is a long-term and continuous process?
- Do you or your staff members have a point of contact at your state education agency that you can consistently reach out to for more detailed information?
- How can you better support a positive political climate by building coalitions, addressing external pressures (such as budget shortfalls) and using your platform to spread key messages?

Roles, relationships and engagement

- What are the responsibilities of your state education agency, districts and schools in the improvement process? Who is authorized to do what? Are those roles clearly defined?
- Do you have strong, trusting relationships with other key education leaders in your state? Are you all aligned to the same vision and goals for public education?
- Is there a team or task force working on school improvement that you could join?
- What other government sectors (for example, public safety, public health or labor) could be involved in the school improvement process and better serve students and their families?
- Does your state have a framework to support or encourage public-private partnerships that could provide additional capacity, expertise and innovative ideas to schools and districts?

If you are unsure of the answers to the questions above, who can you ask for more information? What support do they say they need from you?

STATE EXAMPLES

ACROSS SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS: Texas' System of Great Schools Network

is an optional, technical support program that helps districts gain a clear picture of school performance while expanding access to great schools. Districts in the network "design and implement a continuous improvement process that annually evaluates school quality, parent demand, and neighborhood needs to take strategic action to both improve schools and provide parents with the schools and programs they desire." Schools, districts and the state have clearly defined roles, activities and expectations.

ACROSS SCHOOLS AND PARTNERS: Nevada's Partnership Network

will connect high-need schools with nonprofit partners that will provide evidence-based approaches to improvement — with an external evaluator to determine how well these approaches are working, and with each other to



KEY QUESTIONS: Measuring and Understanding Your State’s Success

Now, consider what happens after your state identifies lower-performing schools and districts, and the work toward improvement begins. Consider how to assess the unique needs of the school community, how schools and districts use data to continuously evaluate and improve, and how your state supports schools and districts throughout the process.

Context

- What common characteristics or unique challenges do your state’s lower-performing schools share?
- What supports do school and district leaders and community [stakeholders](#) say they need to improve their school?

Continuous evaluation structures

- How do lower-performing schools and districts continuously evaluate their progress toward improvement? Are measures of progress aligned with your state’s accountability system?
- Who is involved in providing and receiving feedback throughout the process? How is feedback used to make improvements?

Data usage and connections

- Do leaders at all levels use data to evaluate progress and adjust course as needed?
- Does your state leverage public universities or other external research organizations to use state-collected data to inform school improvement?
- How does your state use its [P-20 data system](#) to determine effective and appropriate improvement strategies?
- Is there a system in place for identifying strong examples of school improvement?

If you are unsure of the answers to the questions above, who can you ask for more information? What support do they say they need from you?

STATE EXAMPLES

USING DATA:

[Mississippi’s LifeTracks](#) website connects data across the P-20 spectrum in one dashboard, reporting information on student demographics, educational progress and education and workforce outcomes. Policymakers can use LifeTracks to evaluate the efficacy of schools and colleges by examining the employability and earnings of Mississippians.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION:

[Vermont’s Education Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework](#) provides “a collection of actions, guiding questions, resources, research summaries, and supports for Vermont districts and school systems” to continuously improve and ensure a high-quality education. The [theory of action](#) behind the framework provides a vision for education in Vermont and steps to achieve it.

KEY TERMS

GROWTH AND PROFICIENCY: Measuring proficiency provides you with information on how well students perform at a given point in time. Measuring growth provides you with information on students’ progress over time, typically by measuring how well they perform from one year to the next.

STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS: Otherwise known as P-20 data systems, these connect data between core state agencies and between early learning, K-12, postsecondary and the workforce.

KEY QUESTIONS: Scaling and Sustaining Successful Efforts

Finally, understand how your state builds on experience, replicates successful school improvement efforts and ensures that progress is sustainable. Once you identify what's working, mechanisms are available to elevate successful examples and strategies and take them to other schools and districts.

Examples of success

- When schools or districts improve, how does your state reclassify them?
- For schools that improved and exited the process, what does your state do to ensure they still receive the resources and support they need to succeed?
- Who identifies school improvement success stories, and how are they elevated and disseminated across your state? What networks exist to spread best practices?
- How do you determine which successful strategies will work in which contexts and match appropriate strategies to appropriate locations?

Strong leadership

- As a state leader, how are you passing on institutional knowledge and opportunities to upcoming leaders in your state?
- Does your state have a model for developing and retaining **strong leaders** at the state, district and school levels? How does your state incentivize these leaders to locate where they are needed most?
- Do peer-to-peer learning opportunities exist for school and district leaders? Do opportunities exist for leaders to step out of their day-to-day context to gain perspective?

Long-term commitment

- Is everyone in your state fully committed to continuing this work long term? Whose commitment do you still need?
- Who else in your state is deeply invested in this issue, and are they prepared to lead efforts to improve schools?

If you are unsure of the answers to the questions above, who can you ask for more information? What support do they say they need from you?

STATE EXAMPLE

ELEVATING SUCCESS: [Kentucky's Best Practices Spotlight](#) recognizes schools and districts that are successfully using strategies to prepare students for college and career. Highlighted schools and districts receive public recognition and a monetary award, and their strategies are added to a [searchable database](#).

School Improvement Thinkers Meeting Participants

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**EDUCATION
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EDUCATION TRENDS

Tune in. Explore emerging education developments.

Emerging state turnaround strategies

Stephanie Aragon and Emily Workman

Efforts to improve outcomes for students in low-performing schools have been under way for decades, yet limited broad-scale improvements continue to frustrate families, school leaders and policymakers. The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 ushered in a new era of accountability, requiring states to publicly identify low-performing schools and take action to improve them. This requirement highlighted inequities in education systems and spurred state initiatives to improve student learning, raise graduation rates and reduce drop-out rates.

However, state leaders continue to find that these piecemeal reforms are taking years to show results, if at all. Therefore, state leaders are eager to identify intensive and innovative interventions that produce more immediate improvements in the academic growth and achievement of students.

This brief provides information and available outcomes data for three school turnaround strategies that are gaining attention and momentum: innovation zones, recovery districts and receiverships. The report concludes with policy considerations that should be integral to a strategic approach to turnaround efforts. A strategic approach requires that states first conduct an internal assessment of the political landscape and structural supports/barriers that exist in the state before implementing a turnaround strategy.

Federal attempts to enhance turnaround efforts through school improvement grants (SIGs) have been costly (totaling more than \$5.7 billion) and, aside from some outliers, have produced meager gains in student proficiency. One in every three schools actually performed worse after receiving these funds.¹

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Frustrated by limited results from typical school restructuring initiatives, states are looking for turnaround strategies that produce immediate, dramatic and transformative changes.

States may want to conduct an initial assessment of their political landscape and the structural supports/barriers that exist in order to determine the most effective approach to implementing a statewide turnaround strategy.

Innovation zones differ from takeover districts and receiverships in that they do not require states to remove authority from the district.

Turnaround strategies

Innovation zones

Often, attempts at improving low-performing schools are limited by the schools' inability to work outside the confines of district and state policies. To address these limitations and inspire reform, some states have created innovation zones where struggling schools or districts are given the autonomy to experiment with new staffing, scheduling, budget and curriculum arrangements.³ The model itself, featuring autonomy from many district and state policies, is similar to that of charter schools, but innovation zones remain under the control of the local district.

Innovation zones have sprouted up in numerous districts and in various forms across the country. In some states, innovation zones are being used to not only help turn around low-performing schools, but also to grant already successful schools with flexibility to pursue personnel, budgeting and innovative learning strategies that might serve their students more effectively. For the purposes of this report, only zones focused on turnaround are discussed.

State examples

Indiana's Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation

Indiana's Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC) has become a leader in utilizing innovation zone strategies. In 2009, the school district and union leadership worked together to develop the EQUITY Framework, which gives participating schools greater autonomy over things such as scheduling, school calendars and professional development. The framework was originally piloted at three district schools with positive results.⁴

After one of EVSC's underperforming schools received its sixth consecutive "F" letter grade, the district responded by expanding on the framework in the pilot schools and creating a Transformation Zone. The State Board of Education voted in May 2014 to waive mandatory state interventions, which can include state takeover, while the district imposed its own interventions on the school by including it in the Transformation Zone.⁵ The Transformation Zone's success helped lead to the passage of HB 1638 in the 2015 legislative session. The legislation makes a Transformation Zone a permissible State Board intervention for turning around chronically underperforming schools.

Tennessee's Shelby County School District and Metro Nashville Public Schools

State law requires that priority schools, representing the bottom 5 percent of schools in overall achievement, be subject to one of three intervention strategies, one of which is inclusion in a district innovation zone.⁶ There are two major innovation zones in **Tennessee**. The Shelby County School District (SCS), home to 50 of the state's lowest-performing schools, created an innovation zone in the 2012-13 school year that currently consists of 16 schools.⁷ Innovation zone schools in Shelby County have received funding through the federal SIGs and autonomies are focused particularly on variations in staffing to raise student achievement. Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) created an innovation zone in 2011 that currently consists of 10 schools. In three of those schools, the district is piloting a unique approach to teaching that emphasizes multi-classroom leadership that expands the reach of excellent teachers through a teacher leader model.⁸

Massachusetts Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership

A signature component of former Gov. Deval Patrick's Achievement Gap Act of 2010 allowed **Massachusetts** to create innovation zones.⁹ The initiative, which began its first year of operation in fall 2015, is already catching the attention of state leaders because of its unique school membership, large scale, and state and district partnership. The first innovation zone, known as the Empowerment Zone, consists of eight low-achieving middle schools serving more than 4,400 students and is governed by a board of state and local appointees. It represents a unique partnership between Springfield Public Schools, the Springfield Education Association and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.¹⁰

A turnaround strategy is an umbrella term that includes takeovers.

A turnaround strategy is any approach that emphasizes "dramatic and comprehensive intervention in low-performing schools that produces significant gains in achievement within two years and readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performance organization."² These interventions can be implemented by a broad array of stakeholders who, importantly, can include those currently overseeing or teaching in a low-performing school.

A takeover strategy is any approach where the state removes control of a district or school(s) from the local education agency (LEA) and turns it over to the state education agency (SEA) or receiver. Takeovers are the most aggressive form of turnaround. The most important distinction is the state's role in removing control of a school or district from an LEA.

Recovery districts

In recovery districts, SEAs gain legal authority to take over their lowest-performing schools and assume the LEA functions for those schools. Schools in these districts are united not by geographic proximity, but rather by their status as underperformers. The belief is that by grouping schools in this way, states can more seamlessly implement comprehensive and aggressive reform strategies in schools facing similar challenges. Recovery districts tend to have a governance system in which “high-quality” operators function in a charter-prevalent model. Schools that are not run by charter operators are run instead by the state board or recovery district authority. Schools in these districts are granted various autonomies but are held to high expectations for student growth and achievement.

Although in the 2014-15 school year, only **Louisiana**, **Tennessee** and **Michigan** had fully functioning recovery districts, the approach is catching the attention of state leaders across the country and at least 11 additional states have considered or are in the process of making way for a recovery district.¹¹ Of these, **Nevada**, **Wisconsin** and **Georgia** have made the most headway. Nevada and Wisconsin’s versions were signed into law in the 2015 legislative session, and Georgia voters in 2016 will consider a constitutional amendment to allow the state to intervene in chronically failing schools to improve student achievement. If approved, Georgia residents will pave the way for a state recovery district.

Brief summaries of the recovery districts currently in place are provided below and an in-depth analysis of each is provided in Nelson Smith’s *Redefining the School District in America*, released in June 2015 by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

State examples

Louisiana’s Recovery School District

Louisiana was the first state to pave the path for a recovery district. The Recovery School District (RSD) was established in 2003 to more effectively address the needs of the state’s low-performing schools but came into full swing in the latter part of 2005 after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Orleans Parish School District (OPSD). The RSD has evolved significantly in the decade since Hurricane Katrina. Although initially many of the schools were “direct-run schools” operated by the RSD, today all of the 57 schools in the district are charters.¹² Through the citywide enrollment system One-App, parents in the RSD have unprecedented options for making choices about their children’s education, regardless of their ZIP code or tax bracket. The RSD closes charter schools that fail to meet scheduled growth and achievement benchmarks.

Tennessee’s Achievement School District

Tennessee’s Achievement School District (ASD) was established by the state legislature in 2010 in response to the federal Race to the Top (RTT) competition. Bolstered by RTT funds, the ASD has grown from six schools in 2012 to 29 schools in 2015. The ASD has evolved since its initial inception. Although half of the district’s first six schools were managed by the ASD, today less than 20 percent are directly run by the ASD.¹³ The five ASD-operated schools are granted charter-like autonomy and are led by state-appointed school leaders and teacher teams.¹⁴ The remaining 24 schools are operated by one of 14 charter operators that have been vetted by the ASD and a community-based advisory council.¹⁵ Although neighborhood assignments remain unchanged when a charter operator takes over a school, students are permitted to opt out and enroll elsewhere, and outside students are permitted to fill vacant seats.¹⁶ The district’s mission is to move the bottom 5 percent of schools in the state to the top 25 percent in five years.¹⁷

Michigan’s Education Achievement Authority

The Education Achievement Authority (EAA) of Michigan was also created in response to the RTT competition. Although the state did not end up receiving the federal grant, state leadership and substantial private funds helped prevent the effort from stalling, and in 2012 the district took over 15 of Detroit’s lowest-performing schools. Though the district has and continues to seek quality charter operators for its schools, today 12 of the district’s 15 schools are managed by the EAA, and only three are charter schools.¹⁸

The EAA has established clear expectations for potential operators. The 2014 request for proposals set a target that “within three years of operating a school, the EAA will challenge its turnaround and new school start-up partners to achieve results in the top 50 percent of schools in Michigan.”¹⁹ To date, internal setbacks have prevented the district from expanding inside Detroit, and legislative efforts to expand the district outside of Detroit have failed.²⁰ Gov. Rick Snyder’s recent executive order, which moved the State School Reform Office to an office that reports to him instead of the State Board of Education, may allow for the creation of a redefined statewide turnaround district.²¹

Receiverships

In receiverships, states gain legal authority to appoint a “receiver” for low-performing or financially distressed schools or districts. Receivership strategies differ from recovery district strategies because they do not require the creation of a new district. Authority over existing districts or, in some cases, individual schools is vested in an individual who has been appointed as the receiver. The receiver is granted all of the powers of a district superintendent and school board, although likely excluding ones to levy and raise taxes. The receiver determines what entities to partner with to run schools, which may include charter-management organizations and teachers unions.

State examples

The success of a receivership is highly dependent on the turnaround strategy the receiver implements. Four years ago, Michigan turned two districts over to receivership due to financial instability. Because Public Act 4 of 2011 (recalled in late 2012) expanded the role of the receiver, the receiver was granted authority not just over finances but also over the academic and educational plan for the school district. In these two cases, the operations of the districts were turned over to for-profit education management organizations and few, if any, academic improvements were cited. In 2014, former **Pennsylvania** Gov. Tom Corbett placed the York County School District under receivership, yet the receiver’s intention to turn the district into an all-charter school system under the management of a single education management organization led to a five-month legal battle ultimately overturning the takeover. Just this year, **New York** Gov. Andrew Cuomo successfully pushed for a receivership law reflective of Massachusetts’ law.²²

Massachusetts’ Lawrence Public School District

A 2010 Massachusetts law requires that districts declared chronically underperforming by the State Board of Education be placed under receivership. The law requires the receiver to be a non-profit entity or an individual with a demonstrated record of success in improving low-performing schools or the academic performance of disadvantaged students.²³ In 2011, the Lawrence Public School District in Massachusetts was placed into state receivership following years of poor academic achievement. Massachusetts’ Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester turned the failing district over to Jeffrey Riley, a former principal and chief innovation officer for Boston Public Schools. The turnaround effort has been lauded for effectively maintaining a strong union-district relationship and creating a combination of charter-run and district-led schools that meet the unique needs of the students.²⁴

Results and their limitations

Some states have had strategies under way for long enough that student outcomes data have been produced, while other state strategies are still too new to be evaluated. Available outcomes data for each strategy are provided in Appendix A. Generally, early evidence seems to indicate that innovation zones, recovery districts and receiverships are leading or beginning to lead to student growth and achievement in tested subjects. In some cases the strategies are also leading to improved student and/or parent satisfaction and high school graduation and college attendance rates.

However, there are limitations to and critiques of these widely broadcasted results that should be considered prior to any attempts at replication. For example, critics have argued that the outcomes data in Louisiana’s Recovery School District are skewed because of flawed and potentially biased data analysis, and critics also point to low state standards and still meager ACT scores as deflating the “New Orleans miracle.”²⁵ Groups such as the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools argue that because state takeovers often occur in districts with high percentages of minorities, the strategy is reinforcing segregation, stripping African American and Latino voters of the right to control their schools and placing this power in the hands of a fragmented governing system.²⁶ They also argue that state takeovers erode the connection between public schools and neighborhoods and dismantle community-based institutions.²⁷ To these critics, “the impacts of takeovers go beyond academic results,” and potentially negative effects on the community should be fully considered.²⁸

For these and other reasons, plans for state takeover are often met with heavy public resistance.

Policy considerations

Implementing a successful school or district turnaround strategy brings many challenges — financial, political and logistical. The following list includes policy considerations that leaders may want to explore before implementing any one turnaround strategy.

Funding. Making meaningful strides toward school improvement comes at a significant cost. Some states have successfully initiated turnaround efforts utilizing multiple funding streams that heavily rely on federal grants — RTT, SIGs and Investing in Innovation Grants (I3) — and philanthropic donations. As these funding streams dry up, states and districts are struggling to come up with the additional funds required to maintain turnaround efforts. Federal SIG funding for the Shelby County Innovation Zone in Tennessee, for example, is drying up and the cash-strapped district has invested \$7 million of its own scarce funds to keep the project moving. Although academic results have been promising, the availability of funding for ongoing maintenance and expansion has been a source of major concern for the district until recently, when it received a \$10 million philanthropic grant.²⁹

Governance and oversight authority. Successful turnaround efforts depend on a governance structure that is prepared to drive, support or sustain meaningful change. It is critical that a state conduct an evaluation to determine whether the SEA, LEA and boards of education have the capacity to lead turnaround efforts. If the capacity does not exist within those traditional governance structures, policymakers must determine who should fill that role.

Political landscape. State leaders must acknowledge the current political climate across the state and within each district. Policymakers should consider whether there is a strong culture of local control, whether education clauses in their state's constitution might impact the state's authority to implement takeovers, the role of teachers' unions and whether the political climate is supportive of school choice.

Community engagement. Related to but separate from political climate, the ultimate success of a turnaround initiative in any given community is highly dependent on buy-in from local residents. A school is often the bedrock of a community and those being most affected by the change should be included in decision-making throughout the process. Leaders must also be aware of any cultural sensitivities that may be present in the area. An **Arkansas** bill that would have created an achievement school district, for example, was pulled following opposition from critics who asserted that the district would be a hit on hard-won civil rights in the state.³⁰

Data collection and evaluation. One of the most common questions state leaders ask about a policy issue is “what's working?” States need to be able to evaluate the success or failures of their own initiatives and share that information with policymakers in others states. Monitoring and data are the critical building blocks of any effective school turnaround.³¹

Condition, capacity, clustering. These three state responsibilities, identified by Mass Insight's School Turnaround Group, are considered essential for school turnaround success.³² The group argues that effective turnaround that will produce dramatic and transformative changes requires special conditions that provide school leaders flexibility to act outside of state and districts policies, opportunities for school leaders to build and maximize leadership and staff capacity, and clustering of schools to encourage efficient use of resources, ease in replication of successful models and the establishment of effective K-12 pathways through school-level feeder patterns.

APPENDIX A

Some state strategies have been under way for enough years that outcomes data have been produced while other state strategies are still too new to be evaluated. Information and available outcomes data for each strategy are provided below.

Innovation Zones

Indicators	Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation's (EVSC) Transformation Zone (Indiana) 2012-13 ³³	Shelby County Schools' Innovation Zone (Tennessee) 2013-14 ³⁴
Student Growth/Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ After its first year, the district rose one full point on a four-point scale — from a D to a C — the largest gain of any district in the state. ◆ After the 2012-13 school year, EVSC made the largest gains in student growth and was one of the state's highest-performing urban districts. ◆ On assessments predictive of Indiana's state accountability measure, Zone schools made larger gains than other similar schools in the district. ◆ In March 2014, the Indiana State Board of Education ruled that the interventions were "effective" and should be allowed to continue. This marked the first time the Indiana State Board of Education declined either to take over a chronically underperforming school or to mandate the district take some other action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Though most iZone schools remain in "priority" status for overall student achievement, since becoming part of iZone, 11 of the now 16 schools have shown double-digit gains in success rates. Over a two-year period, math proficiency rates more than doubled and reading proficiency rates increased 6.8%, while science proficiency rates showed a dramatic 27.5% increase. ◆ On average, students in iZone schools are making superior achievement gains than students in ASD schools. However, critics argue this is because the ASD takes in new schools each year, and that schools in the ASD for longer periods have stronger results.

Recovery Districts

Indicators	Louisiana's Recovery School District (RSD) 2013-14 ³⁵	Tennessee's Achievement School District (ASD) 2014-15 ³⁶	Michigan's Education Achievement Authority (EAA) 2012-14 ³⁷
Student Growth/Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase from 25% to 57% in the number of students in grades 3-8 scoring at "basic and above" on state tests since 2006, compared to an increase from 50% to 69% in the state. ◆ Increase from 3% to 12% in the number of students in grades 3-8 scoring at "mastery and above" on state tests since 2006, compared to an increase from 16% to 24%, in the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Since 2012 proficiency on state math assessments in grades 3-8 has increased from 16.3% to 27% compared to 8.4% in the state, and science proficiency has increased from 16.5% to 26.5% compared to 4% in the state. During the same period, reading proficiency decreased from 18.1% to 13.8% compared to 1.5% in the state. ◆ Students in the ASD's high schools made proficiency gains on end of course exams in every subject. Proficiency gains for students in these schools exceeded those for their state peers in five out of six subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Test results from spring 2013 showed early indications of success. ◆ 64% of all students in the EAA achieved a year or more of growth in reading, and 58% achieved growth of 1.5 years or more. ◆ 68% of students achieved a year or more of growth in math with 59% achieving growth of 1.5 years or more.

Indicators	Louisiana’s Recovery School District (RSD) 2013-14 ³⁵	Tennessee’s Achievement School District (ASD) 2014-15 ³⁶	Michigan’s Education Achievement Authority (EAA) 2012-14 ³⁷
Student Growth/Achievement (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase from 13% to 47% in the number of high school students scoring “good” or “proficient” on end of course exams since 2008, compared to an increase from 43% to 62% in the state. ◆ Charter takeovers in this district appear to have generated substantial achievement gains for the district’s highly disadvantaged student population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Every school in the ASD has a higher average proficiency rate across math, reading and science than it did prior to ASD interventions began. The average composite proficiency rate has grown from 14% in 2012 to 24% in 2015.³⁸ Still, the percentage of scoring proficient or advanced is far lower than in Shelby County and the state. ◆ ASD schools in their second and third years — the first two “cohorts” of schools to join the ASD — earned the state’s highest possible growth rating, averaging a Level 5 on the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System. ◆ The ASD is serving as a “catalyst for change” for other priority schools in the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In more than 80% of the schools, special education students outperformed their district counterparts in both reading and math. ◆ Average ACT scores in 2013-14 were no better than average scores in 2012-13.
Student and/or Parent Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ranked first among more than 100 large school districts nationwide on Brookings’ 2014 Education Choice and Competition Index, which examines variation in district-level choice based on objective scoring of 13 categories of policy and practice. ◆ 80% of students got one of their top three school choices in 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ School culture and safety continues to improve, with higher numbers of students feeling safe (81%) and more students reporting a positive school culture (83%). ◆ Most parents continue to grade their schools an A or B. The parent satisfaction rate is 83%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The percentage of students feeling mostly or very safe in their classrooms increased from 56% to 64% between 2012-13 and 2013-14.
Graduation/College Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Of the students who graduated from RSD schools in 2014, 47% immediately enrolled in college. Though lagging behind the citywide rate of 59%, it is a 4% increase from the year before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Not yet available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Though graduation rates across EAA’s six high schools declined significantly in their first year of takeover (from 64% to 54%), there was recovery in the EAA’s second year, reaching 62% in 2013-14.

Receiverships

Indicators	Lawrence Public Schools District (Massachusetts) 2014 ³⁹
Student Growth/ Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Student growth percentiles on state assessments increased significantly in both English and mathematics since 2012, with district schools up 9% in English and 17% in math. ◆ Math proficiency levels have reached historic highs, increasing by 13% since 2012. English language arts proficiency levels are up 3 percentage points over that time. ◆ LPS has tripled the number of Level 1 schools in the district from two to six over two years. Level 1 is the state's highest accountability and assistance level and designates schools that are meeting performance targets.
Graduation/College Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The four-year cohort graduation rate increased to 61.3% in 2013 from 52.3% in 2011, and the dropout rate declined from 8.6% in 2011 to 5.8% in 2013.

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School Interventions

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)¹, states must identify schools for targeted and comprehensive support during the 2017-18 school year.

The ExcelinEd ESSA Playbook Series provides state policymakers clear recommendations, practical advice and resources on four core areas of the Every Student Succeeds Act: School Accountability, Interventions, Innovation and the Weighted Student Funding Pilot. **This Playbook can help states identify a rigorous, state-level strategy for turning around schools identified for comprehensive support under ESSA.**

Under Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to identify low-performing schools for intervention. Unlike past federal school improvement efforts, however, the requirements provide states with significant flexibility and authority to design interventions.

The following two key state actions are recommended to turn around the lowest-performing schools—labeled comprehensive support schools under ESSA—as quickly as possible:

- ▶ **States should influence district turnaround strategies by reviewing districts' school improvement plans and by distributing federal improvement funds through competitive grants.**

ESSA requires states to approve districts' school improvement plans and allows states to reserve 7 percent of Title I (federal dollars targeted to low-performing schools and districts) for competitive grants for school interventions. ExcelinEd recommends that states evaluate district plans against the most rigorous turnaround strategies and prioritize grant eligibility to districts that adopt them. Several key design principles for competitive grants are included in this playbook.

- ▶ **Increase choice to address persistently low-performing schools.**

In schools and districts that fail to improve, ExcelinEd recommends that states supplement these school interventions with concerted efforts to increase the availability of quality school options for students in persistently low-performing schools. This includes policies that encourage charter school expansion, attract high-quality charter operators and promote community engagement.

However states plan to move forward with school interventions, there are policies that can enable school improvement across the board. Policymakers should foster high-quality teacher and leader pipelines, collect and distribute accessible and useful student achievement data, and promote integrated student services.

— ESSA Resources —

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Summary of Key Provisions for State Policymakers \(February 2016\)](#)

[Implications for State Advocates and Policymakers \(March 2016\)](#)

[School Identification and Interventions \(May 2016\)](#)

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Find more at:
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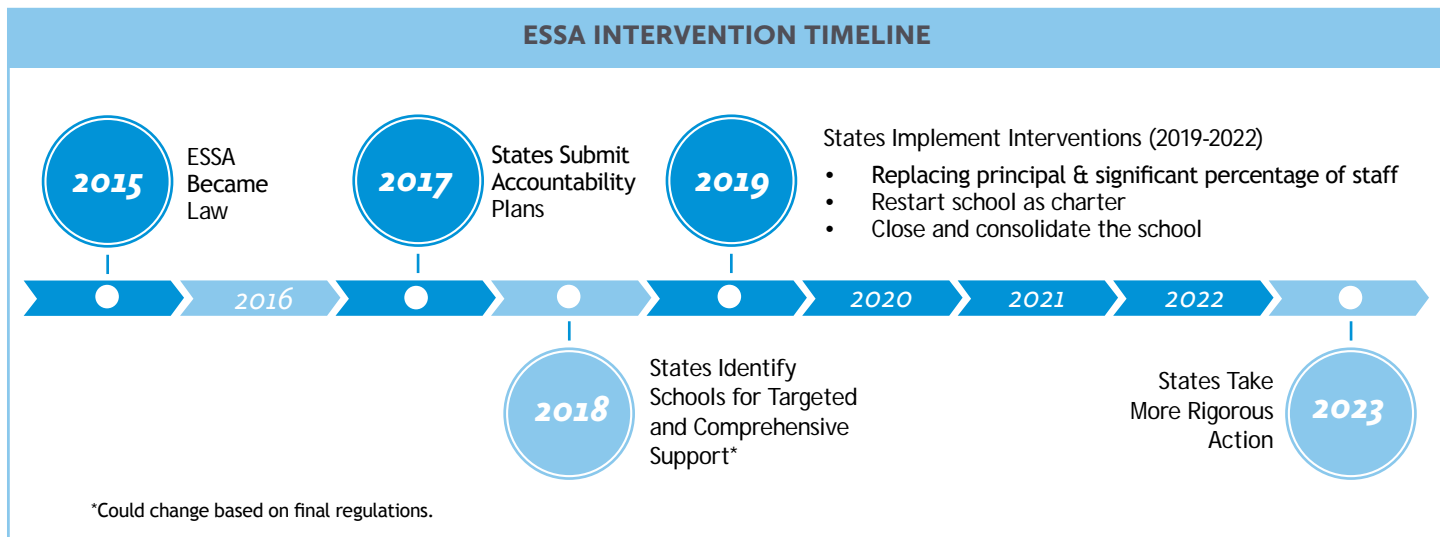




SUMMARY OF ESSA INTERVENTION PROVISIONS

Under ESSA, each state will identify schools for targeted and comprehensive support during the 2017-18 school year based on their accountability systems.

In the transition to ESSA, state education agencies (SEAs) will first develop accountability plans, which will be due to the U.S. Department of Education in the spring or summer of 2017. ExcelinEd’s A-F School Accountability Playbook, available at www.ExcelinEd.org/ESSA, includes details and recommendations regarding state accountability systems. Based on their individual accountability plans, each state will identify schools for targeted and comprehensive support during the 2017-18 school year.



ESSA Requirements for Targeted and Comprehensive Support Schools

Targeted Support

Identification: Schools that have at least one subgroup of students that are “consistently underperforming” as defined by the state.

Requirements for Intervention: Targeted-support schools must develop and implement improvement plans to improve student outcomes in the identified subgroup. The district—not the state—approves and monitors the plans. In addition, if any school identified for targeted support has a subgroup performing as poorly as the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools in the state, the state must assess the allocation of resources and address inequities.

Exit Criteria: The state must set exit criteria for schools in targeted support. If a school does not meet those criteria within a state-determined number of years, the school transitions to comprehensive support.

Key State Role: Assess allocation of resources and set exit criteria and shift persistently underperforming targeted-support schools to comprehensive-support status.



Comprehensive Support

Identification: Schools that are performing in the lowest 5 percent statewide, have a four-year graduation rate of less than 67 percent or have a subgroup that is performing as poorly as the lowest 5 percent of schools in the state and has not improved with targeted support.

Requirements for Intervention: Districts must develop and implement improvement plans for schools identified for comprehensive support. The plans must include evidence-based interventions; identify resource inequities; be informed by all indicators in the state’s accountability system; and be approved by the school, district and state. The state must monitor and periodically review district improvement plans and set the criteria for schools to exit comprehensive support.

Exit Criteria: The state must set exit criteria for schools in comprehensive support. If the exit criteria are not satisfied within a state-determined number of years—not exceeding more than four years—the state must take more rigorous actions.

Key State Role: Encourage the adoption of evidence-based intervention strategies, review district plans for school improvement and monitor implementation, and design and implement more rigorous action for schools that do not improve over time.²

STATE’S ROLE IN SCHOOL TURNAROUND UNDER ESSA

ExcelinEd recommends two key state actions designed to turn around comprehensive support schools: 1) Influence district turnaround strategies by reviewing districts’ school improvement plans and by distributing federal improvement funds through competitive grants; 2) Increase choice to address persistently low-performing schools.

Under ESSA, states have a limited role in schools in targeted support, but they can have a significant influence on interventions for schools in comprehensive support and for persistently low-performing schools. This state influence is possible because, under ESSA, states are freed from the federally prescribed intervention models that were required under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the prior version of the law. ESSA gives states the authority to exercise this influence through two key state actions:

1. ESSA provides an opportunity for states to encourage the adoption of more aggressive intervention strategies by reviewing and approving districts’ school improvement plans and/or distributing federal school improvement funds through competitive grants.
2. ESSA requires states to implement more aggressive reforms for schools in comprehensive support that fail to meet the exit criteria after four years.

KEY STATE ACTION 1:

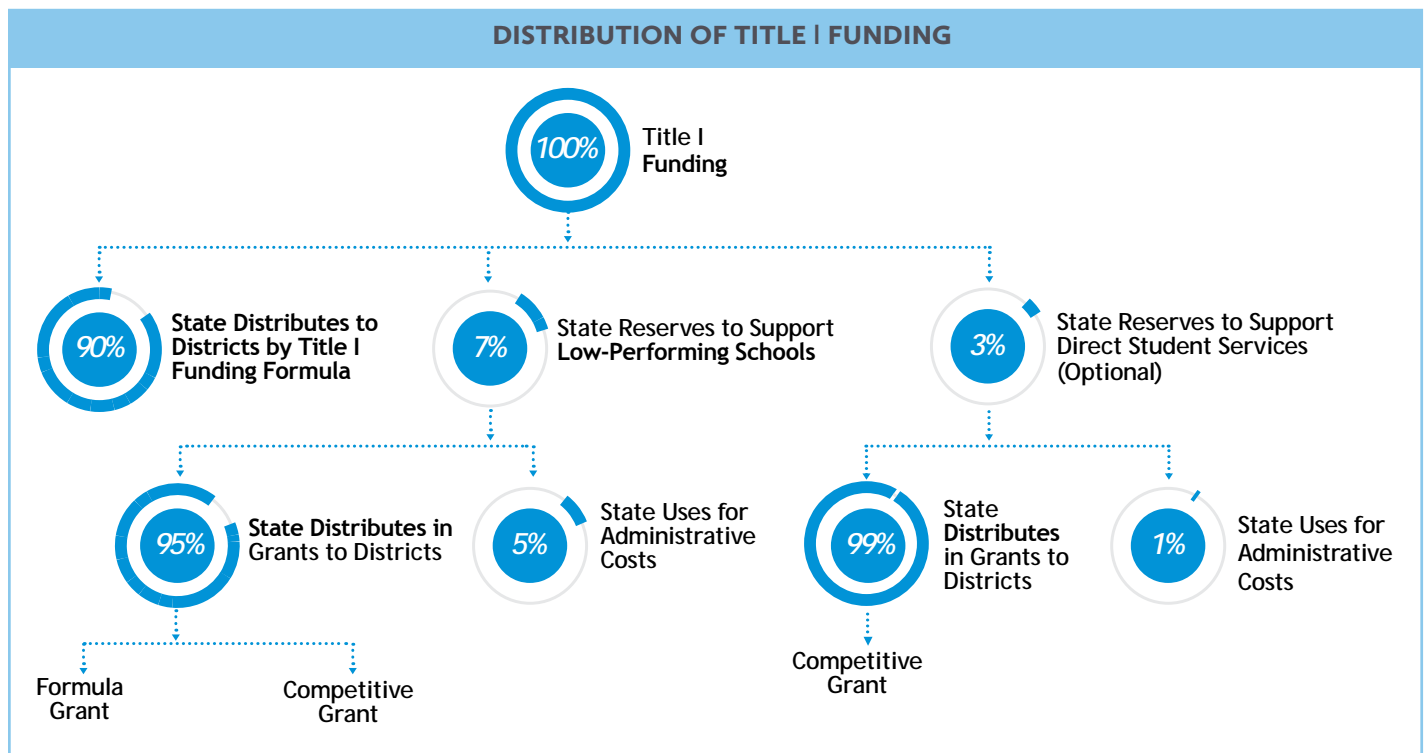
ENCOURAGE the ADOPTION of MORE AGGRESSIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

ESSA provides states with significant resources to support bold interventions. Title I under ESSA accounts for approximately \$15B in federal funding. Ninety percent of funds will go directly to districts, but, as detailed in the **Distribution of Title I Funding figure**, states must reserve 7 percent of Title I funds for interventions. States can distribute these funds to all districts serving the lowest-performing schools or use a competitive grant program to create strong incentives for districts to adopt certain evidence-based school interventions. States may also reserve another 3 percent of Title I funds to support a similar grant for direct student services, such as public school choice, personalized learning, transportation and credit recovery.³

The 7 percent mandatory Title I set aside for school interventions varies significantly in dollar amounts, depending on states’ total Title I allocations. For example, 7 percent of FY15 Title I allocations amounts to just \$2.2M in Wyoming, compared to \$36M in Georgia and \$116M in California.



ESSA also requires states to recommend evidence-based practices to districts and to review, approve and monitor the implementation of districts' school improvement plans. Together, these authorities provide the state with significant leverage to encourage aggressive interventions across all schools in comprehensive support.



Encourage The Adoption Of Evidence-Based School Interventions

ExcelinEd recommends that states apply standards for approving districts' school improvement plans and establish competitive grant criteria—for the 7 percent Title I school improvement funds—that hew to the interventions that follow.

Evidence for Successful School Interventions

Despite decades of efforts to improve persistently low-performing schools, there is a limited body of rigorous research on their success. Moreover, the research that does exist has drawn mixed conclusions.⁴ Yet several studies find that the least intrusive interventions—such as developing teacher effectiveness or redesigning instructional programs—have had little to no impact on student achievement when implemented in isolation.⁵ On the other hand, some research suggests that student outcomes have improved under more transformative interventions—such as replacing school staff, restarting the school as a charter school or closing the school and enrolling students in higher-performing schools.⁶ As a result, ExcelinEd recommends states use their review of district school improvement plans and the competitive grants to encourage the adoption of the most transformative interventions.

Several of these transformative interventions bear a close resemblance to several of the options provided under the Obama administration's School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The SIG program has not produced the hoped-for results, but it is important to note that nearly three-quarters of grantees chose to implement less aggressive reforms, under SIG's "school transformation" model. The 26 percent of SIG grantees using the more transformative interventions (i.e., replacing staff, charter takeover, closure) showed more promising improvements in student outcomes.



MODELS	EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS
<p>Change Staff Replacing principal and significant percentage of staff.⁷</p>	<p>A study of SIG-funded school reforms in California found that schools that implemented reconstitution (which SIG calls “turnaround”) showed significant improvement in student achievement relative to counterparts that used more moderate school improvement models.⁸</p>
<p>Restart as a Charter Close the school and restart it under the management of a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO) or an educational management organization (EMO).</p>	<p>As part of the School District of Philadelphia’s Renaissance Schools Initiative, the CMO Mastery Charter Schools closed and reopened six low-performing schools—three elementary and three middle/high. The schools enrolled the same students, but with different leadership and staff. Since the restart in 2010, Mastery’s takeover schools have seen progress in student achievement results, increased college-going rates and drawn more demand from the local community.⁹</p>
<p>Close and Consolidate Close the school and enroll its students in higher-performing schools in the district.</p>	<p>A study of 18 school closings in Chicago found that students who transferred to the strongest receiving schools experienced an achievement gain of nearly one month in reading and more than two months in math. Research in Ohio and New York also show positive results.¹⁰</p>

Resources for School Turnaround

Partners

- [Green Dot Schools](#) is a charter management organization that operates schools in California, Tennessee and Washington State. It has also served as a turnaround partner and provider to multiple schools. You can find [examples of their success](#) on their website as well as an [independent evaluation](#) from UCLA’s Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing.
- [Mass Insight Education](#) partners with school districts and SEAs “to redesign the way they support their lowest-performing schools ... by fixing policies, structures and incentives surrounding state and local systems.” Read about [their approaches](#) and [what SEAs can do to help](#).
- [Mastery Public Schools](#) is a charter management organization that operates schools in Philadelphia and Camden. Key outcomes of their turnaround efforts are [here](#).

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Key Design Features of a Competitive Grant

Competitive grants can be a useful tool for incentivizing districts and schools to adopt particular policies or approaches, and past experience lends four insights for their design and implementation. ExcelinEd recommends SEAs consider the following in designing a competitive grant for school interventions:

- **Leave room for local ownership and innovation.** Applications for both federal and state competitive grants often include an extensive list of detailed requirements. As a result, winning a grant can become a competition more about checking all the boxes than about the potential of an applicant's idea. If SEAs limit grant options to the three transformative reforms described above, they can be more confident that the reforms will be sufficiently intensive while still leaving room for local ownership and innovation. For example, an SEA could require districts to restart a school as a charter but should leave it to the district to select the CMO and the other supports that school would receive.
- **Create a bright line between oversight and operation.** SEAs are responsible for designing and administering the grant competition, evaluating proposals and funding the transformative models. They must also hold schools accountable if they fail to implement the reforms promised in their applications. Unfortunately, it is difficult for an SEA to hold a grantee accountable while simultaneously offering technical assistance to that grantee. The SEA can enable schools to access high-quality implementation support from qualified providers by providing directly for the support or creating firewalls between SEA offices charged with implementation support and oversight.
- **Require rigorous evaluations.** Too often, school improvement efforts are deemed a success or a failure without a methodologically sound evaluation or consideration of other outcomes. Given the number of schools across the country struggling to improve, it is essential to invest in developing a rigorous understanding of when and how efforts succeed. SEAs should ensure that grants and school improvement plans require a high-quality evaluation through partnership with external providers such as institutions of higher education.
- **Set and enforce strong accountability.** Strong accountability is the linchpin of a competitive grant. Without it, applicants may shy away from the most disruptive reforms, have unrealistic timelines for implementation or set unattainable goals for improvement. However, applicants confident that there will be consequences for falling behind or coming up short will be more likely to temper their promises accordingly. SEAs must be willing to withhold grant funds if a school fails to meet key milestones and to implement more rigorous interventions when reforms do not succeed.

KEY STATE ACTION 2: INCREASE CHOICE to ADDRESS PERSISTENTLY LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

For schools that do not improve after four years in continuous improvement, ESSA requires states to take more rigorous action. The expectation is that interventions will start in the 2018-19 school year and that a school's four years will conclude at the end of the 2021-22 school year. However, nothing in ESSA prevents states from intervening before then. Many of the same schools that lingered in "restructuring" under NCLB were in "priority status" under the ESEA waivers, and are now likely to enter "comprehensive support" under ESSA. ExcelinEd recommends that states not wait another four years to act.



Instead, policymakers should support immediate options for students who have been languishing in low-performing schools for far too many years. School choice gives families the freedom to leave persistently low-performing schools. Moreover, research shows that school choice, in combination with strong accountability, can have a positive effect on low-performing schools.¹¹ State legislators and SEAs should implement laws and policies that advance intra-district and inter-district choice and course access, a technology-driven choice initiative that allows students to access quality courses regardless of location.

These policymakers can support the expansion of effective school options in several ways.

Remove Artificial Limits On And Promote The Growth Of High-Quality School Options

State policies often suppress the creation of new school options. In some cases, caps on charter school expansion limit the number of total charters available for new schools, the number of charters that authorizers may issue each year or the percentage of students in a district that a charter school can enroll. In other cases, state charter school laws limit expansion by making school districts the only available authorizers, and school districts have little incentive to foster competition and are often disinclined to engage in charter authorizing. Instead, policymakers should look for ways to enable and accelerate the growth of and access to high-performing charters and high-performing district schools through intra- and inter-district choice.

- *State legislatures should consider intra- and inter-district choice policies that allow students to transfer to the high-performing public school of their choice.*
- *State legislatures should remove statutory caps on charter school expansion.*
- *State legislatures should create at least one statewide, non-district authorizing body.*
- *State legislatures should create an expedited process to allow high-performing charters to expand grade levels, enrollment or school sites.*

Foster Strong Authorizing And Accountability Practices

The charter sector is based on a “grand bargain” in which schools have autonomy in exchange for accountability. Decades of experience in the charter sector make clear the importance of maintaining this balance. And, while the charter sector has proven more willing than districts to shutter failing schools, too many low-quality charters remain open for too long. States must implement strong accountability practices for charter schools.

- *Authorizers should strengthen charter application processes to only authorize schools with potential to meet student needs.*
- *Authorizers should implement performance contracts for each school with clear and consistent expectations for schools’ academic, operational, and financial success.*
- *Authorizers should develop criteria for renewal and revocation decisions and develop processes to ensure smooth school closures, when necessary.*

Attract and Cultivate High-Quality Charter Management Organizations

To foster the expansion of new charter schools, policymakers must match accountability with autonomy—especially when it comes to charter management organizations (CMOs). The nation’s best CMOs have enormous potential to drive the expansion of high-quality charter schools. They currently serve more than 300,000 students across the country and generally outperform nearby schools, especially in urban districts. To attract the best CMOs to their states and communities, policymakers should consider taking several important steps.¹²

- *State legislators should protect charters’ ability to make key staffing decisions, free of districts’ collective bargaining agreements.*
- *State legislators should ensure charters have the flexibility to design and implement their school model, including curriculum selection and school culture (including discipline).*



- *State legislators should allow charters to manage their own budgets.*
- *State legislators should ensure charters receive key resources, including equitable funding and access to underutilized district facilities.*
- *SEAs should pursue start-up funding for charter schools through the federal Charter Schools Program grant.*

Leverage Direct Student Services To Facilitate Access To Choice

SEAs can choose to reserve 3 percent of Title I funds and direct those funds toward state-determined student services in districts with significant proportions of schools in comprehensive support. ExcelinEd recommends that SEAs use the competitive grant to target funds to expand enrollment in supplementary courses through a new or existing course access program. In addition, low-performing schools are often concentrated in specific neighborhoods or regions, and limited access to transportation effectively limits students' ability to access high-performing schools. SEAs should award grants to districts to:

- *Begin creating or supplement an existing course access program.*
- *Provide student transportation—regardless of whether students attend their neighborhood school, an out-of-zone district school or a charter school.*

Harness The Power Of Opportunity Scholarships

States can establish opportunity scholarship programs in which students attending a consistently underperforming school are eligible for a voucher (of state funds) that they can use to attend a higher-performing public or private school of their choice. Although not politically feasible in every state, opportunity scholarships can provide students with immediate access to an effective school. Vouchers can also drive improvement in public schools through the threat of competition.¹³

- *State legislators should consider establishing an opportunity scholarship (using state funds) available to students attending comprehensive support schools.*

Resources for School Choice and Charters

- [The Foundation for Excellence in Education](#) has developed policy toolkits to help policymakers advance all kinds of school choice, including [education savings accounts](#) and [course access](#).
- [The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools](#) has analyzed each state's charter school law against its model [here](#).
- [The National Association of Charter School Authorizers](#) has established principles and standards for quality authorizing [here](#). They have also completed [state-by-state analyses](#) of authorizer policies and practices.

Ensure Authentic Community Engagement When Schools Open And Close

School choice can create tension in neighborhoods with struggling schools. New schools may find themselves at odds with existing district schools, especially when new schools of choice have non-local partners. In addition, schools of choice are typically subject to much stronger accountability and are more apt to face closure if they fail to improve student outcomes. Strong community engagement will promote the long-term success of new school options and ensure that any school closures minimize the cost to communities' unique cultures and social capital. To encourage authentic community engagement:

- *Authorizers should amend charter application processes to evaluate operators' plans, activities and demonstrated success in community engagement.*
- *State legislators (or authorizers) should require districts and authorizers to hold public hearings on school opening and closure decisions, so that decisions can be informed by community input.*



- *Charter authorizers (or SEAs) should disseminate successful strategies for authentic community engagement, such as building community awareness, building the capacity of community leaders and fostering collaboration to surface solutions.*¹⁴

Resources for Community Engagement

Partners

- [Democracy Builders](#) helps engage parents in the school choice movement. In addition to helping schools engage with their parent communities, Democracy Builders provides parents with [advocacy training](#) and helps [bridge the gap between parents and policymakers](#).
- [Families Empowered](#) was founded specifically to support families in systems of school choice, by providing resources and information throughout the school application process and for families stuck on waitlists.
- [Stand for Children](#) is a national advocacy organization that includes [family engagement and organizing](#) as one of its key strategies for supporting school improvement. It has created [Stand University for Parents](#) (Stand UP) to help parents get involved in their children’s education.

Research and Analysis

- Andrew P. Kelly, “[Turning Light into Electricity: Organizing Parents for Education Reform](#),” 2014, American Enterprise Institute.



Alternative Governance Models to Promote Choice

Some states may choose the transformative effect of an opportunity school district—a state-run alternative district created to improve the state’s lowest-performing schools. Like the Recovery School District in Louisiana and the Achievement School District in Tennessee, a new opportunity school district would have significant authority and autonomy to convert a school to a charter. In designing an opportunity district, ExcelinEd recommends that state legislators keep five key design principles in mind:

- An opportunity school district’s ultimate goal should be to manage a diverse portfolio of independently operated schools—not to run schools directly.
- The opportunity school district should be codified in statute, affording the necessary stability that high-quality charter operators and talent require.
- The opportunity school district should be provided with the startup funds required to create a new district.
- The opportunity school district superintendent should be apolitically selected and capable of overseeing a decentralized marketplace of schools.
- The opportunity school district should be held accountable for meeting their goals through a contract with the district that includes ambitious but reasonable goals for student performance and growth.

Note: Some state constitutions prohibit the type of statewide turnaround district described here. With the right policy conditions and leadership, a receivership model — similar to that in Lawrence, Massachusetts, or Camden, New Jersey — could be a reasonable alternative.

Check out these resources for more on state turnaround districts:

- Juli Kim, Tim Field and Elaine Hargrave, “[The Achievement School District: Lessons from Tennessee](#),” 2015, Public Impact.
- Neerav Kingsland, “[The Recovery School District Model](#),” 2013, American Enterprise Institute.
- Nelson Smith, “[Redefining the School District in America](#),” 2015, Thomas B. Fordham Institute.



ENABLING POLICY CONDITIONS FOR ALL STATES

In addition to competitive grants and leveraging the power of school choice, states must ensure that certain policy conditions are in place to maximize the chances of successful school turnaround at the district and school levels. These include high-quality teacher and leader pipelines, accessible student achievement data, and integrated student supports.

Staff Quality and Support

Schools' ability to recruit and retain effective teachers has a significant impact on school quality. Strong instructional leadership from the principal and district support can also produce positive results.¹⁵ ExcelinEd encourages state legislators to improve existing teacher and leader preparation programs.

For teacher preparation programs:

- *State education agencies should collect and report data on the effectiveness of teachers from various programs and consider closing the ineffective programs.*
- *State education agencies should require or incentivize teacher preparation programs to emphasize clinical experience.*
- *State legislators and SEAs should work together to build or recruit high-quality alternative programs.*

For principal preparation programs:

- *State legislators or state education agencies should set clear standards for the approval of programs, including minimum standards for admission, course requirements and clinical experience.*
- *State legislators or state education agencies should ensure that programs provide better training on budget management, human resources, community engagement and using data.*

Resources for Staff Quality and Support

Partners

- [The New Teacher Project](#) (TNTP) is a nonprofit organization that supports districts and charters in effective talent management, from classroom support to district-level functions. TNTP also operates [alternative teacher preparation programs](#) for those changing careers.
- In addition to traditional school leader preparation, usually housed at colleges and universities, a number of nonprofits train school leaders, including [Building Excellent Schools](#), [New Leaders](#), [Fisher and Miles Family Fellowship](#) and the [Ryan Fellowship](#).

Research and Analysis

- The [National Council on Teacher Quality](#) has developed recommended [state policies](#) for teacher preparation, and its sister organization, Teacher Prep Inspection-US, helps teacher prep programs identify and address their challenges.
- TNTP has authored a number of influential reports on teacher policies, including teacher [evaluation](#), [compensation](#), [retention](#) and [professional development](#).

High-Quality Data and Reporting

Data-driven decision-making at the state, district and school level is a common strategy in successful school turnaround efforts.¹⁶ In addition, high-quality and accessible data on school quality helps parents make informed choices for their children.¹⁷



- *State education agencies should create state-level data platforms that provide timely, meaningful and accessible information about student and school performance and progress.*

Resources for High-Quality Data and Reporting

Partners

- [Data Quality Campaign](#) is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization leading the effort to empower educators, families and policymakers with quality information to make decisions to ensure that students excel.

Research and Analysis

- [ExcelinEd's A-F Accountability Playbook](#), part of the ESSA Playbook Series, helps states maintain the simplicity, transparency and rigor found in A-F school grading—and strengthen their commitment to those principles—as they transition to ESSA.
- [The U.S. Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance for State and Local Report Cards under ESSA](#) not only summarizes ESSA's reporting requirements, but provides SEAs and LEAs with a brief introduction into best practices for creating high-quality, 21st century report cards.

Integrated Student Supports

Struggling schools, students and families often have additional health, emotional and behavioral needs but have trouble effectively accessing the maze of public and private services in the community. Organizations like Communities in Schools can work in conjunction with other transformative reforms to ensure state and local resources are reaching those that need it most.

- *State education agencies can encourage low-performing districts to partner with organizations that can help ensure their students receive the wraparound services they need to succeed.*

Resources for Integrated Student Supports

Partners

[Communities in Schools](#) is a nonprofit organization that partners with schools and communities to provide integrated student supports (or wraparound services) to a state's neediest students.

What's Next?

Under ESSA, states are given tremendous freedom to determine the nature and extent of their school improvement strategies. ExcelinEd encourages state policymakers to take a rigorous statewide approach designed to turnaround low-performing schools and districts as quickly as possible. Policymakers should consider key levers including: influencing district turnaround strategies by reviewing districts' school improvement plans and by distributing federal improvement funds through competitive grants; increasing choice to address persistently low-performing schools; and advancing additional policy options that create the conditions necessary for successful school turnaround. ExcelinEd stands at the ready to provide the technical assistance and advocacy support that state policymakers will need in the coming months and years.



Visit www.ExcelinEd.org/ESSA or email Info@ExcelinEd.org for additional information and assistance.



ENDNOTES

¹ In December 2015, President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This law maintains key accountability measures, including reporting requirements and annual assessments, but leaves states responsible for designing school accountability systems and working with local school districts to select interventions in low-performing schools.

² Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University “An SEA Guide for Identifying Evidence-Based Interventions for School Improvement”, http://www.fcrr.org/documents/essa/essa_guide_sea.pdf

³ Chiefs for Change, “Direct Student Services Tools and Resources”, <http://chiefsforchange.org/dss-resources/>

⁴ O’Brien, E., Dervarics, C. (2013). “Which Way Up? What Research Says About School Turnaround Strategies.” Alexandria, VA: Center for Public Education National School Boards Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Policies/Which-Way-Up-At-a-glance/Which-Way-Up-Full-Report.pdf>

⁵ Strunk, K., Marsh, J., Hashim, A., Bush-Mecenas, S., and Weinstein, T. (2016) “The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District.” Education Finance and Policy; Dee, T. (2012) “School Turnarounds: Evidence from the 2009 Stimulus” (NBER Working Paper No. 17990). The National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990>

⁶ Strunk, K., Marsh, J., Hashim, A., Bush-Mecenas, S., and Weinstein, T. (2016) “The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District.” Education Finance and Policy; Dee, T. (2012) “School Turnarounds: Evidence from the 2009 Stimulus” (NBER Working Paper No. 17990). The National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990> Ibid.

⁷ SIG required that 50 percent of teachers be replaced. There is no evidence that replacing one-half of the staff is the right amount needed for successful turnaround efforts. What’s important is that districts have aligned incentives so that they are sufficiently aggressive with an appropriate proportion of teacher replacement and that the state enforces consequences if districts fail to improve.

⁸ Dee, T. (2012) “School Turnarounds: Evidence from the 2009 Stimulus” (NBER Working Paper No. 17990). The National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990>; An examination of the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Public School Choice Initiative (PSCI), which sought to turn around the district’s lowest-performing schools, found that the cohort of schools that implemented reconstitution and restart turnaround efforts saw significant gains in student achievement while other cohorts using moderate school turnaround efforts saw no change or a decrease in student achievement. Strunk, K., Marsh, J., Hashim, A., Bush-Mecenas, S., and Weinstein, T. (2016) “The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District.” Education Finance and Policy.

⁹ “Turnaround Case Studies: Elevating Turnaround to a Systemic Level.” Mastery Charter Case Study (2013). Education Resource Strategies. Retrieved from: https://www.erstrategies.org/library/turnaround_case_studies; Broussard, S. (2012) “Philadelphia Charters Get Results.” Cleveland.com. Retrieved from: http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2012/05/philadelphia_charters_get_resu.html; A restart of public schools in Los Angeles by the charter management organization, Green Dot Public Schools, has produced similar results. One study found that students attending high schools restarted by Green Dot Public Schools scored higher on California’s high school exit exam on their first attempt and had higher rates of passing the English language and mathematics sections of the test than their peers at Los Angeles Unified School District high schools in the area. In addition, students at Green Dot schools had a 25 percent higher graduation rate and scored 35 percent higher on college readiness requirements. Herman, J., Wang, J., Rickles, J., Hsu, v. Monroe, S., Leon, S., Straubhaar, R. (2012). “Evaluation of Green Dot’s Locke Transformation Project: Findings for Cohort 1 and 2 Students.” UCLA’s National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. Retrieved from: http://cresst.org/publications/cresst-publication-3184/?_sf_s=Locke

¹⁰ de la Torre, M., Gwynne, J. (2009). “When Schools Close: Effects on Displaced Students in Chicago Public Schools.” UChicago Consortium on School Research. Retrieved from: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/when-schools-close-effects-displaced-students-chicago-public-schools>; A study of 200 school closings in Michigan found that students who transferred to higher-performing schools experienced academic gains. Brummet, Q. (2012). “The Effect of School Closings on Student Achievement.” Retrieved from: http://econ.msu.edu/seminars/docs/SC_Draft9232012.pdf; A study of 44 high school closures in New York City



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¹¹ Rouse, C., Hannaway, J., Goldhaber, D., and Figlio, D., “Feeling the Florida Heat? How Low-Performing Schools Respond to Voucher and Accountability Pressure,” American Economic Journal, 2013, <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/aea/aejep/2013/00000005/00000002/art00009>; Greene, J., “An Evaluation of the Florida A-Plus Accountability and School Choice Program,” Harvard University Program on Education Policy and Governance, 2001, <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/Florida%20A+.pdf>

¹² ExcelinEd, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Ampersand Education, “How to Recruit High-Performing Charter Management Organizations to a New Region: Results from the 2015 CMO Survey,” 2015, <http://www.excelined.org/downloads/how-to-recruit-high-performing-charter-management-organizations-to-a-new-region/>

¹³ Forster, G., “Lost Opportunity: Empirical Analysis of How Vouchers Affected Florida Public Schools,” Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 2008, <http://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Lost-Opportunity-How-Vouchers-Affected-Florida-Public-Schools.pdf>

¹⁴ Stand For Children University for Parents (STAND UP), <http://stand.org/indiana/about/what-we-do/family-engagement-organizing>

¹⁵ School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America’s Great City Schools (2015). Council of the Great City Schools. Retrieved from: <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/SIG%20Report%202015.pdf>; King Rice, J., Malen, B. “School Reconstitution as an Education Reform Strategy: A Synopsis of the Evidence.” National Education Association Research Department. Retrieved from: http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/School_Reconstruction_and_an_Education_Reform_Strategy.pdf; De la Torre, M., Allensworth, E., Jagesic, S., Sebastian, J., Salmonowicz, M., Meyers, C., Gerdeman, R. (2013). “Turning Around Low-Performing Schools in Chicago.” The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. Retrieved from: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Turnaround%20Report%20-%20Long%20Version%20FINAL.pdf>; “A Decade of Whole-School Reform: The New American Schools Experience.” (2002) Rand Corporation. Retrieved from: http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB8019/index1.html

¹⁶ Studies show that in schools that improve during school turnaround efforts, administrators and teachers effectively leverage data to identify the specific academic needs of struggling students to determine areas where professional development may be required and point toward intervention strategies. In addition, principals use data to guide educational programs. Duke, D. (2006). “Keys to Sustaining Successful School Turnarounds.” Educational Research Service: Alexandria, VA. Retrieved from: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ795690>; Knudson, J., Shambaugh, L., O’Day, J. (2011). “Beyond the School: Exploring a Systemic Approach to School Turnaround.” California Collaborative on District Reform. Retrieved From: http://www.cacollaborative.org/sites/default/files/CA_Collaborative_School_Turnaround_0.pdf; “School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America’s Great City Schools” (2015). Council of the Great City Schools. Retrieved from: <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/SIG%20Report%202015.pdf>; Strunk, K., Marsh, J., Hashim, A., Bush-Mecenas, S., and Weinstein, T. (2016) “The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District.” Education Finance and Policy.

¹⁷ Hastings, J., and Weinstein, J., “Information, School Choice, and Academic Achievement: Evidence From Two Experiments,” The Quarterly Journal of Economics, November 2008, http://www.econ.yale.edu/~jh529/papers/Hastings&Weinstein_InfoChoiceOutcomes.pdf

June 2017



CCSSO Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems



THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

Melody Schopp (South Dakota), President

Chris Minnich, Executive Director

This memorandum introduces a set of 10 principles—from states and for states—to inform the design and management of effective systems to improve or replace low-performing schools. The principles are derived from what we know based on current research, evidence, and experience, and the input of state leaders, key stakeholders, and other experts. To identify the principles, we began with what must be true at each level of the public education system—from what students must experience as learners to the critical roles played by schools, districts, authorizers, partners, and states. The principles also build on the [CCSSO next-generation state accountability system principles](#) that highlight the inextricable link between accountability and school improvement, including a focus on diagnostic reviews, targeted support for the lowest-performing schools (and their districts), and systems of continuous improvement to sustain progress over time.

MORAL AND ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES

As chief state school officers, we are deeply committed to providing the high-quality educational opportunities, resources, and supports necessary to improve outcomes for *each and every* student in *each and every* school. We are cultivating systems to advance continuous improvement in all schools and districts. Yet we feel a special urgency to drive dramatic improvement for students in our lowest-performing schools and schools with the most significant achievement gaps. Accordingly, the principles laid out in this resource target improvement for these schools and ultimately better serving communities where students have traditionally been underserved.

We know that each year a school does not meet a child’s needs lowers his or her chances of success later in life. Addressing the schools that are struggling the most is fundamental to advancing our [collective commitment to educational equity](#). And because the future health of each state’s economy will depend on how prepared all of our students are, we also have an economic imperative to ensure that each and every child is ready to participate meaningfully in the workforce.

We approach this work with *resolve* to do whatever is necessary to help students succeed, with *optimism*, because much has been and continues to be learned that can inform and accelerate this undertaking, and with *humility*, recognizing the success of school improvement efforts has been uneven to date. Improving or replacing the schools most in need will take courageous, persistent commitment and action from us as state leaders in partnership with communities, families, educators, and other stakeholders.

NEW OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD

In addition to the moral and economic imperatives, states have a new responsibility and opportunity under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to lead in this critical work. In contrast to the more top-down approaches to school improvement of the No Child Left Behind Act and Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waivers, ESSA establishes some federal guardrails and then

empowers each state—working in close partnership with its local education agencies (LEAs), schools, principals, teachers, parents, students, civil rights leaders, community members, tribes, and other key stakeholders—to design its own system of school improvement. This includes the state system’s vision and theory of action; its architecture and policies; its implementation, supports, incentives, and consequences. Further, not only are there state-level roles and responsibilities to fulfill, the state also must ensure—as a matter of both state leadership and federal law—that all other levels of the system are fulfilling their specific roles for the benefit of improving student outcomes in our lowest-performing schools and in our schools with the greatest achievement gaps.

USING THE PRINCIPLES

We intend these 10 principles to articulate the core *components* of an effective school improvement system—a common *vision* across states that can support both individual system design and cross-state collaboration and learning. But we do not intend them as a common *theory of action* for how best to improve outcomes for students enrolled in schools identified for support.

Similar to our accountability principles, the school improvement principles presented here are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. The particular choices we make in applying the principles to our systems should align with our particular theory of action. Some may be fully committed to improving existing low-performing schools under current governance structures. Others may pursue strategies that focus more on school choice, closing and replacing the lowest-performing schools with new schools, or governance changes (e.g., chartering or state-led takeovers). Further, each state’s design should also reflect its unique set of conditions, including but not limited to current levels of student and school performance; the degree to which local control constrains or complements the SEA; and the existing politics, resources, and capacity at both the state and local levels.

The particular choices we make in applying the principles to our systems should align with our particular theory of action. Some may be fully committed to improving existing low-performing schools under current governance structures. Others may pursue strategies that focus more on school choice, closing and replacing the lowest-performing schools with new schools, or governance changes (e.g., chartering or state-led takeovers).

Regardless of the particular theory or the specific conditions, each state’s system should still reflect these principles in meaningful ways. The principles will help guide us in our initial design, through implementation, and as we continuously improve our systems and approaches over time. The principles can also help clarify the essential roles and responsibilities that actors at each level of the system must fulfill. Finally, by being transparent about our aspirations, the principles should help our partners and stakeholders hold us accountable for addressing all the key elements of effective school improvement.

The following table presents the principles of effective school improvement systems. To succeed at this hard work, each principle must be manifest at all levels of the school improvement system. Note that the principles are all important, and the order they are presented in the table below does not connote a ranking or prioritization among them. Accompanying each principle is a set of illustrative examples of key roles that states can play.¹

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems	Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle
<p>1. Elevate school improvement as an urgent priority at every level of the system—schools, LEAs, and the SEA—and establish for each level clear roles, lines of authority, and responsibilities for improving low-performing schools.</p> <p><i>If everything is a priority, nothing is.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a clear state vision and theory of action; identify, based on evidence and lessons learned from past state and local efforts, what must happen at the school, LEA, and SEA levels to create the conditions for success; and codify a focused strategy and defined state role that is understood and shared across the SEA and among education stakeholders. • Prioritize school improvement with a specific focus on equity by emphasizing it in the agency’s strategic plan, organizing and dedicating sufficient SEA resources (time, staff, funding), placing the school improvement lead on the SEA’s senior leadership team, highlighting efforts and data internally and externally, and using the chief’s public communications and political capital to maintain focus on this issue.

¹ Leaders at the school, district, and regional level—as well as those working outside the education system in ways that impact young people—must fill their own key roles. Identifying these roles is beyond the scope of this brief introduction to the principles, but they are essential for actually driving better student outcomes in our lowest-performing schools. CCSSO plans to supplement this initial memorandum with additional details, examples, and resources, including information about the roles leaders at each level must play in an effective state system.

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems

Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle

- 2. Make decisions based on what will best serve each and every student with the expectation that all students can and will master the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and civic life. Challenge and change existing structures or norms that perpetuate low performance or stymie improvement.**

Put students at the center so that every student succeeds.

- Rigorously review and revise state and local policies and practices to remove existing barriers to effective school improvement and create new enabling conditions that can accelerate progress. For example, provide additional authority and flexibility to the SEA and/or LEAs to take additional direct actions when identified schools do not improve.
- Explore new approaches, including changes to funding or governance, that could better serve students even if they require changes to the existing system.
- Establish a direct connection from every state office, program, and policy, and those already implementing school improvement strategies—including those that address specific subgroups of students such as students with disabilities and English learners.

- 3. Engage early, regularly, and authentically with stakeholders and partners so improvement is done *with* and not *to* the school, families, and the community.**

- Work with schools, families, and community members to build trusting relationships, expand capacity, inform planning, build political will, strengthen community leadership and commitment, and provide feedback loops to adjust as needed.
- Integrate school and community assets as well as early childhood, higher education, social services, and workforce systems to, among other things, help address challenges outside of school.

- Regularly and authentically engage key stakeholders—especially school staff, families, civil rights organizations, and community members—as partners in decision-making on needs assessments, school improvement plan development, monitoring, and continuous improvement.
- Arrange or provide capacity-building support to families and community members to help them engage meaningfully in school improvement efforts and to support student learning.
- Bolster state and local capacity by vetting and collaborating with strategic partners (e.g., technical assistance providers, research institutions, tribal organizations, and other service providers) who are aligned with the system’s priorities, implement evidence-based approaches whenever possible, and have a track record of improving outcomes especially for low-income students and students of color.

If you want to go far, go together.

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems

Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle

4. **Select at each level the strategy that best matches the context at hand—from LEAs and schools designing evidence-based improvement plans to SEAs exercising the most appropriate state-level authority to intervene in non-exiting schools.**

One size does not fit all.

- In order to differentiate support and interventions appropriately, elevate the role that high-quality, comprehensive LEA- and school-level needs assessments play in the school improvement process. The needs assessment should inform how the state approves school improvement plans, distributes funds, provides technical assistance, takes action in LEAs with many identified schools, and pursues more rigorous action in any lowest-performing school that does not exit improvement status.
- Differentiate whenever practicable how the SEA structures and delivers improvement support and monitoring to best match the context, needs, and assets of the students, schools, and LEAs involved.
- Select the most appropriate strategy from a comprehensive continuum of state actions, which might include support for locally-driven improvement, creating networks of practitioners across schools and LEAs, aligning and prioritizing regional services, increasing student options, creating state-authorized turnaround or innovation zones, closing and replacing existing schools with new schools, state takeover of individual schools, state takeover of LEAs, and other extraordinary state authorities. Consider a wide array of factors in making selections—especially when taking more rigorous action for non-exiting schools—including but not limited to LEA and SEA capacity as well as local and state political conditions.

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems

Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle

5. Support LEAs and schools in designing high-quality school improvement plans informed by

- each school's assets (and how they're being used), needs (including but not limited to resources), and root causes of underperformance;
- research on effective schools, successful school improvement efforts, and implementation science;
- best available evidence of what interventions work, for whom, under which circumstances; and
- the science of learning and development, including the impact of poverty and adversity on learning.

- Ensure school improvement plans focus on both creating the conditions for learning and strengthening the instructional core to help students master the full range of essential knowledge, skills, and mindsets.
- Expand support and oversight to include a focus on the role and capacity of LEAs and LEA leaders in improvement planning.
- Support LEAs and schools to identify and implement the most appropriate evidence-based interventions to address specific challenges a school faces. Where the existing evidence base is lacking for a particular context, support LEAs and schools in studying the effects of promising or innovative approaches.
- Establish SEA policies and processes (e.g., timelines, needs assessments, and planning templates) that ensure improvement plans are comprehensive, actionable, and can function as "living documents" responding to changing circumstances and progress on implementation and impact. Where appropriate, support planning periods that promote alignment between needs assessments, stakeholder engagement, selected strategies and interventions, and plans for implementation.

Failing to plan is planning to fail.

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems

Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle

6. **Focus especially on ensuring the highest need schools have great leaders and teachers who have or develop the specific capacities needed to dramatically improve low-performing schools.**

Talent matters.

- Support school leadership initiatives—including through Title II’s 3 percent set aside for school leadership—to ensure that identified schools are able to attract, develop, and retain effective school leaders with the specific competencies and skills needed to improve student outcomes in these schools.
- Examine SEA education workforce initiatives to attract, prepare, develop, and retain teachers and leaders in schools and districts identified for improvement (and within those schools for students who have historically been assigned less experienced or effective teachers). For example, support the development of systems of ongoing, embedded, individual, and collective professional learning to develop more effective teachers, especially in low-performing schools.
- Reimagine the SEA role in reviewing local Title II plans and develop teacher equity plans to promote the strategic and (where applicable) evidence-based use of Title II funds and other incentives to prioritize and support school improvement (e.g., reviewing Title II plans and school improvement grant applications together).

7. **Dedicate sufficient resources (time, staff, funding); align them to advance the system’s goals; use them efficiently by establishing clear roles and responsibilities at all levels of the system; and hold partners accountable for results.**

Put your money where your mouth is.

- Tightly align and focus all available SEA and LEA resources—across federal, state, and local formula and competitive funding streams—to support and sustain improvement plans.
- Streamline requirements when possible to avoid duplication and mixed messages that obstruct progress at the school level.
- Dedicate sufficient resources to manage effective school improvement processes at the SEA itself, including rethinking how existing staff across the SEA can prioritize their time to support schools in greatest need of improvement and identifying funds for continuous improvement and rigorous evaluations.

Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems	Sample Key State Roles to Manifest Each Principle
<p>8. Establish clear expectations and report progress on a sequence of ambitious yet achievable short- and long-term school improvement benchmarks that focus on both equity and excellence.</p> <p><i>What gets measured gets done.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set benchmarks to measure whether school improvement efforts are being implemented thoughtfully, schools are making progress on a range of leading indicators, and schools are ultimately exiting improvement status. Provide LEAs with guidance and support for doing the same with schools identified because of low-performing subgroups of students. • Be transparent with all stakeholders, including family and community members, about school improvement progress throughout the process.
<p>9. Implement improvement plans rigorously and with fidelity, and, since everything will not go perfectly, gather actionable data and information during implementation; evaluate efforts and monitor evidence to learn what is working, for whom, and under what circumstances; and continuously improve over time.</p> <p><i>Ideas are only as good as they are implemented.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a consistent focus with LEAs, schools, and partners on implementation based on what is known from implementation science. • Regularly use data and continuous improvement routines (including clear milestones, feedback loops, and data cycles) to intervene appropriately when progress stalls and to inform the allocation of resources and supports across all identified schools. • Apply lessons learned from internal and external evaluations of both successful and unsuccessful school improvement efforts to identify which strategies are the best match for a particular school and LEA. • Regularly reflect on and continuously improve the SEA's school improvement policies and practices themselves.
<p>10. Plan from the beginning how to sustain successful school improvement efforts financially, politically, and by ensuring the school and LEA are prepared to continue making progress.</p> <p><i>Don't be a flash in the pan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure sustainability and success of a school improvement effort, focus on building capacity for continuous improvement in LEAs (not just in schools) and support and buy-in among educators, families, and community members. • Allocate school improvement funds strategically to avoid a "funding cliff" and support LEAs and schools in identifying new and existing funding streams to sustain improvement efforts after schools exit improvement status.



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EDUCATIONAL



THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Report to Legislative Committee

SCHOOL TURNAROUND

November 2017

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SCHOOL TURNAROUND

STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

U.C.A. Section 53A-1-1210 requires the State Board of Education to submit an annual report to the Education Interim Committee on or before November 30 of each year. This report has been submitted annually since 2015.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For two years, schools in Cohort 1 of turnaround status have been engaging in a series of systemic changes. These changes were predicated upon a thorough analysis of a school's performance that was conducted by a school turnaround expert. We have found that the majority of the first cohort of turnaround schools are showing promising improvements. Twenty-four of the twenty-six Cohort 1 Turnaround Schools have increased the percentage of points earned under the state's school accountability system from school year 2014-15 to school year 2016-17. In the fall of 2017, five additional schools have been identified as low performing schools (Cohort 2).

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the Legislature enacted S.B. 234 School Turnaround Amendments, which modified the School Turnaround and Leadership Development Act (the Act). The Act required the Board to annually designate the lowest performing 3% of schools statewide according to the percentage of points possible under the state's accountability system. The Act also requires schools that have been designated to make specific changes over a three-year period to improve student performance. The first cohort of turnaround schools, designated in the fall of 2015, has completed their planning year, and is in their second year of implementation. The second cohort of turnaround schools, designated in the fall of 2017, will begin the improvement process winter of 2017.

FINDINGS

Using the state's accountability system criteria in place for the 2014-15 school year, 24 of the 26 Cohort 1 schools increased the percentage of points earned from school year 2014-15 to school year 2016-17. Based on the state's accountability system from the 2014-15 school year, 16 Cohort 1 schools improved at least one letter grade, and if this progress trend continues, these schools will exit turnaround status in the fall of 2018. (Appendix One)

CONCLUSION

Cohort 1 schools that conducted a needs assessment, root cause analysis and prepared a school improvement plan, and implemented that plan with fidelity, have demonstrated progress in the state's accountability system. Cohort 1 schools can only exit School Turnaround status if they improve at least one letter grade for two consecutive years. Exit determinations will be made in the fall of 2018.

APPENDIX

Percentage Points Growth and School Grades – Cohort 1

Cohort 1 Turnaround Schools			
Elementary and Jr. High Schools			
District	School	% Growth Change	2015 grade - 2017 grade
Alpine	Cedar Valley Elementary School	61%	2015 – D, 2017 - B
Canyons	Midvale Elementary School	-4%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Carbon	Mont Harmon Middle School	59%	2015 - D, 2017 - B
Charter	CS Lewis Academy	18%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Charter	Dual Immersion Academy	68%	2015 - F, 2017 - C
Charter	Entheos Academy (Magna Campus)	14%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Charter	Mana Academy	57%	2015 - F, 2017 - D
Davis	Vae View Elementary	25%	2015 - D, 2017 - C
Granite	Granger Elementary	23%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Granite	Lincoln Elementary	21%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Granite	Oquirrh Hills Elementary	-10%	2015 - D, 2017 - F
Granite	Redwood Elementary	13%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Granite	Roosevelt Elementary	41%	2015 - F, 2017 - D
Granite	South Kearns Elementary	43%	2015 - D, 2017 - C
Granite	Thomas Jefferson Jr. High	34%	2015 - D, 2017 - C
Granite	Thomas W. Bacchus Elementary	24%	2015 - D, 2017 - C
Granite	West Lake Jr. High	5%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Granite	Woodrow Wilson Elementary	28%	2015 - D, 2017 - D
Kane	Big Water School	32%	2015 - F, 2017 - D
Ogden	Bonneville Elementary	91%	2015 - F, 2017 - B
San Juan	Bluff Elementary	60%	2015 - F, 2017 - C
San Juan	Tse'Bii' Nidziszgai Elementary	23%	2015 - F, 2017 - F
High Schools			
Charter	Pioneer High School	43%	2015 - F, 2017 - C
Charter	Utah Connections Academy	13%	2015 - F, 2017 - F
San Juan	Monument Valley High	47%	2015 - F, 2017 - C
San Juan	Whitehorse High	39%	2015 - F, 2017 - D

*Percentage increase in the percentage of points earned under the state's accountability system from school year 2014-15 to school year 2016-17.



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LEARNING

A Framework for Comprehensive Student Development

K. Brooke Stafford-Brizard, Ph.D. | Foreword by Pamela Cantor, M.D.





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Foreword

This paper began with a conversation about children. At Turnaround for Children, we wanted to understand how they acquire the skills and mindsets for learning. Which skills do we need to build in children for them to be successful in school? And if we know what they are, can they be taught? How does growing up with adversity impact the acquisition of these critical skills?

Brooke Stafford-Brizard set out to answer these questions. What emerged after a deep dive into scientific research from diverse fields is Building Blocks for Learning. It's a framework for comprehensive student development, grounded in science, in service of equity. It suggests a developmental continuum that starts in early childhood but doesn't stop there. It acknowledges that children don't always get the same start in life and they don't all follow the same smooth path through it. The paper contains the background and rationale to support and develop Building Blocks for Learning among all children, especially in grades K-12.¹

We present this framework in the hope that it will serve as a platform for multiple stakeholders from the areas of policy, research and practice to build a more comprehensive approach to student development in schools, and perhaps even beyond schools. This work contributes to a number of other efforts currently underway to create a more coherent field of policy, research, practice and measurement focusing on the full set of skills and mindsets that students need to succeed in school and to thrive in the years beyond. Turnaround for Children offers this framework as a contribution to a vital collaborative endeavor to deepen and transform K-12 education. Instead of asking children to beat the odds, we can use this knowledge to change the odds for many children.

– Pamela Cantor, M.D., President and CEO, Turnaround for Children



¹ Recent terminology for these skills and mindsets within the field of education includes the labels “non-cognitive” or “non-academic.” Neither of these effectively defines or describes these skills and mindsets, as many of them represent the very core of cognition (e.g., attention, memory), and they are academic in nature as they are applied in an academic setting. Therefore, these terms are not used in this paper.



The Case for Comprehensive Student Development

Currently, the U.S. education system draws from a rigorous and well-developed set of academic standards for learning, which focus on what children should know and be able to do. However, success in the classroom and beyond relies on much more than mastery of these academic standards. If academic standards are *what* students need to learn, there are also skills and mindsets that prepare and support *how* students learn. Successful engagement in the classroom and in life relies on a set of cognitive and social-emotional skills and mindsets, which are not represented in academic standards.

When students face adversity and stress in their home environment and/or fail to access a quality early childhood education, the development of cognitive and social-emotional skills and mindsets is at risk. Thus, K-12 design must ensure that instruction, supports and assessments are in place to address this potential skill gap in school-age students. Currently, many schools are designed with the assumption that critical skills for learning are in place upon entry into K-12, leaving many students without the attention or support they need to develop as learners. All students, regardless of socioeconomic background, need these cognitive and social-emotional skills and mindsets to engage and thrive in school.

When educators neither prioritize these skills and mindsets nor integrate them with academic development, students are left without tools for engagement or a language for learning. They become dependent on adult-driven procedures and routines rather than their own skills and motivation. To deliver the education all students deserve – one that prepares them for the lives they choose – the U.S. education system must address the essential elements of student development beyond academics. When students matriculate through K-12 without the skills necessary to engage in learning, they can't process the vast amount of instruction that comes their way each day and it becomes daunting, if not impossible, to stay on track.

This is the achievement gap.

The Building Blocks for Learning represent a set of evidence-based skills and mindsets that facilitate and foster success in school and life. They have been proven by research to strongly correlate to and even predict academic achievement.² While there is increasing focus on these skills and mindsets within the U.S. education system, K-12 schools have yet to be designed with the effective integration of these critical components of development in mind. But they can and should be. Moreover, when educators do emphasize key cognitive and social-emotional skills, they generally do so in isolation from academic instruction, without the sound design and instructional practices that are often effectively applied toward academic development. It is well understood that students build academic skills through effective modeling, scaffolding (or support) and opportunities to apply and transfer them independently. It is also well understood that students must develop foundational academic skills before higher-order skills. Children's behavioral, social, emotional and cognitive development requires this same design, attention and support.

It is also important to consider that in K-12 schools student development occurs within the social context of a classroom through relationships between teachers, peers and other adults. Many current frameworks for student development are limited in their transactional approach between a student and academic content, which underrepresents this critical social dynamic. The majority of teachers recognize and appreciate the central role that human relationships play in student development. Even so, current school design models often overlook the role of relationships and their impact on child development.

Relationships are the fuel for human development; they foster trust and belief, and are a buffer against stress. Children learn through modeling from and interaction with others, whether it be a parent, teacher, other adult or a peer. Current focus on student development rightly prioritizes the skills and knowledge that students must acquire, apply and then transfer to new contexts, yet this prioritization cannot eclipse the fact that relationships drive this learning and development. The Building Blocks for Learning reflect a set of skills and mindsets that facilitate student success in a social context through inter- and intra-personal development. These are not just skills and mindsets to prioritize in addition to academics; these are the skills and mindsets to prioritize in service of human development and academic success, as well as success in college and life. The Building Blocks for Learning are what students need to become successful, engaged and independent learners in K-12 and beyond.

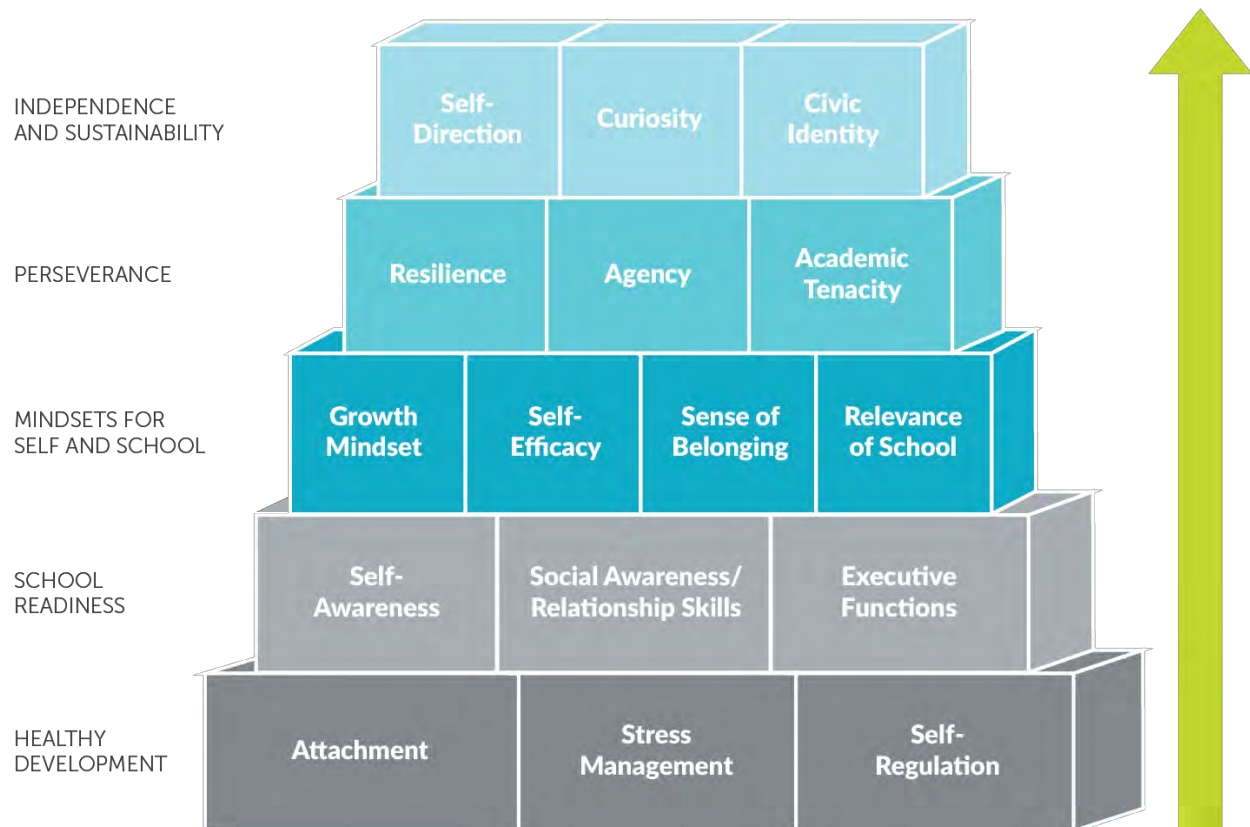
² Each Building Block's presence in the framework is supported by research in the relevant field (i.e., cognitive neuroscience, educational psychology), which validates that the skill or mindset meets the framework criteria (detailed later in this paper). All of the supporting research is included in the references section.

The Building Blocks for Learning Framework

Turnaround for Children's Building Blocks for Learning framework represents the skills and mindsets that students use to access, acquire and apply the academic content prioritized in classrooms.

Figure 1

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LEARNING



The skills and mindsets included in this framework were identified through the following guiding principles:

- 1) Alignment to the development of the **child as a “learner”** in an educational setting
- 2) A **measurable** and **malleable** skill, behavior or mindset – differentiating between fixed personality/character traits and “teachable” learner attributes
- 3) A research base demonstrating impact of the skill, behavior or mindset on **academic achievement**

Several popular skills, mindsets and traits did not meet these guidelines and are therefore not included as Building Blocks. For example, grit is considered a personality trait, and has not yet been proven to be teachable.³ What are represented are key Building Blocks that contribute to the complex construct of grit and meet the framework's guiding principles, such as self-regulation and academic tenacity. As another example, creativity is a compelling and important skill to many, but has an inconsistent relationship with achievement in the research.⁴ This might very well be due to the fact that traditional K-12

³ Duckworth, A. L. & Eskreis-Winkler, L. (2013).

⁴ Philliber Research Associates. (2013).

classrooms often do not reward creativity as much as compliance. While this is something to consider with ongoing research and practice, current evidence does not support the inclusion of creativity as a Building Block.



The Developmental Perspective

Research on each Building Block informs its placement in the framework. For some of the skills, the developmental path is clear and grounded in a robust evidence base. For example, the cognitive skills of self-regulation and executive functions have clear developmental benchmarks in early childhood and adolescence,⁵ offering strong support for the age at which students should develop these skills. The Building Blocks toward the top of the framework also inform the placement of Building Blocks below, based on contributing skills and mindsets identified in the research. For example, attachment and self-efficacy are identified as skills that support the development of resilience and are therefore placed under this higher-order skill.⁶ Still, much of this research falls short of suggesting a prescribed sequencing of skills and mindsets. The framework will benefit from further research that prioritizes these developmental questions. Finally, the highest-order skills in the framework represent what a K-12 education should be designed to achieve – a student’s capacity to engage with him/herself and the world independently and successfully.

In the first or bottom row of the framework is a set of foundational skills that every child needs. Identified through research in the fields of neuroscience and child development,^{7, 8, 9} they include the bonds that children make with adults, which provide emotional security; the skills to cope with and manage stressful conditions; and the regulation of emotion and attention to effectively engage and accomplish goals. Research has demonstrated that chronic stress and adversity, often experienced by children growing up in poverty, significantly impacts the development of areas of the brain responsible for these foundational skills.¹⁰ As a result, many of these students do not enter school with skills for controlling impulses, focusing attention or organizing thinking in a goal-oriented fashion.¹¹

The second row of the Building Blocks framework represents a set of social-emotional skills and cognitive skills that contribute to a child’s readiness to engage successfully in school.¹² Together, these first two rows of skills are requisite for learning and are often prioritized in high-quality, early-childhood settings. These skills are the gateway for engaging in the classroom, connecting to teachers and peers and building the habits of success that drive academic achievement. The Building Blocks for Learning framework proposes how these gateway skills, together with a set of mindsets that students have about themselves and school, contribute to higher-order skills that help students to thrive in school and succeed in life.

The student-held mindsets represented in the third row of the model include self-efficacy, the student’s conviction that he/she is capable of success, and growth mindset, the belief that this comes with effort and hard work. Sense of belonging allows students to connect to the school community, and belief in the relevance of school reflects an understanding that education is a path toward success.¹³ These mindsets are placed above the gateway skills in the framework, but this does not mean that they cannot be developed before, after or at the same time. Where and how to focus on each mindset, and in what order or sequence, remains an important empirical question that this nascent field of research will address over time. There is still much to learn regarding the developmental nature of this set of important mindsets students have about themselves and school. What is clear from research is that the gateway skills, together with the mindsets about self and school, contribute to the higher-order Building Blocks, such as resilience and academic tenacity.^{14,15}

⁵ Diamond, A., & Lee, K. (2011).

⁶ Masten, A. S. (2007).

⁷ Moss, E., & St-Laurent, D. (2001).

⁸ Kraag, G., Zeegers, M. P., Kok, G., Hosman, C., & Abu-Saad, H. H. (2006).

⁹ Blair, C. & Diamond, A. (2008).

¹⁰ Blair, C. & Raver, C. C. (2012).

¹¹ Blair, C. & Raver, C. C. (2012).

¹² As a note, many researchers include executive functions – including inhibitory control, flexibility and memory skills – as part of the construct of self-regulation, but as Diamond and Lee note, “more complex EFs include problem-solving, reasoning and planning.” Executive functions are a vital set of skills for accessing, processing and storing information, and develop with more complexity as a child develops, with two significant benchmarks in early childhood and adolescence. Due to the complexity and progression of these skills in relation to development, they are separated from the umbrella concept of self-regulation.

¹³ Farrington, C. A., et al. (2012).

¹⁴ Masten, A. S. (2007).

¹⁵ Dweck, C., Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011).

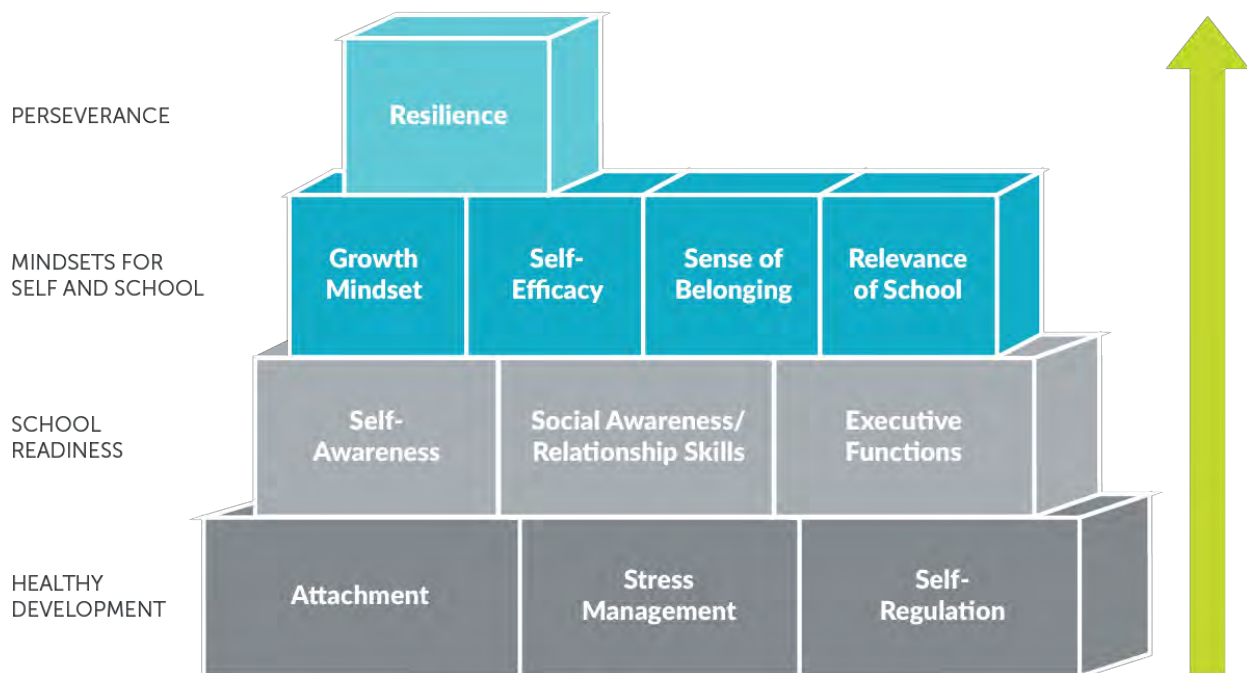
The top two rows of Building Blocks represent the skills that help students persevere through school toward commencement despite the barriers and adversity they might face. This includes resilience, which allows students to recover and bounce back from harmful conditions that could derail their success, and to build protective factors to cope with future challenges and adversity. It also includes agency, or the ability to act with autonomy and advocate for oneself in service of individual values and goals. And finally, it includes academic tenacity, which helps students persevere toward long-term goals. At the top of the framework, the highest-order Building Blocks demonstrate the skills and mindsets that allow students to chart their own course in life and pursue that course with independence. Self-direction, curiosity and civic identity capture (respectively): how students identify and pursue goals successfully, how they use the world to accomplish goals with inquiry and flexibility, and how they define their own contributions to the world.

While the foundational Building Blocks do not comprehensively define the higher-order skills, they are powerful and consistent contributors to them, and therefore support the developmental perspective of the model. As an example, Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the lower-order Building Blocks that contribute to the development of resilience and academic tenacity, according to the research defining these skills.^{16, 17} Ongoing research targeting the developmental connection between specific foundational and higher-order Building Blocks will contribute to the development and validation of this framework.

Figure 2

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LEARNING: DEVELOPMENT OF RESILIENCE

Masten, 2007



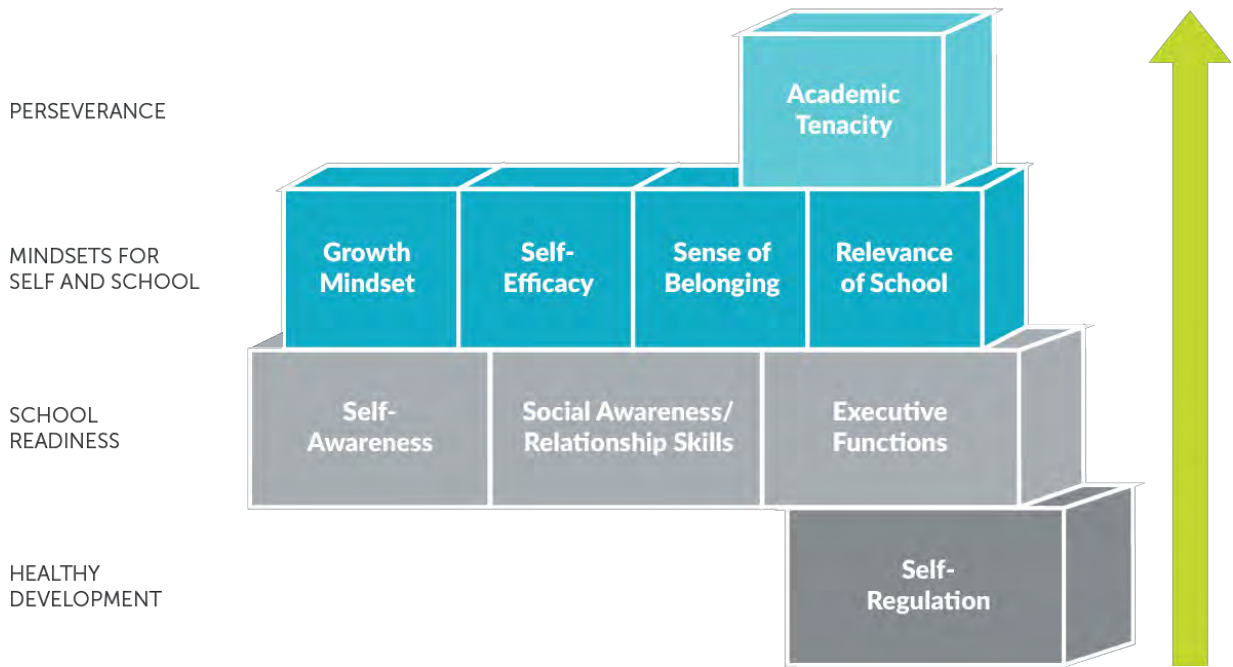
¹⁶ Masten, A. S. (2007).

¹⁷ Dweck, C., Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011).

Figure 3

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LEARNING: DEVELOPMENT OF **ACADEMIC TENACITY**

Dweck, Walton and Cohen, 2011



Next Steps

There are numerous opportunities to test and strengthen this framework for student development and steps to take within the areas of research, practice and policy.

Research

As noted above, this framework provides a deep set of empirical questions and the platform for a rich research agenda that will contribute to the ongoing validation of the framework and the developmental connections within it. New learnings are surfacing from fields such as neuroscience almost every day, contributing to an understanding of neural development and diversity, the neurobiology of stress and adversity, and how all of this impacts learning. Findings from this and other relevant fields, such as educational, positive and social psychology, will provide critical contributions to this developing framework. Moreover, research within and between each of the Building Blocks will help to answer important questions regarding age, gender and race as they relate to the acquisition, application and perception of these skills and mindsets.¹⁸ Further research will also inform which skills can or must be developed toward mastery and which fall on a continuum of performance.

¹⁸ Even if students demonstrate key Building Blocks, studies in a number of urban districts have demonstrated that this can be attributed differently, often negatively, in students of color (Crenshaw, et al, 2015). For example, while a white student may be applauded for demonstrating agency (e.g., voice and self-advocacy), her African-American peer may be seen as “rowdy” when exhibiting the same behaviors.

While there is evidence to support the malleability of the Building Blocks,¹⁹ researchers and practitioners invested in this framework will want to address:

- How to teach and strengthen these skills and mindsets effectively within school settings and other settings that address children's development, such as after-school, mentoring and alternative education programs
- How they should be sequenced, promoted and overlap in their implementation
- What level of demonstration or mastery is required for effective development of the Building Blocks (and how this differs depending on the skill or mindset)
- Effective integration with academic development and pedagogical practice (e.g., personalization, differentiation), prioritizing alignment to the Common Core State Standards and leveraging the powerful connection to process skills outlined in these standards
- How the framework can inform the prioritization, sequencing and development of skills for career success in workforce readiness programs

Research can also contribute to the development of crucial measurements of these skills and mindsets. The most common and accessible form of measurement for most Building Blocks is a self-report, which presents a number of threats to validity. Informant reports from parents, teachers or peers are also possible, as are behavioral tasks, which can be costly and time-consuming. A number of researchers have suggested a composite measure, including questionnaires and behavioral tasks, which should be pursued with attention to availability of resources (e.g., time and money) in schools. As all of these options develop, there must be strategic focus on a commitment to effectively embedding these measures into school design so there is allocated time for their administration, efficient analysis and effective use of the data as a formative tool for addressing student needs in these domains.

While the empirical questions and areas for development around the Building Blocks for Learning are significant, the opportunity to establish a rigorous and developmental framework for these skills and mindsets with deep connection to both academic and personal growth and achievement has the potential to dramatically improve the education we provide for students across the country.

Practice

As emerging research informs this framework, the field of practice must use these findings to prioritize effective and integrated development of the Building Blocks. Today, the gap between theory and practice regarding the development and support of these skills and mindsets remains large. Practitioners will provide critical insights toward the successful identification and implementation of the Building Blocks within the complex environments of districts, schools and classrooms. Stimulating, supporting, documenting and measuring innovation in districts and schools is a critical piece of the work ahead. This involves identifying and codifying practice that effectively addresses student development and its integration with academics, particularly in environments with high concentrations of students facing adversity.

The work of identifying and developing effective practice with regard to the Building Blocks for Learning must incorporate all areas of school design including:

- Leadership and teacher preparation, professional development and evaluation
- Support and guidance for effective school culture and climate
- Design and implementation of curriculum, assessments and pedagogical supports (e.g., stress reduction and self-regulation through mindfulness and contemplative practice)
- Systems of support and intervention for students

Key learnings from the Building Blocks framework, put into practice, will contribute to the strengthening and reinvention of K-12 classrooms and all settings that focus on preparing students for success in school and in life. Attention to the full continuum of student development from early childhood to adulthood will also inform the creation of developmentally appropriate resources to support acquisition and application of the Building Blocks. Research and practice have demonstrated that many individuals, particularly those experiencing the stress and adversity of poverty, do not acquire

¹⁹ Malleability is one of the criteria for inclusion in the framework, and is supported in the research base identified for each Building Block.

these skills and mindsets at the developmentally appropriate age.²⁰ In addition, neuroscientific research continues to demonstrate critical periods where neural development is possible, such as the teenage years.²¹ Just as the challenge of learning to read in older students and adults has been addressed through age-appropriate, engaging materials and instruction, the same can be done for the development of skills such as self-regulation and executive functions.

Policy

Finally, policymakers have an opportunity to support the impact of both research and practice by prioritizing the development of the Building Blocks as a core component of a successful district and school. Setting policy to establish the relevant resources, supports and accountability at the federal, state and local levels will reinforce a paradigm shift in K-12 settings and fuel innovation and progress in the areas of research and practice. Furthermore, while the Building Blocks for Learning offer a universal perspective on comprehensive student development (i.e., every child regardless of their background must develop these skills and mindsets), research supports the tremendous impact this framework can have on high-need populations, such as students with learning and behavioral issues. Federal, state and district policies that incentivize and support environments and instruction to develop the Building Blocks for Learning will address the large population of students, many from high-poverty backgrounds, who are currently moving through the K-12 system without the gateway skills for learning. As stated earlier, the absence of cognitive and social-emotional skills, such as emotional regulation, attention and memory, that are core to effective engagement in learning, contributes significantly to ongoing challenges and deficits in academic development and to the achievement gap. Policy can play a powerful role in this innovative and promising strategy for addressing that gap.



Conclusion

There may be great momentum in the field of work focusing on these components of student development, yet many of the domains are neither aligned nor integrated, thereby contributing to competing vocabularies, taxonomies and confusion regarding what to prioritize and when. Furthermore, this field remains disconnected from academic instruction, often rendering these skills and mindsets supplemental or ancillary in the K-12 classroom instead of prioritized and integrated to drive comprehensive student development as they should be. The Building Blocks for Learning framework presents an opportunity to launch and prioritize a common framework for the development of cognitive and social-emotional skills and mindsets within K-12 schools, which interweaves with academic development and builds toward independence and success for all students.

²⁰ Blair, C. & Raver, C. C. (2012).

²¹ Steinberg, L. (2005).

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About Turnaround for Children

Turnaround for Children acts as a catalyst for change by raising awareness about and addressing the challenges that affect any school facing adversity, particularly those in high-poverty communities. Turnaround develops tools and strategies, grounded in science, that cultivate a safe environment, reduce stress, increase readiness to learn and accelerate student development and academic achievement. Please visit www.turnaroundusa.org to learn more.

About the Author

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Appendix

Working Definitions of Building Blocks for Learning

Academic Tenacity

The beliefs and skills that allow students to look beyond short-term concerns to longer-term or higher-order goals, and withstand challenges and setbacks to persevere toward these goals.²²

Agency

A student's individual decision-making and autonomous actions.²³

Attachment

A deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space.²⁴

Civic Identity

A multifaceted and dynamic notion of the self as belonging to and responsible for a community or communities.²⁵

Curiosity

The desire to engage and understand the world, interest in a wide variety of things and preference for a complete understanding of a complex topic or problem.²⁶

Executive Functions

The cognitive control functions needed when one has to concentrate and think, when acting on one's initial impulse would be ill-advised. Core executive functions include cognitive flexibility, inhibition (self-control, self-regulation) and working memory. More complex executive functions include problem-solving, reasoning and planning.²⁷

Mindsets²⁸

Growth Mindset

Wherein students ascribe to the belief: *my ability and competence grow with my effort.*

Self-Efficacy

The perception that one can do something successfully.

Sense of Belonging

A sense that one has a rightful place in a given academic setting and can claim full membership in a classroom community.

Relevance of School

A student's sense that the subject matter he or she is studying is interesting and holds value.

Relationship Skills

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively and seeking and offering help when needed.²⁹

²² Dweck, et al., 2011

²³ Toshalis, E. & Nakkula, M.J. (2012)

²⁴ Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1973).

²⁵ Rubin, Beth C. (2007).

²⁶ Goff, M., & Ackerman, P. (1992).

²⁷ Diamond A, Lee K. (2011).

²⁸ Farrington, et al., (2012).

²⁹ Payton, J., Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., Schellinger, K. B., & Pachan, M. (2008).

Resilience

Positive adaptation during or following exposure to adversities that have the potential to harm development: (a) developing well in the context of high cumulative risk for developmental problems (beating the odds, better than predicted development), (b) functioning well under currently-adverse conditions (stress-resistance, coping) and (c) recovery to normal functioning after catastrophic adversity (bouncing back, self-righting) or severe deprivation (normalization).³⁰

Self-Regulation

Regulation of attention, emotion and executive functions for the purposes of goal-directed actions.³¹

Self-Awareness

The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.³²

Social Awareness

The ability to take the perspective of, and empathize with, others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school and community resources and supports.³³

Stress Management

Constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person.³⁴

Self-Direction

A process in which learners take the initiative in planning, implementing and evaluating their own learning needs and outcomes, with or without the help of others.³⁵



³⁰ Masten, A., 2007.

³¹ Blair, C., & Ursache, A. (2011).

³² Payton, J., Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., Schellinger, K. B., & Pachan, M. (2008).

³³ Payton, J., Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., Schellinger, K. B., & Pachan, M. (2008).

³⁴ Kraag, G., Zeegers, M. P., Kok, G., Hosman, C., & Abu-Saad, H. H. (2006).

³⁵ Knowles, M. S. (1975).



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The Sequence of Policy Development

Education is the one issue in the state policy structure that most clearly has multiple partners developing or influencing policies. The governor can create policy through executive order; the legislature can create policy through the development of law; the chief state school officer makes policy through implementation and policy development; and the state board of education creates policy through a variety of measures including rule making, regulation, and—in some states—self-executing powers. Regardless of how education policy evolves in a state, it is bound to be a subject of debate and discussion. Thus, policymakers who use an inclusive systemic approach to policy development are more likely to withstand scrutiny of the policies they enact, even when people disagree with part or all of the policy.

Although education policy can originate in any number of venues, state boards of education, in partnership with departments of education, are in the best position to ensure policy continuity from investigation to evaluation. By following the sequence of policy development, boards have an opportunity to align policies with identified education goals and evaluate their effectiveness in achieving those goals. The sequence of policy development is as follows.

Issue Statement

Many issues come to the attention of state boards of education, although not all of them warrant policy actions. When an issue is brought before the board, a determination should be made on how appropriate state board action is regarding the particular issue; how the issue relates to the board's strategic goals; what is the board's view toward the issue; and what would be the anticipated outcomes of board actions. A board may determine early in the process that policies for a particular issue are best determined at the local level.

Issue Evaluation

Once the board has agreed that it should explore the policy options of an issue, it should commit some time to studying it as a group to create a common core of knowledge about the issue. The board should determine the current status of the issue in the state, what research says about the issue, which, if any, local communities are already engaged in activities that address the concerns the issue has raised, and what other states are doing in this particular area.

Data Gathering

As the board is expanding its basic knowledge about the issue, the department of education should be gathering the data the board needs in order to formulate its views and policy parameters. Such data will advise the board how many and which students the policy will affect and what resources are already available to those who will be responsible for implementation both at the state and local levels.

Public Engagement

Engagement of the public and the education community on the need and purpose of the policy must be meaningful and comprehensive. While there are multiple ways to develop public engagement forums, the critical issue is to ensure that the information that is gained is useful for the policy development process. It is also important that the board identify non-traditional forms of public engagement to hear from constituencies who may be impacted by the policy, but who generally do not have a voice in the policymaking process. In addition to public engagement forums, the board should evaluate the political climate for the policy. Interactions with the governor, the legislature, and the education community can disclose important information for the development of the policy. It can also lay the groundwork for future support.

Drafting Policy

The board should be clear about its role in the drafting of policy. Boards do not need to write the policy. They simply guide its development. Before any specific policy language is brought to the board, the elements the board wishes to see included in the policy should be conveyed to staff. Staff members should also advise the board if they feel additional elements should be included in the policy before specific language is brought before the board for its approval.

Additional Engagement

Boards may find it useful to have additional targeted engagement with selected individuals or groups around the drafted language. Misinterpretation of the policy's intention can be avoided if draft language is circulated among key constituencies and policy partners for their reactions and input.

Policy Statement

Once the board has taken the above steps, the final language is adopted and disseminated. Dissemination should include acknowledgment of those who provided input during the development phase of the policy and note the important modifications that were made as a result of the public engagement process.

Implementation and Oversight

Generally, the state department of education, in partnership with local education agencies, is responsible for the implementation of the board's policy, but the board's oversight responsibilities can include receiving data reports on the status of implementation and the impact of the policy on students. The board should also report to interested constituencies and policy partners on the status of the policy's impact on students, teachers, and the system.

Policy Evaluation

Every policy adopted by the board should include a time line for demonstrated results and criteria for a policy review cycle. This allows for full disclosure to the local districts that are responsible for implementing the policy and it assures the public that the board is not walking away from an issue once the policy, rule, or regulation has been created.

Boardsmanship Review

Building Partnerships with the State Legislature July 2016

By Kris Amundson

As education policymaking moves back to states, it is critical that state boards of education and state legislatures work together collaboratively. The interests of students are usually best served when state legislatures and state boards of education view education policymaking as a shared responsibility. When the two bodies are feuding over turf, they are not devoting their time to addressing their state's pressing needs.

In states where there is open dialogue about the expectations of the board, the state education agency, and other branches of government, legislatures have been inclined to strengthen or maintain the responsibilities of the state board. In states where the board operates in obscurity and fails to convey its goals and vision for education to the legislature and the governor on a regular basis, others have attempted to usurp the board's authority. To create the climate of open dialogue with the legislature, state boards should do the following:

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

As Lyndon Johnson once observed, "The time to make friends is before you need them." Creating a relationship based on mutual respect and open communication between the state board and the state legislature is a key board responsibility.

Ideally, board members will reach out to prospective legislators even before they are elected. These early conversations can help future lawmakers understand the key issues facing the state. If possible, members should set up school visits that will illustrate these issues vividly. Early conversations are also a good way to clarify the roles of legislators and state boards. These roles will differ from state to state, so a briefing by your board attorney might be helpful for new legislators.

Of course, some legislators may have campaigned against specific board policies or practices. In those cases, an open dialogue is even more critical. Boards should seek common ground wherever it can be found. It may be that the new legislator needs more information about what is actually in the policy or what the board is already doing to address constituent concerns. For example, knowing that the state's curriculum standards in a particular subject area are already slated for review during the coming school year might prevent the introduction of a bill to mandate that outcome.

LEARN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.

Remember that every bill goes through a long process before coming to a final vote. It is possible to influence the legislation at several points. Board members are likely to have the most impact before the bill is ever introduced. It is possible to talk with the potential sponsor of the bill, answer questions, and offer insights. It may also be possible to offer suggestions of what to include in the bill—and what to omit.

There are other points at which the board can influence the legislation: committee hearings, floor debate (either through amendments or by encouraging legislators to support or oppose the bill), and when the bill moves through the other house. If necessary, the board may be able to persuade the governor to amend or even veto a bill.

It is essential to know who the key players are. At a minimum, this will include the chair and ranking member of the relevant House and Senate committees as well as the chairs of the budget subcommittees that deal with education. Staffers on these committees are also critical allies. In addition, members

of state boards should reach out to the legislator(s) who represent their districts.

STAY IN TOUCH EVEN WHEN THE LEGISLATURE IS NOT IN SESSION.

In some states, contact between the board and key members of the legislature is limited to the time when the legislature is in session. By that point, legislators are often too busy for substantive policy conversations. It is far better to establish a process for regular, ongoing communication with members of key legislative committees and their staffs to ensure legislators are aware of the board's policy priorities.

Invite legislators and staff to your board's work sessions or to informal meetings. The board in one state invited legislative leaders and key staff to join them for lunch before the board meeting began. Over time, these lunchtime conversations strengthened the relationship between the two bodies.

CONSIDER CREATING A LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE.

Each year, thousands of bills addressing the needs of education (both real and perceived) are introduced in state legislatures. State board members, most of whom are volunteers, do not always have time to monitor all of the legislation introduced in a given session. Many elective state boards of education have legislative committees to ensure that the board's concerns are accurately conveyed to the state's lawmakers. These

LEGISLATIVE DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

Communicate regularly. Don't wait for legislators to contact the board. Promote transparency and openness in everything the board does.

Avoid misunderstandings. Clearly convey the "why" for state board policies and the "how" legislators can help.

Tie board legislative priorities to the board's strategic plan. Communicate clearly what the board hopes to accomplish through these priorities.

Avoid partisan politics when possible. A board is at its best when it is focused on children, teaching, and learning.

DON'T

Rely solely on the chief and department staff to convey the board's agenda to the legislature. The board chair and/or legislative committee chair should be familiar to legislators. Individual board members should know the legislators who represent their district.

Depend on the relationship between one or two board members and a particular legislator to accomplish the board's agenda. The lack of a board/legislature infrastructure will be felt when board members or legislators leave their positions.

Promote an individual or organizational position that is not consistent with the board's goals and strategic plan. It will divide the board and reinforce the idea that the board is not supportive of its own agenda.

committees can take on these tasks:

- recommend a legislative agenda to the full board;
- maintain oversight of legislative issues as they progress through the legislative process;
- convey board goals and visions to the legislature;
- work with the chief and the appropriate department staff to ensure the board's goals are reflected accurately in legislative proposals;
- analyze new board initiatives for legislative implications.

In some states, the state board's policy

agenda is presented through the state education agency or the governor's office. Even in those cases, it makes sense for board members to have their own independent analysis of legislation being considered.

INVOLVE EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS IN DEVELOPING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES.

The Every Student Succeeds Act mandates stakeholder involvement in the development of the comprehensive state plan, but there are many other ways that stakeholders can strengthen the board's work. The more support the board can generate for its legislative priorities, the more likely it is that the legislature will act favorably upon them. The legislative committee should invite representatives of interest groups, parents, and community and business leaders to share their views and concerns about proposed legisla-

tive initiatives sponsored by the board. When possible, the board should incorporate these concerns into its legislative agenda. The more comprehensive and inclusive a proposal, the more support it engenders from a wide range of individuals.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND CONCISELY.

Be sure legislators know exactly what you want them to do: "Support H.B. 1203 in committee," or "Oppose S.B. 981 on the floor." Since legislators are even more pressed for time than state board members, state board members must keep their comments brief and to the point. The legislator is more likely to read one-page letters or memos than lengthier documents.

AVOID BURNING BRIDGES.

No board will win on every issue. So it will be important to keep the lines of communication open with the legislators who oppose board priorities as well as those who support them. An opponent on one issue may be a strong ally on the next. As one wise observer put it, "Be sure there are still some M&Ms in the jar" at the end of any particular legislative session. In other words, don't burn bridges.

Given the nature of state governance and politics, boards will inevitably, from time to time, find themselves in conflict with some members of the state legislature. But following the recommendations presented here of maintaining communications with the legislature, developing and using a legislative committee, and involving a wide range of stakeholders in the policymaking process should help boards avoid such conflicts and maintain their focus on the improvement of education for all children in the state.

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15-103. School districts; financial mismanagement; intervention; definitions

- A. The state board of education shall review allegations of school district insolvency and gross mismanagement. The state board shall give the school district an opportunity to respond to these allegations at a public meeting. If the state board determines that the school district is insolvent or has grossly mismanaged its finances, the state board shall appoint a receiver or fiscal crisis team for that school district.
- B. The state board shall find a school district insolvent if it finds one or more of the following:
1. The school district is unable to pay debts as they fall due or in the usual course of business.
 2. The salaries of any teachers or other employees have remained unpaid for forty-five days.
 3. The tuition due another school district or other state institution remains unpaid on or after January 1 of the year following the school year it was due and there is no dispute regarding the validity or amount of the claim.
 4. The school district has defaulted in payment of its bonds or interest on bonds or in payment of rentals due any state or federal authority or private business for a period of sixty calendar days and no action has been initiated within that period of time to make payment.
 5. The school district has contracted for any loan not authorized by law.
 6. The school district has accumulated and has operated with a deficit equal to five per cent or more of the school district's revenue control limit for any fiscal year within the past two fiscal years or the conditions prescribed in section 15-107 have occurred.
 7. The school district's warrants have not been honored for payment by the school district's servicing bank or by the county treasurer and the warrants have remained unpaid for a period of more than sixty calendar days.
- C. A school district shall not be deemed to be insolvent pursuant to subsection B of this section if the circumstances are the result of the failure of the state to make any payments of monies due the school district at the time payment is due.
- D. The state board of education shall have jurisdiction over all petitions requesting that a school district be placed in receivership and a receiver be appointed or that a fiscal crisis team be appointed because of the school district's alleged insolvency or gross mismanagement. The state board shall have the burden of demonstrating by a preponderance of the evidence that the school district is insolvent or is engaged in gross mismanagement.
- E. If the state board of education finds that the school district is insolvent or has engaged in gross mismanagement, the state board may place the school district in receivership and appoint a receiver recommended by the state board. The state board shall develop and adopt a list of qualified receivers to be appointed by the board.
- F. On appointment, the receiver may perform any of the actions prescribed in paragraphs 1 through 11 of this subsection and shall begin a full review and investigation of the school district's financial affairs and submit to the state board of education a detailed report listing the findings of that investigation that shall include a financial improvement plan and budget that details how the school district will eliminate any continued gross financial mismanagement and achieve financial solvency. The plan shall include a proposed timeline for achieving financial solvency. The receiver shall submit the report within one hundred twenty days after the receiver's appointment. The financial improvement plan approved by the state board of education may authorize the receiver to do any of the following:
1. Override any decisions of the school district's governing board or the school district superintendent, or both, concerning the management and operation of the school district, and initiate and make decisions concerning the management and operation of the school district.
 2. Attend any and all meetings of the school district's governing board and administrative staff.
 3. Supervise the day-to-day activities of the school district's staff, including reassigning the duties and responsibilities of personnel in a manner that, in the determination of the receiver, best suits the needs of the school district.
 4. Place on extended leave, suspend or terminate for cause the school district's superintendent or chief financial officer, or both. The receiver is not authorized to provide a severance or buyout package to the school district's superintendent or chief financial officer if the school district is placed into receivership by the state board of education. A person terminated

pursuant to this paragraph may appeal the receiver's decision to the state board of education if an appeal is filed with the state board within thirty days of receiving notice of the termination.

5. Authorize pupils to transfer from schools operated by the school district to schools operated by another school district that is not currently in receivership.
6. Appoint a chief educational officer who shall possess the powers and duties of a school district superintendent. A chief educational officer who is appointed pursuant to this paragraph shall hold a valid administrative certificate.
7. Appoint a chief fiscal officer who shall possess the powers and duties of the school district's chief school business official and any other duties regarding budgeting, accounting and other financial matters that are assigned to the school district by law.
8. Appoint a competent independent public accountant to audit the accounts of the school district.
9. Reorganize the school district's financial accounts, management and budgetary systems to improve financial responsibility and reduce financial inefficiency within the district.
10. Establish school district fiscal guidelines and a system of internal controls, including internal administrative controls and internal accounting controls, with provisions for internal audits.
11. Cancel or renegotiate any contract, other than contracts of certificated teachers who have been employed by the school district in the capacity of a certificated teacher for more than one year immediately before the date the receiver was appointed, to which the governing board or the school district is a party if the cancellation or renegotiation of the contract will produce needed economies in the operation of the district's schools. The receiver may refuse to reemploy any certificated teacher who has not been employed by the school district for more than the major portion of three consecutive school years as provided in section 15-536.

G. The receiver's power, authority and duties shall be effective on the date of the receiver's appointment by the state board of education. The receiver shall perform the receiver's duties according to the instructions of the state board of education order and according to law. The receiver shall promptly report any violations of law, including a violation of the uniform system of financial records, to the state board of education.

H. On review and approval of the state board of education, the receiver shall take all necessary steps to implement the financial improvement plan and budget utilizing those powers identified in the plan as prescribed in subsection F of this section.

I. The salary and benefits of the receiver and any officers or employees appointed by the receiver shall be paid by the school district. The state board of education shall determine the salary for the receiver and any officers or employees appointed by the receiver based on amounts recommended by the state board.

J. The state board of education shall remove the school district from receivership and dismiss the receiver and dismiss any officer or employee appointed by the receiver thirty days after all of the following have occurred:

1. The auditor general certifies that the school district has been financially solvent for one fiscal year.
2. The auditor general certifies that the school district's financial records are in compliance with the uniform system of financial records and generally accepted accounting principles.
3. The receiver certifies that the school district is no longer engaged in gross mismanagement.
4. The state board of education has determined that the school district is able to pay its debts as those debts become due.

K. Beginning ninety days after the submission of the first report prescribed in subsection F of this section, the receiver shall submit a quarterly progress report to the state board of education. The state board of education shall review the expenses and costs of the receiver at least once each calendar quarter.

L. The state board of education shall formally review the receiver's progress every six months. If, based on the quarterly progress reports, the state board determines that the receiver's progress is insufficient, the state board may remove the current receiver and appoint another receiver for the school district.

M. The state board of education may dismiss the receiver for cause or on a majority vote of no confidence in the receiver of the state board.

N. The school district shall indemnify the receiver and any officer or employee appointed by the receiver who is made or threatened to be made a party to any litigation by reason of their status under this section if the receiver, officer or employee acted in good faith and in a manner that the receiver, officer or employee reasonably believed to be consistent with the best interest of the school district and if the receiver, officer or employee had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct was unlawful.

O. During the period of time that the school district is in receivership, no member, officer, employee or agent of the school district may enter into any contract or incur any liability on behalf of the school district for any purpose if the amount of the contract or liability exceeds the receiver's authorized financial plan and budget for the school district. The receiver may discipline, including, if warranted, imposing a suspension from duty without pay, removal from office or termination of, any school district employee or officer who violates this subsection.

P. This section does not create a private cause of action against the school district or its officers, directors, board members or employees.

Q. The assumption of control of the school district by the receiver shall in no way interfere with the election or reelection of school district governing board members.

R. This section shall not interfere with a school district's ability to declare bankruptcy under federal law.

S. The state board of education shall continue to monitor and offer technical assistance to a school district for two years after its removal from receivership.

T. All information received and records or reports kept by the state board of education during an investigation resulting from a complaint against a receiver appointed pursuant to this section or section 15-107 are confidential and not a public record.

U. The state board of education or the department of education shall immediately notify the auditor general if the board or department has knowledge that a superintendent or chief financial officer who was employed at the school district at the time the school district was placed in receivership is currently employed in another school district or charter school in this state.

V. Notwithstanding any other law, a fiscal crisis team appointed pursuant to this section shall be subject to section 15-107, subsections E through H and a school district that is assigned a level two fiscal crisis team pursuant to this section shall be subject to section 15-107, subsections J, K and L.

W. For the purposes of this section:

1. "Fiscal crisis team" means either:

(a) A level one fiscal crisis team with the duties and authority prescribed in section 15-107, subsection D, paragraph 2.

(b) A level two fiscal crisis team with the duties and authority prescribed in section 15-107, subsection D, paragraph 3.

2. "Gross mismanagement" means that the school district's officers or employees committed or engaged in gross incompetence or systemic and egregious mismanagement of the school district's finances or financial records.

3. "Notice" means written notice personally served or delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested.

4. "Receiver" means an individual appointed by the state board of education from the persons recommended by the state board for the purpose of managing a school district placed in receivership by the state board of education.

5. "Receivership" means the state or condition of being under the control of the receiver appointed by the state board of education.

6. "Superintendent" means the chief executive officer of the school district.

15-107. School district overexpenditures; fiscal crisis teams; quarterly progress reports; fiscal management report; annual report; actions resulting from overexpenditures; professional development; definition

A. A county school superintendent, within two business days, shall provide written notice to the department of education, if, in the county school superintendent's judgment, a school district has committed an overexpenditure under this section.

Notwithstanding any other law, a warrant shall not be drawn by a county school superintendent for an expenditure that is in excess of the amount budgeted and that has not been previously expended, unless the county school superintendent is notified in writing by the department of education that budget capacity exists as determined by the department based on information provided by the school district.

B. The department of education, in conjunction with the county school superintendent, shall monitor the school district and provide technical assistance to the school district and to the county school superintendent to resolve the overexpenditure.

C. If the department of education determines that the school district has failed to take appropriate action to resolve the overexpenditure or that the original notice of overexpenditure pursuant to subsection A of this section constitutes an overexpenditure that will cause the school district's overall expenditures to exceed the school district's general budget limit or unrestricted capital budget limit by fifty thousand dollars or one-half of one per cent, whichever is less, the department shall request that the matter be placed on the agenda of a meeting of the state board of education for action pursuant to this section.

D. At the request of the department of education, the state board of education shall call a public meeting to consider overexpenditures by any school district. The state board of education shall require the superintendent of the school district and any other school district personnel who may have information relevant to the overexpenditure to appear before the state board of education. After testimony from all interested parties, the state board of education shall take one of the following actions:

1. Require the department of education, in conjunction with the county school superintendent, to monitor the expenditures of the school district.

2. Direct the department of education to contract with a level one fiscal crisis team. The level one fiscal crisis team shall provide on-site oversight and off-site monitoring for the school district for no longer than twelve months and shall advise the school district on all financial issues and professional development training related to financial issues.

3. Direct the department of education to contract with a level two fiscal crisis team. The level two fiscal crisis team shall provide on-site oversight and off-site monitoring for the school district for no longer than twenty-four months, shall have the authority prescribed for level one fiscal crisis teams and may override any financial act or decision of the school district, including expenditures.

4. Appoint a receiver who, subject to the discretion of the state board of education, may take any actions prescribed in section 15-103, subsection F.

E. The level one and level two fiscal crisis teams shall be composed of at least one person who has knowledge of school finance and may include current or former school district financial officers, current or former school district business managers, certified public accountants and current or former school district superintendents. The fiscal crisis teams shall not include employees of the state board of education or the department of education.

F. The expenses incurred by a fiscal crisis team or by a receiver appointed pursuant to this section shall be paid by the school district. The state board of education shall review the expenses and costs of each fiscal crisis team at least once each calendar quarter.

G. Beginning ninety days after submitting the fiscal management report prescribed in subsection H of this section, the fiscal crisis team or receiver appointed pursuant to this section shall submit a detailed written quarterly progress report to the state board of education that includes all of the following:

1. The results of the review of the school district's finances, including expenditures.

2. The recommendations and decisions made by the fiscal crisis team or the receiver appointed pursuant to this section.

3. The status of the fiscal management plan described pursuant to subsection H of this section.

4. Recommendations to the state board of education on the content of professional development training related to overexpenditures.

5. Any recommendations of potential action to be taken concerning professional certificates issued to school district personnel by the state board of education or the department of education. The state board of education shall review the recommendations submitted pursuant to this paragraph and shall take appropriate action.

H. After appointment, the fiscal crisis team or the receiver appointed pursuant to this section shall review the financial affairs of the school district and may work with school finance personnel at the department of education to ensure that the finances of the school district are in compliance with the laws of this state. A school district that has been assigned a fiscal crisis team or a receiver pursuant to this section shall submit, in consultation with the receiver or the fiscal crisis team, a fiscal management report to the state board of education within one hundred twenty days after the date that the state board of education appointed the receiver or the fiscal crisis team. The fiscal management report shall include the following:

1. A description of the fiscal management plan that has been implemented to correct the overexpenditure, including the following:

(a) The manner in which the fiscal management plan will address the findings and recommendations of the fiscal crisis team.

(b) A timeline for complete resolution of the overexpenditure.

(c) A detailed explanation of the methods and procedures that will be implemented to prevent future overexpenditures.

(d) The identification of any issues that need to be resolved before the fiscal management plan may be fully implemented.

(e) The identification of any long-term issues resulting from the overexpenditure that will extend to future fiscal years.

2. A description of the manner in which the fiscal management plan was developed, including identification of the role of the fiscal crisis team or the receiver, the role of the school district governing board and the role of the administrators of the school district.

I. On or before December 31, the state board of education shall submit an annual report to the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives. The state board shall provide a copy of this report to the secretary of state. The annual report shall include the following:

1. A summarized compilation of the fiscal management reports submitted by school districts pursuant to subsection H of this section.

2. The actions taken by the state board of education, the department of education, school districts, fiscal crisis teams and receivers during the most recently completed fiscal year.

3. Recommendations regarding improvements to the laws of this state or to administrative actions required under the laws of this state.

J. A school district that is assigned a level two fiscal crisis team or a receiver pursuant to this section shall require professional development training for school district governing board members and appropriate administrative personnel of the school district, including the school district superintendent, who are involved in district finances and budgeting, as determined by the level two fiscal crisis team or by the receiver. The professional development training shall be selected from a list approved by the state board of education, and the cost of the professional development training shall be paid by the school district. Governing board members and district administrative personnel shall complete at least twelve hours of professional development training within one hundred twenty days after the assignment of a level two fiscal crisis team or the appointment of a receiver. The fiscal crisis team or the receiver shall report to the state board of education whether the professional development training requirements prescribed in this subsection have been met.

K. A school district governing board member who fails to complete the professional development training within the time prescribed in subsection J of this section is guilty of nonfeasance in office, and the state board of education shall forward a complaint to the attorney general. The attorney general may bring an action in superior court against a school district governing board member for failure to comply with the professional development training requirements prescribed in subsection J of this section. If a court determines that a school district governing board member failed to comply with the professional development training requirements prescribed in subsection J of this section, the court shall issue an order

removing the school district governing board member from office. Any vacancy in the office of the school district governing board as a result of a court order issued pursuant to this subsection shall be filled in the manner provided by law.

L. If any of the administrative personnel of the school district fails to complete the professional development training within the time prescribed in subsection J of this section, the state board of education may take appropriate action concerning current certificates held by that person.

M. All information received and records or reports kept by the state board of education during an investigation resulting from a complaint against a receiver appointed pursuant to this section or section 15-103 are confidential and not a public record.

N. For the purposes of this section, "overexpenditure" means an expenditure in excess of any of the following:

1. The general budget limit of the school district or the amount budgeted by the school district, whichever is less.
2. The unrestricted capital budget limit of the school district or the amount budgeted for capital by the school district, whichever is less.

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-third Legislature
Second Regular Session
2018

CHAPTER 262
SENATE BILL 1449

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 15-741 AND 15-741.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE 3, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-741.03; RELATING TO PUPIL ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-741, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-741. Assessment of pupils

5 A. The state board of education shall:

6 1. Adopt rules for purposes of this article pursuant to title 41,
7 chapter 6.

8 2. Adopt and implement a statewide assessment to measure pupil
9 achievement of the state ~~board-adopted~~ BOARD-ADOPTED academic standards in
10 reading, writing and mathematics in at least four grades designated by the
11 STATE board. The STATE board shall determine the manner of
12 implementation. The STATE board may administer assessments of the
13 academic standards in social studies and science, except that a pupil
14 shall not be required to meet or exceed the social studies or science
15 standards measured by the statewide assessment.

16 3. Ensure that the tests prescribed in this section are uniform
17 throughout the state.

18 4. Ensure that the tests prescribed in this section are able to be
19 scored in an objective manner and ~~that the tests~~ are not intended to
20 advocate any sectarian, partisan or denominational viewpoint.

21 5. Ensure that the tests prescribed in this article collect only
22 types of pupil nontest data that are approved by the state board ~~of~~
23 ~~education~~ at a public meeting and published on the website of the state
24 board ~~of education~~ pursuant to paragraph 7 of this subsection.

25 6. Include within its budget all costs pertaining to the tests
26 prescribed in this article. If sufficient monies are appropriated, the
27 state board may provide achievement test services to school districts that
28 request assistance in testing pupils in grades additional to those
29 required by this section.

30 7. Survey teachers, principals and superintendents on
31 achievement-related nontest indicators, including information on
32 graduation rates by ethnicity and dropout rates by ethnicity for each
33 grade level. Before the survey, the state board ~~of education~~ shall
34 approve at a public meeting the nontest indicators on which data will be
35 collected and shall post in a prominent position on the home page of the
36 state board's website a link to the nontest indicators entitled "What
37 nontest data does the state of Arizona collect about Arizona pupils?".
38 The linked web page shall state the types of data collected, the reasons
39 for the collection of the data and the entities with which the data is
40 shared. In conducting the survey and collecting data, the state board ~~of~~
41 ~~education~~ shall not violate the provisions of the family educational
42 rights and privacy act (P.L. 93-380), as amended, ~~nor~~ OR disclose
43 personally identifiable information.

1 8. Establish a fair and consistent method and standard by which
2 test scores from schools in a district may be evaluated taking into
3 consideration demographic data. The STATE board shall establish
4 intervention strategies to assist schools with scores below the acceptable
5 standard. The STATE board shall annually review district and school
6 scores and shall offer assistance to school districts in analyzing data
7 and implementing intervention strategies. The STATE board shall use the
8 adopted test and methods of data evaluation for a period of at least ten
9 years.

10 9. Participate in other assessments that provide national
11 comparisons as needed.

12 10. Require in the contract for the statewide assessment pursuant
13 to this section that test scores and assessment data from the third grade
14 reading portion of the statewide assessment adopted pursuant to this
15 section be received by local education agencies on or before May 15 of
16 each academic year and THAT the scores and assessment data from all other
17 portions of the statewide assessment adopted pursuant to this section be
18 received by local education agencies on or before May 25 of each academic
19 year. The state board shall impose penalties on the contractor for scores
20 received after these dates.

21 B. The achievement tests adopted by the state board as provided in
22 subsection A of this section shall be given at least annually. Nontest
23 indicator data and other information shall be collected at the same time
24 as the collection of achievement test data.

25 C. Local school district governing boards shall:

26 1. Administer the tests prescribed in subsection A of this section.

27 2. Survey teachers, principals and superintendents on ~~achievement~~
28 ~~related~~ ACHIEVEMENT-RELATED nontest indicator data as required by the
29 state board, including information related to district graduation and
30 dropout rates. In conducting the survey and collecting data, the
31 governing board shall not violate the provisions of the family educational
32 rights and privacy act (P.L. 93-380), as amended, ~~nor~~ OR disclose
33 personally identifiable information.

34 D. Any additional assessments for high school pupils that are
35 adopted by the state board of education after November 24, 2009 shall be
36 designed to measure college and career readiness of pupils.

37 E. A test for penmanship shall not be required pursuant to this
38 article.

39 F. ON REQUEST, A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY ADMINISTER
40 THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT IN THE FORM OF A WRITTEN TEST.

1 agency that adopts ~~a locally procured~~ AN achievement assessment pursuant
2 to this section shall provide the necessary reasonable accommodations for
3 a student who is an English language learner and the necessary
4 accommodations and modifications for a student as required by the
5 student's individualized education program team.

6 E. The state board of education shall require that the provider of
7 ~~a locally procured~~ AN achievement assessment that is proposed for the menu
8 of ~~locally procured~~ achievement assessments ~~shall~~ do all of the following:

9 1. Provide evidence that the assessment is a high quality
10 assessment.

11 2. Demonstrate that the assessment meets or exceeds the level of
12 rigor of the state board's adopted academic standards.

13 3. Demonstrate that the assessment scores can be scaled for state
14 accountability programs including establishing comparable student
15 performance levels for achievement profiles and letter grade
16 classifications issued pursuant to section 15-241.

17 4. Submit an evaluation from a third party approved by the state
18 board ~~of education~~ that shows the assessment meets the requirements
19 prescribed in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this subsection.

20 5. Provide a copy of assessment scores to the department of
21 education when scores are provided to ~~their~~ THE partnering local education
22 agency.

23 F. For the purposes of this section, "nationally recognized" means
24 ~~an assessment that is~~ accepted by universities for the purposes of
25 awarding college credit or admissions.

26 Sec. 3. Title 15, chapter 7, article 3, Arizona Revised Statutes,
27 is amended by adding section 15-741.03, to read:

28 15-741.03. Statewide assessment; contracts; JLBC review

29 NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER LAW, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MAY NOT
30 RENEW ANY CURRENT CONTRACT FOR ANY PORTION OF THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT
31 ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-741 OR REESTABLISH A NEW CONTRACT FOR ANY
32 PORTION OF THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 15-741
33 WITHOUT A REVIEW BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE.

34 Sec. 4. Statewide assessment; contract information;
35 submission to joint legislative budget committee;
36 delayed repeal

37 A. On or before November 15, 2018, the department of education
38 shall provide information to the joint legislative budget committee on
39 each current contract for all portions of the statewide assessment adopted
40 pursuant to section 15-741, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by this
41 act, including information on when that contract is set to expire.

42 B. This section is repealed from and after November 30, 2018.

1 Sec. 5. Request for proposals for menu of assessments

2 On or before September 1, 2018, the state board of education shall
3 direct the department of education to issue a request for proposals to
4 contract with a provider or providers to procure a menu of assessments to
5 measure pupil achievement in grades three through eight and at least one
6 in high school pursuant to section 15-741.02, Arizona Revised Statutes, as
7 amended by this act, including the required availability of the menu of
8 assessments for local education agencies that offer instruction in grades
9 three through eight beginning in the 2019-2020 school year.

10 Sec. 6. Transition to menu of assessments

11 If sufficient monies are appropriated in fiscal year 2018-2019, each
12 local education agency that offers instruction in grades nine through
13 twelve and that administers an assessment from the menu of assessments
14 pursuant to section 15-741.02, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by
15 this act, to pupils in one or more schools in that local education agency
16 in the 2018-2019 school year may submit a request to the department of
17 education for reimbursement for assessment costs in a format prescribed by
18 the department. The department shall reimburse each local education
19 agency that submits a reimbursement request a proportional amount per
20 pupil not to exceed the total amount for the assessment costs from any
21 monies appropriated to the department in fiscal year 2018-2019 for this
22 purpose, or from any dollars available as a result of fewer local
23 education agencies administering the statewide assessment to measure pupil
24 achievement. A local education agency that provides an assessment from
25 the menu of assessments prescribed in section 15-741.02, Arizona Revised
26 Statutes, as amended by this act, through a public-private partnership is
27 eligible only for reimbursement of any monies paid by the local education
28 agency.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR APRIL 25, 2018.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE APRIL 25, 2018.

1 Sec. 5. Section 15-977, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
2 read:

3 15-977. Classroom site fund; definitions

4 A. The classroom site fund is established consisting of monies
5 transferred to the fund pursuant to section 37-521, subsection B, ~~and~~
6 section 42-5029, subsection E, paragraph 10 **AND SECTION 42-5029.02,**
7 **SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 10.** The department of education shall administer
8 the fund. School districts and charter schools may not supplant existing
9 school site funding with revenues from the fund. All monies distributed
10 from the fund are intended for use at the school site. Each school
11 district or charter school shall allocate forty percent of the monies for
12 teacher compensation increases based on performance and employment related
13 expenses, twenty percent of the monies for teacher base salary increases
14 and employment related expenses and forty percent of the monies for
15 maintenance and operation purposes as prescribed in subsection H of this
16 section. Teacher compensation increases based on performance or teacher
17 base salary increases distributed pursuant to this subsection shall
18 supplement, and not supplant, teacher compensation monies from any other
19 sources. The school district or charter school shall notify each school
20 principal of the amount available to the school by April 15 of each year.
21 The district or charter school shall request from the school's principal
22 each school's priority for the allocation of the funds available to the
23 school for each program listed under subsection H of this section. The
24 amount budgeted by the school district or charter school pursuant to this
25 section shall not be included in the allowable budget balance carryforward
26 calculated pursuant to section 15-943.01.

27 B. A school district governing board must adopt a performance based
28 compensation system at a public hearing to allocate funding from the
29 classroom site fund pursuant to subsection A of this section. Individual
30 teacher performance as measured by the teacher's performance
31 classification pursuant to section 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 38
32 shall be a component of the school district's portion of the forty percent
33 allocation for teacher compensation based on performance and employment
34 related expenses.

35 C. A school district governing board shall vote on a performance
36 based compensation system that includes the following elements:

37 1. School district performance and school performance.

38 2. Individual teacher performance as measured by the teacher's
39 performance classification pursuant to section 15-203, subsection A,
40 paragraph 38. The individual teacher performance component shall account
41 for thirty-three percent of the forty percent allocation for teacher
42 compensation based on performance and employment related expenses.

43 3. Measures of academic progress toward the academic standards
44 adopted by the state board of education.

45 4. Other measures of academic progress.

- 1 5. Dropout or graduation rates.
- 2 6. Attendance rates.
- 3 7. Ratings of school quality by parents.
- 4 8. Ratings of school quality by students.
- 5 9. The input of teachers and administrators.
- 6 10. Approval of the performance based compensation system based on
- 7 an affirmative vote of at least seventy percent of the teachers eligible
- 8 to participate in the performance based compensation system.
- 9 11. An appeals process for teachers who have been denied
- 10 performance based compensation.
- 11 12. Regular evaluation for effectiveness, which shall comply with
- 12 section 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 38.
- 13 D. A performance based compensation system shall include teacher
- 14 professional development programs that are aligned with the elements of
- 15 the performance based compensation system.
- 16 E. A school district governing board may modify the elements
- 17 contained in subsection C of this section and consider additional elements
- 18 when adopting a performance based compensation system. A school district
- 19 governing board shall adopt any modifications or additional elements and
- 20 specify the criteria used at a public hearing.
- 21 F. Until December 31, 2009, each school district shall develop an
- 22 assessment plan for its performance based compensation system and submit
- 23 the plan to the department of education by December 31 of each year. A
- 24 copy of the performance based compensation system and assessment plan
- 25 adopted by the school district governing board shall be included in the
- 26 report submitted to the department of education.
- 27 G. Monies in the fund are continuously appropriated, are exempt
- 28 from the provisions of section 35-190 relating to lapsing of
- 29 appropriations and shall be distributed as follows:
- 30 1. By March 30 of each year, the staff of the joint legislative
- 31 budget committee shall determine a per pupil amount from the fund for the
- 32 budget year using the estimated statewide weighted count for the current
- 33 year pursuant to section 15-943, paragraph 2, subdivision (a) and based on
- 34 estimated available resources in the classroom site fund for the budget
- 35 year adjusted for any prior year carryforward or shortfall.
- 36 2. The allocation to each charter school and school district for a
- 37 fiscal year shall equal the per pupil amount established in paragraph 1 of
- 38 this subsection for the fiscal year multiplied by the weighted student
- 39 count for the school district or charter school for the fiscal year
- 40 pursuant to section 15-943, paragraph 2, subdivision (a). For the
- 41 purposes of this paragraph, the weighted student count for a school
- 42 district that serves as the district of attendance for nonresident pupils
- 43 shall be increased to include nonresident pupils who attend school in the
- 44 school district.

1 H. Monies distributed from the classroom site fund shall be spent
2 for the following maintenance and operation purposes:

- 3 1. Class size reduction.
- 4 2. Teacher compensation increases.
- 5 3. Assessment intervention programs.
- 6 4. Teacher development.
- 7 5. Dropout prevention programs.
- 8 6. Teacher liability insurance premiums.

9 I. The district governing board or charter school shall allocate
10 the classroom site fund monies to include, wherever possible, the
11 priorities identified by the principals of the schools while assuring that
12 the funds maximize classroom opportunities and conform to the authorized
13 expenditures identified in subsection A of this section.

14 J. School districts and charter schools that receive monies from
15 the classroom site fund shall submit a report by November 15 of each year
16 to the superintendent of public instruction that provides an accounting of
17 the expenditures of monies distributed from the fund during the previous
18 fiscal year and a summary of the results of district and school programs
19 funded with monies distributed from the fund. The department of education
20 in conjunction with the auditor general shall prescribe the format of the
21 report under this subsection.

22 K. School districts and charter schools that receive monies from
23 the classroom site fund shall receive these monies monthly in an amount
24 not to exceed one-twelfth of the monies estimated pursuant to subsection G
25 of this section, except that if there are insufficient monies in the fund
26 that month to make payments, the distribution for that month shall be
27 prorated for each school district or charter school. The department of
28 education may make an additional payment in the current month for any
29 prior month or months in which school districts or charter schools
30 received a prorated payment if there are sufficient monies in the fund
31 that month for the additional payments. The state is not required to make
32 payments to a school district or charter school classroom site fund if the
33 state classroom site fund revenue collections are insufficient to meet the
34 estimated allocations to school districts and charter schools pursuant to
35 subsection G of this section.

36 L. The state education system for committed youth shall receive
37 monies from the classroom site fund in the same manner as school districts
38 and charter schools. The Arizona state schools for the deaf and the blind
39 shall receive monies from the classroom site fund in an amount that
40 corresponds to the weighted student count for the current year pursuant to
41 section 15-943, paragraph 2, subdivision (b) for each pupil enrolled in
42 the Arizona state schools for the deaf and the blind. Except as otherwise
43 provided in this subsection, the Arizona state schools for the deaf and
44 the blind and the state education system for committed youth are subject

1 to this section in the same manner as school districts and charter
2 schools.

3 M. Each school district and charter school, including school
4 districts that unify pursuant to section 15-448 or consolidate pursuant to
5 section 15-459, shall establish a local level classroom site fund to
6 receive allocations from the state level classroom site fund. The local
7 level classroom site fund shall be a budgetary controlled account.
8 Interest charges for any registered warrants for the local level classroom
9 site fund shall be a charge against the local level classroom site fund.
10 Interest earned on monies in the local level classroom site fund shall be
11 added to the local level classroom site fund as provided in section
12 15-978. This state shall not be required to make payments to a school
13 district or charter school local level classroom site fund that are in
14 addition to monies transferred to the state level classroom site fund
15 pursuant to section 37-521, subsection B, ~~and~~ section 42-5029, subsection
16 E, paragraph 10 **AND SECTION 42-5029.02, SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 10.**

17 N. Monies distributed from the classroom site fund for class size
18 reduction, assessment intervention and dropout prevention programs shall
19 only be used for instructional purposes in the instruction function as
20 defined in the uniform system of financial records, except that monies
21 shall not be used for school-sponsored athletics.

22 0. For the purposes of this section:

23 1. "Assessment intervention" means summer programs, after school
24 programs, before school programs or tutoring programs that are
25 specifically designed to ensure that pupils meet the Arizona academic
26 standards as measured by the statewide assessment prescribed by section
27 15-741.

28 2. "Class size reduction" means any maintenance and operations
29 expenditure that is designed to reduce the ratio of pupils to classroom
30 teachers, including the use of persons who serve as aides to classroom
31 teachers.

32 Sec. 6. Section 15-1409, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
33 read:

34 **15-1409. Community college tuition financing districts;**
35 **formation; powers and duties; issuance and sale of**
36 **bonds for capital outlay**

37 A. A community college tuition financing district shall contract
38 with an existing community college district to provide instructional and
39 student services within the community college tuition financing district.

40 B. The minimum assessed valuation and population requirements
41 prescribed in section 15-1402 do not apply to community college tuition
42 financing districts.

43 C. A community college tuition financing district shall be formed
44 in the same manner prescribed in sections 15-1403 and 15-1404, except that
45 the county board of supervisors shall serve as the governing board of the

Prop 301 Distribution and Classroom Site Fund

Table 13		Proposition 301 Monies (FY 2017 Actual) (\$ in Millions)
PROPOSITION 301 SALES TAX REVENUES		
<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Comment</u>
School Facilities Board	\$64.1	For debt service on \$794.7 million of bonds authorized by Proposition 301 for school repairs and updates.
Universities	72.4	Receive 12% of monies remaining after SFB debt service is deducted.
Community Colleges	18.1	Receive 3% of monies after SFB debt service.
Tribal Colleges	0.8	Same formula as for community colleges.
Income Tax Credit	<u>25.0</u>	For income tax credit authorized by A.R.S. § 43.1072.01.
Subtotal - Non-ADE Programs	\$180.4	
Additional School Days	\$86.3	To add 5 days to K-12 school year (180 days total).
School Safety and Character Education	8.0	\$7.8 million for School Safety (A.R.S. § 15-154) and \$0.2 million for Character Education (A.R.S. § 15-154.01).
School Accountability	7.0	For school accountability pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-241 and § 15-1041.
Failing Schools	1.5	To Failing Schools Tutoring Fund (A.R.S. § 15-241CC).
Classroom Site Fund	<u>384.3</u>	Established by A.R.S. § 15-977. Receives all monies remaining after other distributions are made. Also receives all expendable K-12 endowment earnings above \$72.3 million.
Subtotal - ADE Programs	\$487.1	
Total - Prop 301 Sales Tax	\$667.5	
CLASSROOM SITE FUND EXPENDITURES (ALL SOURCES)		
Prop 301 Sales Tax (from above)	384.3	
Prop 301/CSF - Land Trust	96.5	
Prop 301/CSF - Carry-Forward	<u>0.0</u>	
Total - Classroom Site Fund	\$480.8^{1/}	
^{1/} Total disbursements reported for FY 2017 in ADE's FY 2019 budget request from August 2017. Does not match estimated amounts in JLBC Staff Classroom Site Fund (CSF) memo dated 3/29/2017, as the latter were estimates based on data available at the time rather than year-end actuals.		

Classroom Site Fund

Expected to distribute \$386 per pupil in FY 2018 and \$423 per pupil in FY 2019.

LEAs are required to allocate 40% for teacher compensation increases based on performance and employment related expenses and 20% for teacher base salary increases and employment related expenses and 40% for specified maintenance and operation purposes.



**Arizona State Board of Education
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Miscellaneous - Board Member Email Accounts

Board members have the opportunity to establish a state email account dedicated solely to Board business. This will provide uniformity and security in communications to and from Board members.

Although establishing a dedicated email account for Board business is not required, it is recommended by staff. If you would like an email account please check the appropriate item below and return it to staff.

Melissa will send instructions to your current email detailing next steps. Once the new email is established, all communications from staff will go to your newly created email address.

Name: _____

_____ I want to establish a dedicated Gmail account for Board business

_____ I decline a dedicated Gmail account for Board business

****Please return to Board staff****



Arizona State Board of Education Annual Board Retreat – August 6-7, 2018 Hassayampa Inn – Prescott, Arizona

MOWR and Early Literacy

- Statutes: <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/53leg/2R/laws/0309.pdf>
- MapLIT: <http://geo.azmag.gov/maps/readonaz/>
- MOWR - ADE: <https://www.azed.gov/mowr/>
- Read on Arizona: <http://www.readonarizona.org/>

Accountability

- Statutes: <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/53leg/2R/laws/0275.pdf>
- 2016-2017 Letter Grades: <https://azsbe.az.gov/f-school-letter-grades>

School Improvement

- Statutes: <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/53leg/2R/laws/0275.pdf>
- School Improvement - ADE: <https://www.azed.gov/improvement/>

Other

- Arizona Education Progress Meter: <https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/?region=Arizona>
- NAEP Scores: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/profiles/stateprofile?chort=1&sub=RED&sj=AL&sfj=NP&st=MN&year=2017R3>