



Arizona State Board of Education

1700 W. Washington Street
Executive Tower, Suite 300
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Phone: (602) 542-5057
Website: azsbe.az.gov



State Board of Education

Policies and Procedures for Appealing 2022-2023 A-F Letter Grades

The A-F Appeals Committee is scheduled to meet November 20th for expedited/non-expedited appeals and November 27th for non-expedited appeals to review appeals. All applicants should have a designee available to appear before the Committee as requested on these dates.

1. Timing of submission:

- a. The period to file an appeal begins the day letter grades are released and ends November 15th at 5:00 P.M. Mountain Time.
- b. Letter grades issued under appeal will be designated as "Under Review" on the public A-F file after the appeal period closes and will remain in place until the appeal is resolved by the Board.

2. Format of submission:

- a. Schools and local education agencies (LEAs) seeking to appeal a letter grade must use the designated "SBE Letter Grade Appeal Application" form (Google Forms).
- b. All appeals and supporting documentation must be submitted to "SBE Letter Grade Appeal Application" ([Google Forms](#)) during the period indicated above. It is highly recommended that you preserve the copy of your responses emailed to you upon submission.
- c. Only an authorized representative of the school or LEA may submit an appeal application. This may be: Principal of the school, Superintendent or Charter Operator, and other administrative or leader positions.
- d. The A-F Appeals Committee will make the determination on whether the school's appeal will be an expedited appeal (document review only) or a non-expedited appeal (document review and appearance before the Committee). This determination is made based on a rubric considering if the recommendation of staff is for the Committee to approve the appeal, if the application and supporting evidence is sufficient, and if the appeal is distinct enough to warrant a lack of precedent in the Committee's recommendations. Board staff will notify the school of this determination prior to the Committee meeting dates.
 - i. **Expedited Appeal (Document Review):**
 1. The application materials are provided to the Committee members. Once the Committee determines that the appeal is appropriate for an expedited appeal, school representatives will be notified and provided information on the Committee meeting where expedited appeals will be discussed.
 - ii. **Non-Expedited Appeal (Appearance):**
 1. Appearances before the Committee will be limited to a five to ten minute question and answer session unless the grounds for the



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appeal is non-substantive as provided for in section 10. The Appeals Committee will provide the questions to the school prior to the appearance so the school may prepare.

2. Schools may only present on the information and materials provided in the appeal and **shall only** provide additional information or materials as it relates to Committee member questions provided in advance.
3. Attendance may be virtual or in-person for non-expedited appeals.
4. Up to 2 representatives for the school or LEA may present to the Committee.

3. Notification of receipt:

- a. Applicants submitting an appeal will be automatically notified by email immediately after submitting the appeal by the Google Form.
- b. A free Google account is required to submit the appeal application due to uploading supporting documents.
- c. If you experience challenges in submitting the form or you do not receive a notification, the applicant may contact inbox@azsbe.az.gov.

4. Incomplete and inappropriate applications:

- a. Incomplete applications will **not** be reviewed and will be denied without further review. A notification will be provided. Incomplete and inappropriate applications are defined as:
 - i. Missing attestation on Form;
 - ii. Missing supporting documentation;
 - iii. Applications submitted by other means than the Google Forms;
 - iv. Applications submitted by someone other than an authorized representative for the school or LEA.

5. Schools and LEAs shall redact all personally identifiable student information and any other information that is confidential or private in nature. Student ID's (SAIS ID's) are permissible.

Applications that contain information of this type will be immediately discarded and will be denied without further review. A notification will be provided.

6. Supporting evidence for the appeal:

Supporting evidence must be submitted at the time of the appeal application to be considered by the Committee.

a. Supporting evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- i. Previous A-F accountability data showing an upward trend until the substantive event;



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- ii. Media reports conferring the reason for appeal, or additional narrative from stakeholders;
- iii. Substantiating emails of event circumstances (such as testing concerns or other internal communications);
- iv. Evidence of attempts to rectify incorrect data (15-915, communications with the Arizona Department of Education, and so on).

7. Grounds for appeal are limited to:

a. Adverse Testing Conditions

- a. Definition: The disruption of student testing due to an extreme, unpredictable circumstance that negatively impacted student performance on the assessment. This may include: network failure, failure of heating/cooling system during testing, frozen equipment, disruption in school (e.g., drill, alarm, emergency).
- b. Example: During the Spring assessment window, the school's network was attacked by a hacker leading to network failure. The district's IT department made attempts (see supporting document) to bring the network online, however access was inconsistent and students were consistently locked out of the test.
- c. Examples of Supporting Evidence: Communications with test proctors, Arizona Department of Education staff, network/IT professionals, administrator testimony of events, previous A-F accountability results establishing trend in assessment data.

b. School/Community Events or Emergency:

- a. Definition: Unexpected event(s) that negatively influenced student learning in the short or long-term. This may include environmental conditions, extenuating construction circumstances, temporary closures, threats of violence near or in the school, loss of internet access in the community, and so on.
- b. Example: At the beginning of the school year, the main road into town is washed out and must undergo months of repair, impacting transportation to and from school by about an hour each way. The school sees a significant decline in attendance rates, as well as instructional time, due to an additional two hours of commuting time for many students.
- c. Examples of Supporting Evidence: Previous A-F accountability results, attendance records, transportation logs, and so on.



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c. School Tragedy

- a. Definition: A singular event that negatively impacts student learning. Tragedies may include circumstances endangering students, deaths within the school, and other traumatic events.
- b. Example: A fatal car accident occurs on the campus of an elementary school during the middle of a school day in February. It is revealed that a staff member was in the vehicle. Students and staff who witnessed the accident necessitated counseling.
- c. Examples of Supporting Evidence: Testimony from community members, evidence of coordination of efforts to support the school's community, police or media reports as appropriate, previous A-F accountability results establishing trend in assessment data.

d. Incorrect Data (see paragraph 10)

- a. Definition: Incorrect data appeals address gaps or differences in the calculations from the school's demographics or performance. It may include, but is not limited to, students being misidentified for a subgroup, incorrect withdrawal codes, missing student assessment results.
- b. Example: There are three students in special education who are not reflected in the static file. One SPED report shows all students included, while SPED 07 does not. We were told that no corrections could be made to the SPED 07 report during the static file review window.
- c. Examples of Supporting Evidence: Student ID's (SAIS ID's) for the students not included, documentation of their IEP status, SPED report showing all students included, communications addressing attempts to rectify the issue during the static file window.

8. Guidance to Committee on Letter Grade Recommendations:

- a. Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or Emergency, and School Tragedy appeals may be recommended for the movement of up to one letter grade.
- b. Incorrect data appeals may be recommended to move the letter grade multiple letter grades depending on the underlying data.
- c. Consideration of multiple grounds for appeal:
 - i. Multiple grounds for appeal may be approved for recommendation by the Committee.
 - ii. The letter grade may be recommended to move up to one letter grade for any combination of approved grounds for appeal: Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or Emergency, School Tragedy.
 - iii. If the appeal includes incorrect data, in addition to an approved grounds for appeal of Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or



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Emergency, and School Tragedy, the letter grade may be recommended to move up to one letter grade for Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or Emergency, and/or School Tragedy, and however many letter grades the incorrect data addresses.

9. Rubric: The same rubric will be used to evaluate all appeals.

- a. The Committee will consider whether the grounds for appeal were:
 - i. Unrelated to school/student performance
 - ii. Outside the school's control
 - iii. Timing reasonably related to student performance
 - iv. Substantial cause of overall school performance

In addition, the Committee will consider whether the school took reasonable steps to minimize the impact of the event on outcomes, or if the opportunity did not exist for the school/LEA to minimize impact on students. It is recommended that the appealing entity supply evidentiary documents within the initial "SBE Letter Grade Appeal Application" ([Google Forms](#)) to address the Committee's considerations.

10. Non-substantive events:

The Committee **will not** evaluate appeals and will not provide time for an appearance before the Committee based on conditions including, but not limited to:

- a. Opposition to accountability formula (e.g. Growth should not be weighted as such; non-FAY students who pass AASA should be counted, etc.)
 - o Schools are encouraged to provide input for the accountability technical advisory committees to consider in future accountability years via inbox@azsbe.az.gov.
- b. Demographic make-up of student population (e.g. School has an above average percentage of ELL students; student mobility patterns, etc.)
- c. Individual student characteristics (e.g. a student was often tardy or absent from their Math classes)
- d. Incorrect data that does not impact the school's letter grade (e.g. Three students' assessment data is missing from the proficiency indicator, yet if their data is added to the file, the school would still have received a "B" letter grade)
- e. The inclusion of self-reported data that was provided or completed after the submission deadline without attempts to rectify prior to closure of the submission window or letter grade release.
- f. School closures relating to COVID-19 restrictions not instituted by tribal or county orders.

11. LEA letter grades: Letter grades for local education agencies (LEA) for the school year 2022-2023 will be released. The Board approved the straight GPA method for calculating these letter grades in [April 2022](#). LEAs appeal their letter grade by



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appealing a school’s individual letter grade. Following the determination of school letter grade appeals at the December Board meeting, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will re-calculate the LEA letter grade using the straight GPA method and the Board will re-release the public A-F file. Communications on any changes will be provided to LEAs. Please review the [A-F business rules](#) approved in April 2023.

12. Incorrect data appeals:

The expectation for incorrect data appeals is a reasonable attempt to rectify the data prior to the release of letter grades.

Schools that cite incorrect data as the basis for the appeal may be subject to the following if the appeal is granted by the Board. These conditions will be included in the recommendation from the A-F Appeals Committee to the Board:

- a. If directed by the Board, the school shall file a 15-915 form with ADE School Finance to correct the data.
- b. If directed by the Board, a school shall attend a mandatory data training workshop convened by ADE or review resources provided.
- c. Additionally, schools may be required to sign an attestation that states the school did not check data in static file validation appropriately but will in future years. Further resources will be provided.

13. Public Records: All appeals submitted may be subject to public records requests.

14. Committee Background and Recommendations: See corresponding “A-F School Accountability Appeals Committee” document. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Board for final action on the letter grade appeal at the December 4, 2023 Board meeting. All decisions made by the Board are final.

15. Board Meeting: A notification of the Committee’s recommendation and guidance on submitting comments to the Board’s agenda will be provided following the convening of the Committee.

Contact Information

Arizona State Board of Education (SBE)	Arizona Department of Education (ADE)
For information about the appeals process and Board’s decisions on A-F: (602) 542-5057 inbox@azsbe.az.gov https://azsbe.az.gov/f-school-letter-grades	For information about ADEConnect, business rules, or data underlying calculations of components: (602) 542-5151 achieve@azed.gov https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/

2022-2023 Letter Grade Appeal Application

Please complete and submit this form by Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.

Please review the Appeal Policies and Procedures prior to submitting.

Link: <https://azsbe.az.gov/f-school-letter-grades>

As outlined in the A-F Appeals Policies and Procedures, incomplete appeals and appeals submitted with personally identifiable information (e.g. student names, student addresses, diagnoses, etc.) will not be reviewed, the submission will be destroyed and the appeal will be denied without further review.

This form will need to be submitted using a Google account. Applicants submitting an appeal will be automatically notified by email immediately after submitting the appeal by the Google Form.

Please contact inbox@azsbe.az.gov if you have any questions.

If you are an LEA representative, filing an appeal for multiple schools, please submit one form per school. Staff cannot process singular forms with multiple school appeals.

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

Application Background

2. Name of Person Submitting Form *

3. Job Title *

4. Work Phone *

5. Name of School Appealing 2022-2023 Letter Grade *

6. State School Entity ID (Not CTDS). Can be found here: <https://www.ade.az.gov/edd/> by selecting "View More Details" *

7. Please select all the grades this school served in 2022-2023 (e.g., for Grades 5-8, select "5", "6", "7", and "8") *

Check all that apply.

Pre-K

K

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

8. Local Education Agency (LEA) Name *

9. State Local Education Agency (LEA) Entity ID (Not CTDS). Can be found here: <https://www.ade.az.gov/edd/> by selecting "View More Details" *
-

10. **I attest that no personally identifiable student information and/or any other information that is confidential or private in nature will be shared in this form or in its supporting documents.** *

I understand applications containing this information will be immediately discarded and the appeal will be denied without further review.

I attest that I have read the A-F Appeals Policies and Procedures. Link:

Mark only one oval.

YES

Factor(s) for the School's Letter Grade Appeal

Incorrect Data Appeals Note: Please ensure any appeals related to incorrect data related appeals affects/changes the summative letter grade and the supporting documentation is included in the appeal application. Incorrect data appeals in which the underlying data does not change the summative letter grade will not be evaluated.

11. Which accountability model does the school's appeal application fall under? *

Mark only one oval.

Traditional K-8

Traditional 9-12

Alternative

Hybrid (Non-Typical Configuration)

AOI

Other: _____

12. Please indicate the total number of factors you are citing as the basis of the letter *
grade appeal.

Factors may include:

- 1) School/community events or emergency;
- 2) Adverse testing conditions;
- 3) School tragedy; and
- 4) Incorrect data.

Complete each set of questions on the following sections for each factor cited in the basis for your school's appeal. NOTE: If you are appealing based upon multiple factors (i.e. incorrect data-factor one and a school tragedy- factor two), please indicate each of them separately.

Mark only one oval.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Factor 1

13. **Appeal Factor One:** *
Please select ONE of the following factors as appropriate and add any additional details in the available box below.

NOTE: If you are appealing based upon multiple factors (i.e. incorrect data-factor one and a school tragedy- factor two), please indicate each of them separately.

Mark only one oval.

- School/Community Events or Emergency
- Adverse Testing Conditions
- School Tragedy
- Incorrect Data (Please review the policies and procedures regarding appeals citing incorrect data)

14. Does this appeal factor relate to a specific grade level/grade band, individual class * and/or subject area, or other specificity? Select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

Grade level/grade band

Individual Class

Subject area

Other: _____

15. If you answered specific grade level/grand band, individual class, subject area, or other specificity from above, please describe the specific area.

16. **Appeal Factor One Description:** *
Please explain reasoning for the factor using NO personally identifiable student information (SAIS ID numbers only may be used).

Appeals that include personally identifiable student information will be denied and destroyed without further review.

Please include any: narratives on the longitudinal data related to school/student performance, timelines, communication efforts, and/or any other narration in support of the appeal.

You will be able to attach files supporting your narrative at the end of this form. The text box on this form will expand as you write more text.

Factor 2

Skip if you did not select 2, 3, or 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.
Complete if you did select 2, 3, or 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.

17. **Appeal Factor Two:**

Please select ONE of the following factors as appropriate and add any additional details in the available box below.

NOTE: If you are appealing based upon multiple factors (i.e. incorrect data-factor one and a school tragedy- factor two), please indicate each of them separately.

Mark only one oval.

- School/Community Events or Emergency
- Adverse Testing Conditions
- School Tragedy
- Incorrect Data (Please review the policies and procedures regarding appeals citing incorrect data)

18. Does the second appeal factor relate to a specific grade level/grade band, individual class and/or subject area, or other specificity? Select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Grade level/grade band
- Individual Class
- Subject area
- Other: _____

19. If you answered specific grade level/grand band, individual class, subject area, or other specificity from above, please describe the specific area.

20. **Appeal Factor Two Description:**

Please explain reasoning for the factor using NO personally identifiable student information (SAIS ID numbers only may be used).

Appeals that include personally identifiable student information will be denied and destroyed without further review.

Please include any: narratives on the longitudinal data related to school/student performance, timelines, communication efforts, and/or any other narration in support of the appeal.

You will be able to attach files supporting your narrative at the end of this form. The text box on this form will expand as you write more text.

Factor 3

Skip if you did not select 3 or 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.
Complete if you did select 3 or 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.

21. **Appeal Factor Three:**

Please select ONE of the following factors as appropriate and add any additional details in the available box below.

NOTE: If you are appealing based upon multiple factors (i.e. incorrect data-factor one and a school tragedy- factor two), please indicate each of them separately.

Mark only one oval.

- School/Community Events or Emergency
- Adverse Testing Conditions
- School Tragedy
- Incorrect Data (Please review the policies and procedures regarding appeals citing incorrect data)

22. Does the third appeal factor relate to a specific grade level/grade band, individual class and/or subject area, or other specificity? Select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Grade level/grade band
- Individual Class
- Subject area
- Other: _____

23. If you answered specific grade level/grand band, individual class, subject area, or other specificity from above, please describe the specific area.

24. **Appeal Factor Three Description:**

Please explain reasoning for the factor using NO personally identifiable student information (SAIS ID numbers only may be used).

Appeals that include personally identifiable student information will be denied and destroyed without further review.

Please include any: narratives on the longitudinal data related to school/student performance, timelines, communication efforts, and/or any other narration in support of the appeal.

You will be able to attach files supporting your narrative at the end of this form. The text box on this form will expand as you write more text.

Factor 4

Skip if you did not select 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.
Complete if you did select 4 factors for appealing the school's letter grade.

25. **Appeal Factor Four:**

Please select ONE of the following factors as appropriate and add any additional details in the available box below.

NOTE: If you are appealing based upon multiple factors (i.e. incorrect data-factor one and a school tragedy- factor two), please indicate each of them separately.

Mark only one oval.

- School/Community Events or Emergency
- Adverse Testing Conditions
- School Tragedy
- Incorrect Data (Please review the policies and procedures regarding appeals citing incorrect data)

26. Does the fourth appeal factor relate to a specific grade level/grade band, individual class and/or subject area, or other specificity? Select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Grade level/grade band
- Individual Class
- Subject area
- Other: _____

27. If you answered specific grade level/grand band, individual class, subject area, or other specificity from above, please describe the specific area.

28. **Appeal Factor Four Description:**

Please explain reasoning for the factor using NO personally identifiable student information (SAIS ID numbers only may be used).

Appeals that include personally identifiable student information will be denied and destroyed without further review.

Please include any: narratives on the longitudinal data related to school/student performance, timelines, communication efforts, and/or any other narration in support of the appeal.

You will be able to attach files supporting your narrative at the end of this form. The text box on this form will expand as you write more text.

Considerations on the Grounds for Appeal (Rubric)

29. The factors shared regarding the school's letter grade appeal meet the following criteria: *

Check all that apply.

- The factor(s) were outside the school's control
- The timing of the circumstance(s) were reasonably related to student performance
- The factor(s) represented a substantial cause of the overall school performance that negatively impacted the assigned letter grade

30. Did the school take reasonable steps to minimize the situation's impact on student/school performance? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- The opportunity did not exist for the school/LEA to minimize impact on students

31. Which steps have been taken to minimize the situation's impact (as appropriate for appeal factor)? *

Check all that apply.

- Communication with ADE
- Filing 15-915 request with ADE School Finance
- Counseling and other supports
- Providing learning opportunities through other environments
- Ample testing preparedness, coordination and/or response
- Not applicable
- Other: _____

32. Please explain your answer from the previous three questions, you may also choose to upload supporting documentation that refers to these considerations. The text box on this form will expand as you write more text. *

Additional Letter Grade and Appeal Information

Insert statement of expedited/non-expedited and timeline

33. Issued 2022-2023 letter grade you are appealing: *

Mark only one oval.

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F
- NR

34. What letter grade was your school awarded in school year 2021-2022? *

Mark only one oval.

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F
- NR

35. Please upload supporting documents here. *

The document limit is 10 files, therefore, please combine files together as needed to be under this limit.

There is no page limit, but each file must be under 100MB.

Reminders:

Appeal applications are considered public records.

Submitted supporting documents are considered part of the appeal application, therefore, **documents that include personally identifiable student information will be destroyed and the appeal will be denied without further review.**

Files submitted:

36. By checking this box, you attest this appeal application is complete, data and documents provided are accurate and factual to the best of your knowledge and you have reviewed the A-F Appeals Policies and Procedures (Link). *

Check all that apply.

YES

37. Please type your first and last name as your signature to the attestation questions in this application. *

The form is complete upon hitting "Submit." Your completed application will be automatically sent to the email address you provided.

Google Forms

