

A-F Appeals: Overview

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What is the A-F appeals process?

- Pursuant to [15-241 \(J\)](#): The state board of education shall establish an appeals process to allow a school or local education agency to appeal the school's or local education agency's final letter grade, or a letter grade applied to a performance indicator prescribed in subsection D of this section, based on mitigating factors.



What is the A-F Appeals Committee?

- This Committee, open to the public, scores applications based on “a rubric for an expedited or non-expedited process depending on the school’s or local education agency’s specific situation.”
- Membership consists of three members of the State Board of Education
 - For SY22-23: Dr. Jacqui Clay-County School Superintendent, Dr. Scott Hagerman-High School District Superintendent, Member Julia Meyerson-Charter School Administrator



Timeline

Meeting dates:

Committee

November 20, 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM

November 27, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Board

December 4, 9:00 AM

22-23 Letter Grades Timeline	
October 13	SBE Meeting Materials posted
October 23 Board Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Board sets cut scores » Board approves Appeals Policies/Procedures » Board directs ADE to check letter grades and releases for schools and LEAs by November 1, 2023
October 23-November 1	Board/ADE communicate appeals process, coming letter grades, etc.
By November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Letter Grades released to public, press, schools, LEAs simultaneously » Press release and comms. to schools/LEAs (from Board) » Appeals window opened
COB (5:00pm MST) on November 15	Appeals window closed
Immediately following COB on November 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Letter Grades are posted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Schools that appealed are labeled "UR" for Under Review » LEAs with schools that appealed are labeled "UR"
November 20 – November 27	A-F Appeals Committee reviews appeals and issues recommendation to Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » November 20, 11:30am-2:30pm, virtual only meeting format » November 27, 8:00am-12:00pm, hybrid meeting format
December 4 Board Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Board acts on A-F Appeals Committee recommendations » Finalized school letter grades are posted » LEAs remain "UR" until re-calculated
By December 11	Finalized LEA letter grades are posted



Rubric

Questions related to this rubric are directly asked on the application, however can be expanded to supporting materials or ADE determination (incorrect data/adverse testing conditions)

- A. Is the appeal application complete and appropriate? (appropriate meaning it does not contain personally identifiable student information)¹:
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No

- B. Did the application cite an appealable factor as the basis for the appeal? (School/Community Events or Emergency; Adverse Testing Conditions; School Tragedy; Incorrect Data²)
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No

- C. Was this event: 1) related to school/student performance; 2) outside the school's control; and 3) a substantial cause of the overall school performance that negatively impacted the assigned letter grade?
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No

- D. Did the school take reasonable steps to minimize the situation's impact on accountability outcomes?
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No
 - 3) The opportunity did not exist for the school/LEA to minimize impact on students.



Form (Google)

- Applications for an A-F appeal are to be submitted electronically through a Google form.
- A Google account will be required to submit the form.
- The questions asked on the form can be found in the document “A-F appeals policies and procedures” on the Board’s A-F appeals webpage beginning page 7: <https://azsbe.az.gov/parents/a-f-school-letter-grades/f-appeals>
- Contact the Board if you have any issues with submitting the form or addressing questions in the form (last slide of this presentation).

<https://forms.gle/CYYmBKyrJJNWhqFZ7>



Expedited / Non Expedited appeal

Committee Determination

Expedited Appeal:

Document review only, reserved for when the application and materials are clear to Committee members with no questions remaining.

These appeals will be reviewed on November 20th.

Non-Expedited Appeal:

Although the application is complete, the Committee has identified remaining questions for the school. These questions will be asked of the school on November 27th. The questions will be provided to schools prior.



Expedited / Non Expedited appeal

- The Committee will make its best effort to decide which appeals may be non-expedited between November 16 and November 17, however the Committee may also discuss at its public meeting on November 20th, any remaining appeals that they would like to request an appearance (non-expedited).
- Schools are encouraged to be available for both meetings (November 20, 11:30am-2:30pm and November 27, 8:00am-12:00pm), at least until they receive their memo between November 16 and 17



Grounds for appeal

- A school can apply for up to 4 different grounds for appeal: Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or Emergency, School Tragedy, Incorrect Data
- Each grounds for appeal is considered separately: Committee recommendations can approve one grounds while denying other grounds, for instance, or approve all grounds for appeal.
 - Adverse Testing Conditions, School/Community Events or Emergency, and School Tragedy appeals may be recommended for the movement of up to one letter grade.
 - Incorrect data appeals may be recommended to move the letter grade multiple letter grades depending on the underlying data.



Supporting evidence examples

- Previous A-F accountability data showing an upward trend until the substantive event;
- Media reports conferring the reason for appeal, or additional narrative from stakeholders;
- Substantiating emails of event circumstances (such as testing concerns or other internal communications);
- Evidence of attempts to rectify incorrect data or circumstances (15-915, communications with the Arizona Department of Education, counseling, and so on).



Yes, SAIS ID's can be included

- However, student names, student diagnoses (IEP documents, chronic illness, etc.), and other personally identifiable information (PII) protected by FERPA should be removed.
- **All appeal applications and supporting documents are subject to public records requests.**
- If PII is not removed, the appeal application will be destroyed/deleted and the application will not be evaluated by the Committee or Board.
- You will be notified if Board staff finds PII in the application or supporting documents.
 - Barrier: When an appeal application is received with PII on November 14th or November 15th, it can be difficult for Board staff to review and communicate this, and for schools to re-submit, due to reduced timelines.
 - Cutoff is 5:00pm (MT) on November 15th



LEA letter grades

- Calculated with a “straight” GPA where each school is equally weighted in the LEA letter grade. After each school is assigned a 0-4 point score, and divided by the number of schools, the number is rounded to the nearest whole number.
- LEA letter grades are appealed by appealing underlying school’s letter grades.
- After school letter grade appeals are decided at the December Board meeting, ADE will re-calculate the LEA letter grade and the Board will re-release the public A-F file.



Communications to expect from the Board

- Schools will receive the following communications:
 - **Between November 16 and November 17, memo regarding the Committee's November 20th meeting**, including draft recommendation, **determination of expedited/non-expedited/undetermined appeal**, and guidance to attend or observe the meeting.
 - **Between November 21 and November 24, memo regarding the Committee's November 27th meeting**, including draft recommendation, **determination of a non-expedited (appearance) appeal**, and guidance to attend the meeting
 - **Between November 28 and December 1, memo regarding the Committee's recommendation** including guidance to make a public comment or to observe the Board meeting
 - **After December 4, memo regarding the Board's final vote** on A-F appeal
 - If this final vote changes the LEA letter grade, a memo will be sent to the school and superintendent/charter holder



Other presentations

Other presentations in this guidance series address specific grounds for appeal, including examples.



Contact Information

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