

MEETING MINUTES

Arizona State Board of Education Alternative Accountability Technical Advisory Committee

NOTICE AND AGENDA

Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Arizona State Board of Education, the Alternative Accountability Technical Advisory Committee and to the general public that the Committee will hold a meeting, open to the public, on **Monday, November 4, 2024, at 09:30 A.M at 1535 W Jefferson St Room 417, Phoenix, AZ 85007.**

Members of the public will have physical access to the meeting location 10 minutes before the Committee meeting, at 9:20 A.M.

A copy of the agenda for the meeting is attached. The Committee reserves the right to change the order of items on the agenda, with the exception of public hearings. One or more members of the Committee may participate telephonically.

Agenda materials can be reviewed online at <http://azsbe.az.gov>

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02 (H), the Committee may discuss and take action concerning any matter listed on the agenda.

Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A) (2), the Committee may vote to convene in executive session, which will not be open to the public, for discussion or consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection.

Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter or narrator by contacting the State Board Office at (602) 542-5057. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Please see below on how to access the meeting and provide public comment on agenda items.

Methods on Accessing the Committee Meeting

This meeting is accessible to the public through in-person attendance at the address listed on this notice. This meeting is not live-streamed to any platform, or recorded. Accessing the meeting virtually through video conferencing is available by registering here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nwzf0ZOYQTS8wdtWvcYuWw#/registration.

Please refer to materials published on this agenda, procedure for submitting public comment, and minutes published online: <https://azsbe.az.gov/public-meetings/committee-meetings>.

Procedure for Submitting Public Comment:

For individuals wishing to submit public comment

Written Comment:

Written comments for the meeting will be accepted by:

- email inbox@azsbe.az.gov
- fax to (602) 542-3046
- USPS to 1700 W. Washington St., Executive Tower, Suite 300, Phoenix, Arizona 85007

The deadline to submit a written comment will be Monday, November 4, 2024 at 7:00 AM.

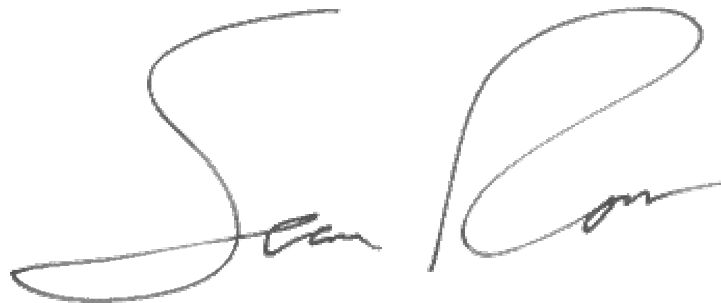
Written comments received after the deadline will not be posted and will not be provided to members.

Written comments will not be read into the record, however, staff will post all written comments received by the deadline on the Committee's agenda by **Monday, November 4, 2024 at 8:00 AM.**

DATED AND POSTED this 31st day of October, 2024.

Alternative Accountability Technical Advisory Committee

by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sean" and last name "Ross" clearly distinguishable.

Sean Ross, Executive Director
State Board of Education
(602) 542-5057

1. Operational

Meeting commenced at: 9:41 AM

Binky Michelle Jones, Chair

Mary Berg, Vice Chair

Kellie Burns, Committee Member (virtual)

Kelly Powell, Committee Member (virtual)

Sue Durkin, Committee Member

Wayne Tucker, Committee Member – arrived at 9:58am

Harriet Caruso, Committee Member (virtual)

A. Comments for the record

No written comments received for the meeting before the deadline.

B. Meeting calendar for 2025

Jessica Mueller, [Policy and Research Administrator for the Arizona State Board of Education, presented on this agenda item.](#)

Members confirmed that they prefer the 9:30am – 12:00pm timeframe.

Members discussed a conflict for typical pattern of October 2025 meeting and tentatively agreed on October 20, 2025.

Jessica will send calendar invites to all committee members and will post the calendar on the State Board of Education website.

2. Technical

A. Study and discussion of AATAC member questions

i. Discussion on Persistence Rate Report

Chair Jones introduced this agenda item and asked Arizona Department of Education staff to provide any updates.

Sean Smith, Chief Accountability Office for the Arizona Department of Education thanked members for their help and conversation on this.

ii. Discussion on CSI-Low Graduation Rate Entrance/Exit for Alternative Schools

Chair Jones introduced this agenda item and guest speaker Dr. Amy Schlessman, Chief Alternative Education Officer for ThrivePoint High Schools.

Dr. Schlessman made remarks about the National Alternative Education Association statement regarding alternative schools in the federal Comprehensive School

Improvement (CSI) Low Graduation Rate identification.

Sean Smith asked how the outlined proposal would allow Arizona to look at all schools equally as required by law. Dr. Schlessman responded that allowing individual states to determine how it would work. Dr. Schlessman gave an example of California's interest in creating a one-year graduation rate that would be used to all schools across the state.

Members noted that such a plan would require change at a national level within ESSA to allow states to create such systems.

Members discussed five-year graduation rate data, the data source, the experience of students during COVID and how that impacts the graduation rates we see now.

Sean Smith noted that this topic came up at a recent conference and this is a recurring topic of interest nationally.

Dr. Schlessman noted that in meeting with legislators, questions were asked about how much federal dollars for school improvement are going to alternative schools. Russel Potter, School Improvement Data Director for the Arizona Department of Education, responded about the challenges of identifying all the data regarding the total federal resources for alternative schools. Russel also noted a change in the attitude directed towards schools identified as CSI-low graduation rate and that there is no leeway from the federal government on how to identify alternative schools for CSI but there is leeway for exit criteria. There are also challenges with dropout recovery programs.

Members noted that some alternative schools are for-profit and are thus not eligible for the funding. Members suggested that School Improvement differentiate how schools can utilize the funding associated with federal identification. Russel noted that there are some rigid requirements associated with the funding but it is looked at on a case by case basis with specialists. Russel noted that there is also an economic argument that is a play from a political perspective.

Sean Smith asked what are some of the problematic outcomes that occur as part of identification for federal accountability? What problems are created for an alternative school when they get identified? Is there a way to mitigate the problems that result from it? Members noted that the process is difficult and that there is a perception associated with it that impacts the people in a position to make policy decisions regarding alternative schools. Sean Smith asked where the public finds that federal identification. Members shared that it is included on School Report Cards and it is shared through the State Board, and federal law requires notifying stakeholders. Dr. Schlessman noted that there has been a change in the most recent fiscal year on the Charter School Board's dashboard. Dr. Schlessman also noted that her school was notified they would be going from 2 visits this year to 4. Members noted that there is staff time required to prepare for such visits and it still feels punitive. Russel noted that the visits and activities associated with them are intended to be helpful to the process. Members asked that the help associated with visits and the rules associated with it be differentiated.

Sean Smith noted three themes of feedback, a need for real stakeholder involvement in

what can be differentiated, the issue with funding having disappeared, and communications/public facing concerns. Members noted that they are pulling a vast majority of funding but that there could be traditional high schools with really low graduation rates that really do need funding and assistance to make improvements. Sean Smith noted that Accountability has had conversations about how to explain and warn users about the impact of indicator scoring and knowing how to use and understand that information.

Yassin Fahmy, Director of Accountability for the Arizona Department of Education, asked if the funding for Alternative Schools could be used more creatively than traditional schools because Alternative Schools are a creative concept to meet the needs of their specific students. Russel noted that question would need to be taken to specialists who work with schools to better understand what the options would be. Sean Smith noted that there is a lot of positivity in the story of alternative schools that is not being told by the current systems.

Members suggested looking at how many fifth-year students traditional high schools have versus how many fifth-year students alternative high schools have.

Yassin noted that data comes from a single snapshot, for a concurrently enrolled student, the last exit code is who is responsible for the student but another option is to look at the full-time enrollment school. Members noted that this would need to be investigated and studied before any rule changes would be made.

Chair Jones asked that this item be made a standing agenda item for the committee.

Jessica Mueller noted that in January the Committee will look at the criteria/demographics of students to identify a school as an Alternative School.

B. Presentation of school year 2023-2024 alternative school accountability performance

Chair Jones introduced this agenda item.

Jessica Mueller presented on the data for the 2023-2024 school year alternative school accountability performance.

Members noted that EL students are coming in more at the pre-emergent/emergent level at all grade levels. Members also noted that more alternative schools may now be eligible for EL Proficiency and Growth points.

Members asked what the point threshold is for Alternative Schools to be unrated. Sean Smith confirmed that the threshold is that a school must be eligible for 60 possible points.

Members suggested looking at the considering the impact of changing the point eligibility threshold in future years. Sean Smith suggested also looking at n-size changes to see the impact that would have.

Members asked for data about how many Alternative Schools that are not AOIs were not

rated.

C. Presentation and discussion on indicator methods: proficiency, EL proficiency and growth, credits earned, on track to graduate, academic persistence, graduation rate, and CCRI, for implementation in school year 2024-2025. Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A) (2), the Committee may vote to convene in executive session, which will not be open to the public, for discussion or consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection

Chair Jones introduced this agenda item.

Sean Smith discussed the feedback regarding indicator scoring and that the general consensus is that business rules stay consistent for the introduction of indicator scoring. The trend is that putting indicator grades on the system removes much of the bias of a summative grade. The other point of agreement is that if indicator cut scores come from historical distributions. The historical distributions say where we are at and looking at movement of schools over time with those distributions say where schools have gone since the cut scores were originally set.

Yassin presented data on what indicator cut scores would be if it mimicked the current distribution of summative letter grades.

Members noted that if extensive communication is needed then the system isn't as clear as it should be.

Sean Smith cautioned that some of the weirdness in the model is part of the design of addressing indicator scoring because transitioning it slowly is going to show a lot of the problems in A-F. The system was not conceived to work as independent indicators.

Sean Smith noted that the variability within indicators will impact the way summative scores work with indicator scores.

Members discussed why graduation rate is lagged a year and discussed wanting to continue to discuss this at future meetings.

Sean Smith and members discussed that there are ways to make a GPA model work but the current model has the summative grade and indicator grades being calculated separately.

Members ask that data on other indicators' scoring be included in the next meeting's agenda. Members also noted that it could be helpful at the next meeting to discuss specific schools.

3. Future Meeting Dates and Items for Future Agendas

The next meeting will take place on November 18th at the Arizona Department of Education.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02pm.