ACCOUNTABILITY & RESEARCH

THE GRADER

May 2021 Edition

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End of Year Note of Appreciation

ADE's Accountability Team wanted to send a note of appreciation to all the readers of The Grader. Our subscribers vary greatly from accountability personnel, administrators, superintendents, teachers, information technology, policy, communications, and the media. The purpose of The Grader is to inform educator stakeholders on federal and state accountability systems, public reporting, and data systems. It is no wonder we have such a diverse group of readers. It is your feedback on the newsletter that helps us to keep it relevant and informative. To that, we say thank you.

As we near the end of the 2020-2021 school year and we enter the accountability season, we want to recognize the work that the Arizona schools have accomplished during one of the most challenging times in the history of education. This challenge was not just across Arizona, but our country and the world. The diligence, perseverance, commitment, and love of the PK-12 education has shown throughout the year. You kept the ball rolling, while overcoming unforeseen obstacles and rewriting the rules as you worked for the success of your students. For that alone, you have earned the appreciation and respect of our team beyond measure.

This is a lengthy Grader full of information on what is coming up regarding both state and federal accountability indicators, reporting, and all the other items we are tasked with. Our main purpose will be to provide you with the most accurate data and reporting that can help everyone start to understand the impact of the pandemic and help focus attention where needed. Please be sure to reach out to us if you have any questions as Arizona schools wrap up their year and we move into our summer months.

Take care and stay safe,

Wendy

Integrity Errors and Corrections for 2020-2021

This past year schools have overcome an amazing number of challenges, and we realize that for many schools correcting integrity errors is a low priority. However, those integrity errors need to be resolved before students can enter the static file. The static file is the driver for all state and federal accountability indicators, and while schools are not going to be given a letter grade or a summative score this year, each component will still be reported. We also are aware that many schools use this comprehensive file for their own analysis at the end of the year and having all their eligible student included increases its value.

Please work with your SIS administrators to correct any errors your students may have. If schools do not correct student integrity errors, it will prevent a student from being included in any of the component calculations. ADE is monitoring these numbers weekly and ensuring the static file is of the highest quality. Thank you for taking the time to correct the integrity issues in your data.

Opening of 2020-2021 A-F Self-Report Data

The A-F Self Reporting Data application opened on ADEConnect on May 3rd, 2021 in order for schools to submit their self-reported data components (CCRI, Credits Earned, and On-Track to Graduate). The application will close on **July 30th, 2021 at the end of the business day**. After this deadline, schools will no longer be able to submit data for the 2020-2021 school year. The Fiscal Year 2021 A-F Self Reporting Data Guide can be found [here](). This guide contains helpful information such as where to download the CCRI spreadsheets and how to submit data. Resources are also available on our State

[Accountability](#) page, which includes FAQs and instructional videos. For additional questions or concerns, please contact Achieve@azed.gov.

2020-2021 Static File Coming Soon

The Static File has been a constant since 2017 in verification and calculation of state accountability indicators. It will also be used for federal accountability indicators moving forward. For those new to accountability, or The Grader, the static file contains personal identifying information (PII) for all the students a school will be held accountable for in the current school year, excluding Graduation or Dropout rates. The file is only available to schools/districts/charter holders for their students as it contains PII data. The file cointains important information used by ADE, as well as the field for their own reporting, analysis, or research. Schools are known to add teacher information, instructional/curriculum programs, and intervention to investigate, evaluate, or report based on their own unique needs. The following is what you can expect for this year, mirroring previous years, with some extensions due to the pandemic.

June (Release V1) – This file will contain students' demographics, program participation, and FAY status. This file is released as early as possible so that schools have time to correct their student level data prior to the July 15th cut-off date for student information system corrections.

June/July – Schools are strongly encouraged to check the Assessment correction application based on the Assessment timeline to ensure tests are corrected so that they will be included in accountability.

Early August (Release V2) – This file will contain assessment results, assessment corrections submitted by July 30, and growth data. This file needs to be reviewed for any issues regarding assessments.

Late August/Early September (Release V3) – This is the final version that would contain all updated information.

Dropout Tracker Survey

This month we are asking people to fill out a short survey on the Dropout Tracker. The purpose of this survey is to get feedback on how LEAs use the Dropout Tracker and how the tracker can be improved. This short seven question survey should take less than five minutes to complete. The survey will be open until May 21st. Thank you for taking the time to help us improve the Dropout Tracker Report.

Survey Link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V5QRPG7

Pupil Withdrawal Monitoring Conclusion and Upcoming Changes

The Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) Accountability Department, working alongside Education School Excellence (ESE) began the monitoring of Pupil Withdrawal Forms in Fall of 2020. Several steps were taken in the fall to include reviewing of all materials, applicable rules and statutes governing the proper use of withdrawal codes. A field focus group was brought together to provide input on materials, processes, procedures and potential changes or updates as needed. There were several meetings with the Pupil Withdrawal Monitoring focus group. In addition, a couple of the members chose to be "pilots" and went through the monitoring in early 2021 to check how the processes put in place flowed and functioned. Changes were made based on their input.

These are the areas that were identified for development through the focus group and field feedback:

- The need for a new code that removed the confusion of the use of a S/W-4 code

- Request for better training for the field

- Improvement of the Dropout Tracker report

- Investigate a possible method of changing student data in prior years that does not include a 15-915 when funding is not affected

- Updating the Pupil Withdrawal Form

Twelve schools that were currently going through Title I Monitoring were selected for this year. All twelve have completed their Pupil Withdrawal Monitoring and have been vital in providing continuous improvements to the process, training material, and support resources. We appreciated working with them, their response to the monitoring, and efforts to help improve the system for all schools.

The monitoring in the 2020-2021 school year had several positive outcomes, despite occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic and an extremely challenging period for the Arizona PK-12 schools. In addition to the Pupil Withdrawal Monitoring, the pandemic led to many data pulls on the location and mobility of students using withdrawal and enrollments providing further insight. Here are the highlights of some of those outcomes based on our findings:

- Establishment of a focus group that are available to further advise on continuous improvement and data quality

- Improved communication with the field on the laws, requirements, processes, and outcomes/implication of the Pupil Withdrawal Form

- Establishment of a new code that will allow for a clear break between students withdrawn due to 10 unexcused absences/no contact and students who have been properly withdrawn, but the withdrawing school had not received documentation from a subsequent school beginning in the 2021-2022 school year

- Establishment of a new code for students under the age of 16 that qualifies them to drop out based on the categories found in ARS §15-802(D)(2-5) beginning in the 2021-2022 school year

- Updated Pupil Withdrawal Form scheduled for release in May/June of 2021 for use and integration in the 2021-2022 school year

- Updated and created additional support material

- Gathering field input and use of the Dropout Tracker report for updates and enhancements for potential changes for the next school year or as soon as it can be accomplished

- On-demand training webinars for 24/7 access to begin in June of 2021

- Live online training offered to new registrars and SIS personnel prior to the start of a new school year. Watch the Grader for announcement of these dates and times

ADE's AzEDS team will be providing more information on the new codes. Accountability will soon be providing the updated Pupil Withdrawal Form. The codes were vetted through a multi-department lens to include ESS (Special Education), School Finance, Data Governance, and Accountability. The codes also have their corresponding re-entry code.

Code Value	Short Description	Description
W41	Withdrawn before scheduled end of school year with completed withdrawal form	Withdrawn before scheduled end of school year with completed withdrawal form; awaiting confirmation from subsequent enrolling school.
S41	Summer withdrawn with completed withdrawal form	Summer withdrawn with completed withdrawal form; awaiting confirmation of from subsequent enrolling school
R41	Student re-entering after withdrawing from this school as a W41	Student re-entering after withdrawing from this school as a W41
W51	Student under 16 years of age withdrawn based on ARS §15-802(D)(2-5) with supporting documentation.	School received verification that a student under the age of 16 has withdrawn from school before scheduled end of school year; student does not intend to complete requirements for a high school diploma and qualifies with documentation based on ARS §15-802(D)(2-5).

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Code Value	Short Description	Description
S51	Summer student under 16 years of age withdrawn based on ARS §15-802(D)(2-5) with supporting documentation.	School received verification that a student under the age of 16 has withdrawn from school during the summer; student does not intend to complete requirements for a high school diploma and qualifies with documentation based on ARS §15-802(D)(2-5).
R51	Student re-entering after withdrawing from this school as a W51	Student re-entering after withdrawing from this school as a W51

Using Summer Withdrawal Codes

As a reminder, summer withdrawal codes should be used to indicate that something has changed for a student during the summer. This is how ADE knows to remove students from several calculations such as the graduation rate calculation. For example, if you receive a records request for a student over the summer, you would mark the student with an "S1" withdrawal code to indicate that over the summer, you received appropriate documentation indicating that the student is now attending another school. Keep in mind that summer withdrawal codes must have an entry and exit date, however the entry date must be at the start of the new fiscal year (July 1) or later and the exit date must occur after the entry date. The Graduation, Dropout, and Persistence Rate Technical Manual is a great resource regarding entry and withdrawal codes. If you have questions, please contact Achieve@azed.gov.

Accountability 101 Guidebook

In an effort to better support school/LEA staff members who are new to Accountability processes and A-F Letter Grades, we would like to remind the field that the Accountability 101 Guidebook is available here. This document has also been posted on our website under the "Guides & FAQ" tab on our Resources page. The Accountability 101 Guidebook is intended to provide a high-level overview of A-F Letter Grades, share important contacts and resources, and cover some important terms. If possible, we encourage you to include this in training materials for any new staff members expected to work on Accountability/A-F Letter Grade related items.

USED Accountability Waiver

The US Department of Education has approved Arizona's request to waive accountability, school identification, and related reporting requirements for the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to section 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Please CLICK HERE for the waiver template.

Please CLICK HERE for the Arizona Waiver Response document.

Revising the ESSA State Plan

Under ESSA, each state creates an ESSA State Plan which gives states the power to identify the schools that need the most targeted support. We are in the process of re-writing that plan to meet our state's current realities and goals for our students and teachers, and to ensure Arizona's schools and students are equitably supported.

From March through September 2021, the Arizona Department of Education will be hosting meetings to solicit feedback from the field on specific aspects of our ESSA State Plan revision. We hope you will attend our meetings and look forward to receiving your feedback!

Revision Timeline

General ESSA State Plan Site

EL Amendment Sunset

The EL Amendment App found within ADEConnect has assisted LEAs and ADE in addressing data issues for the A-F State Accountability system that may have occurred in English Learner data. Over the last few years two major things have occurred: the development of AzEDS and changes in the appeal process for A-F State Accountability. Based on those changes, the EL Amendment application has become outdated and unnecessary. EL data has significantly improved, and schools can now appeal a letter grade based on data. Therefore, the EL Amendment Application will be retired. This does

not impact the EL Reason application which is still a federal requirement for reporting why students were not assessed.

Timeline

May marks the beginning of the accountability season. Below is a number of important dates and deadlines for accountability. Please check The Examiner (Assessment's newsletter) for the most up to date information on assessment data and corrections.

May 2021	• **5/3** 2020-2021 A-F Self-Reported Data Application opens on ADEConnect • Schools notified of Alternative Status
June 2021	• Mid-June: First version of static file containing only enrollment, demographic, and program data becomes available. Data inquiry and correction window opens.
July 2021	• **7/15** Data inquiry and correction window closes • **7/30** 2020-2021 A-F Self-Reporting Data application closes on ADEConnect
August 2021	• Early August (Release V2) – This file will contain assessment results, assessment corrections submitted by July 30, and growth data. This file needs to be reviewed for any issues regarding assessments. • Late August: School-level aggregated data available in ADEConnect • Late August/Early September (Release V3) – This is the final version that would contain all updated information.