

# Arizona's Approved State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### **Where can I find a copy of the final approved plan?**

General information related to Arizona's ESSA State Plan can be found at <http://www.azed.gov/essa/>.

The text of the approved plan can be found at

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=59b185613217e1015407f276>.

### **Why does the final approved plan look different from drafts?**

The drafts of Arizona's plan were developed in conjunction with Arizona stakeholders. This collaborative effort led to a document which provided rich detail about our plans related to ESSA. In March, the United States Department of Education (USED) released a final template for plan submission. This final template was very different from original templates. Arizona was required to provide direct answers to the law with little embellishment about implementation. Thus, some plan detail was lost in the translation to the new, required template.

### **What was the approval process for Arizona's State Plan?**

Approval of Arizona's plan was a multi-step process. After submitting the plan, the USED sent Arizona's plan through both peer and departmental review. Through calls with USED, many questions about the plan were answered. Some changes, to improve the clarity of Arizona's responses, were made as a result of these calls. Because other changes were either more extensive or required input from other agencies, the USED issued a letter to ADE requesting further information and clarification (this letter can be found at <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=59b185963217e1015407f27a>). To guarantee approval by the Secretary within the 120 day timeline, USED required Arizona to resubmit its updated plan in 15 calendar days from the initial phone call. After the submission of the revised plan, Arizona continued to work with USED to come to agreement on an approvable plan. Along the way to final approval, ADE staff worked with the State Board of Education to adjust accountability requirements, and Superintendent of Public Instruction, Diane Douglas, worked directly with the

Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, to advocate on Arizona's behalf. Final plan approval was received on the 120<sup>th</sup> day, September 6, 2017.

### **Why did accountability for alternative schools change?**

According to USED, the ESEA requires a State to include all public schools in its system of annual meaningful differentiation. A State may only develop an alternative methodology for annual meaningful differentiation for schools for which an accountability determination cannot be made using that system. If a State is able to make accountability determinations using its system of annual meaningful differentiation for alternative and AOI schools, it would not be permitted to develop an alternative methodology for those schools.

### **Which schools will receive Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV-A)?**

Schools that receive Title I funds are eligible to receive Title IVA funds. Arizona has not chosen to run a competitive grant for these funds; rather, Title I schools who choose to participate in the program will be automatically eligible to receive funds.

### **How can schools use Title IV-A funds?**

The following website, <https://www.titleiva.org/what-is-title-iv-a/>, provides a comprehensive look at the requirements of Title IV-A.

### **How will Arizona's State Plan be implemented?**

A priority of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Diane Douglas, is to ensure that stakeholder voices are heard and that the best interests of Arizona kids are kept in mind. Implementation, therefore, will continue to be a collaborative effort. Portions of the State Plan are the responsibility of the Arizona Department of Education while others rely upon the State Board of Education. For the portions that are the responsibility of ADE, implementation will be guided by statutory requirements as well as the [Arizona Kids Can't Wait Plan](#). Accountability decisions related to the A-F letter grades are the responsibility of the State Board of Education. Information about the development of the A-F letter grade system can be found here, <https://azsbe.az.gov/f-school-letter-grades>.