

# *The Grader*



Greetings to Arizona Educators,

Our best wishes that the new school year has gotten off to a great start and all the gears and wheels are fully operational at this time.

This month's Grader has some important items regarding A-F Accountability, Alternative Education Application Processes and other tidbits of information. The Grader is the source of accurate information, changes of dates, and the upcoming calendar of events for Arizona's education accountability needs. Please also feel free to reach out to Achieve at (602) 542-5151 or [Achieve@azed.gov](mailto:Achieve@azed.gov) if you have questions or need clarification on items.

Have a great month,



## **In This Issue:**

- A-F Timeline (pg. 2)
- New Spreadsheet of A-F
- Accountability Summary Page (pg. 2)
- FY 18 Aggregated Data Available (pg. 2)
- Assessment Data Download Application (pg. 2)
- Error Code 20023 (pg. 3)
- Alternative Schools Application (pg. 3)
- STC Moves to Accountability (pg. 3)
- LEA Reason (pg. 3)
- CCRI Spreadsheet Audit Summary (pg. 4-5)
- ADEConnect Reports (pg. 6)
- W1 Withdrawal Code (pg. 6)
- Dropout (pg. 6)
- Update from PELL Conference (pg. 7)
- Public Files Now Available (pg. 7)
- Meet the Team (pg. 7-8)

# A-F Timeline

- The Final Static File has been posted
- The aggregated scores are available on ADEConnect (Letter grade is pending and will be provided after the September State Board of Education (SBE) meeting)
- Five to ten days post SBE meeting, letter grades will be posted and appeal window will open (notification will go out in *The Grader*)
- Appeal window will be open for two weeks (more details forthcoming)
- Additional timeline pending regarding appeals and final posting of A-F post appeals

## New Spreadsheet of A-F Accountability Summary Page

There is a new download on the top of the A-F Summary page along with the Static File download icon. This will allow an LEA to download all the data components found on the front page of the A-F letter grades for each school assigned to that LEA. The design of this download was based on feedback we received from the field. After its first run, we will reach out about what modifications or changes can be made in the future to make the spreadsheet more useful for district data personnel.

## FY 18 Aggregated Data Available

Aggregated component score information is now available in ADEConnect under “Accountability” then “A-F Letter Grades”, make sure you have toggled to 2018 in the upper left hand corner. This aggregated information includes MSAA data and all other data included for A-F Letter Grades. Additionally, in the upper right hand corner is the final FY18 Static File. If you have questions or need more information please reach out to [Achieve@azed.gov](mailto:Achieve@azed.gov) or give us a call at (602) 542-5151.

## Assessment Data Download Application

As several of you now know, the Accountability team recently fixed our Assessment Data Download Application. This application allows schools and LEAs to download previous assessment data and assigned cohort year for their students. The application can be found in ADEConnect under “Accountability” then “Student Level Assessment Data”. Please keep in mind that this application will only pull information for students that are currently enrolled at your entity and are passing integrity. If you have questions regarding this application or have any issues, please send an email to [Achieve@azed.gov](mailto:Achieve@azed.gov).

## Error Code 20023

Previously, integrity error code 20023 created a warning error. Starting on September 1, 2018 error code 20023 reverted back to a true error and began failing integrity for students with error code 20023. Accountability AzEDS Integrity Rule 20023 states: “Date falls outside this school’s calendar.” If you have questions or need more information, reach out to [Achieve](#).

## Alternative Schools Application

The application for FY19 Alternative School status will open on October 1, 2018. This application must be completed for all schools requesting Alternative Status including first-time applicants and recertifying applicants. All applicants will be required to submit their mission statement on record as of October 1, 2018. Alternative School Sponsors will be asked to re-view submitted mission statements to verify accuracy.

The Alternative School application will remain open until January 15, 2019. After January 15, 2019, no other Alternative School status requests will be accepted. The Application will be available on the Accountability and Research page [here](#). Notification will go out to schools mid-March if they have been approved as an Alternative School for the 2018-2019 school year. If you have questions about the Alternative Schools application or your school’s eligibility please contact [Achieve@azed.gov](mailto:Achieve@azed.gov).

## STC Moves to Accountability

Beginning in FY19 all STC data will fall under Accountability. Please take the time to verify that all STC data is correct for prior years and that moving forward it is correct and accurate as this data may be included in School Report Cards and/or future A-F Letter Grade models.

## LEA Reason

Per Federal requirements, schools/districts must submit an explanation as to why a student was incorrectly tested or not-tested on the AZELLA assessment. This explanation is submitted through the LEA Reason application which is expected to open in September. When this application becomes available we will send a reminder to our distribution list along with instructions on how to access the application.

# CCRI Spreadsheet Audit Summary

This year we conducted a basic audit of CCRI spreadsheets used for A-F Letter Grades. A small sample of schools were selected at random to provide either their completed spreadsheet for FY 17 or FY 18. In addition, we requested feedback from schools that saw a significant difference between FY 17 points and FY 18 points to see what changes schools were making to improve the process and how we can better aid the field.

During our audit, we found that while most schools that “unlocked” their spreadsheet had replicable results, there was an instance where a school would have received slightly more points had they used the original spreadsheet. Schools that choose to unlock the spreadsheet are encouraged to copy and paste their data into a spreadsheet downloaded directly from ADEConnect in order to ensure they get the same results and did not accidentally alter the formulas within the spreadsheet. We found that some schools were forgetting to enter someone into the “Entered By” and “Approved By” cells at the top left. This step is especially important for auditing purposes and will be used in future audits if we have any questions. We would also like to remind schools to pay close attention to the minimum n-count for reporting; for FY 18, this n-count was 10 cohort 2018 students that met the enrollment requirements. These spreadsheets are part of final letter grade calculations and **should be maintained for 5 years according to retention record schedules.**

We learned a lot from the feedback concerning the CCRI Self-Report process. Schools had 5 main areas that were the determining factors in their success and improvement from one year to another.

## 1. Internal Communication

Schools that had a change in leadership—especially those that had a change late in the summer—found it hard to accurately complete the spreadsheet whereas schools and districts that pre-designated tasks and responsibilities said it greatly improved their abilities. Successful schools also informed teachers of their role and students on the importance of taking a diverse course load.

## 2. Program Change

Some schools started offering additional CTE courses, promoted the completion of a CTE sequence and 2 years of the same language, and offered FAFSA and College and Career nights.

## 3. Better Tracking/Reporting

Schools were able to reach out to community colleges and other resources to receive student scores through data sharing agreements and conduct exit surveys with seniors.

# CCRI Spreadsheet Audit Summary cont.

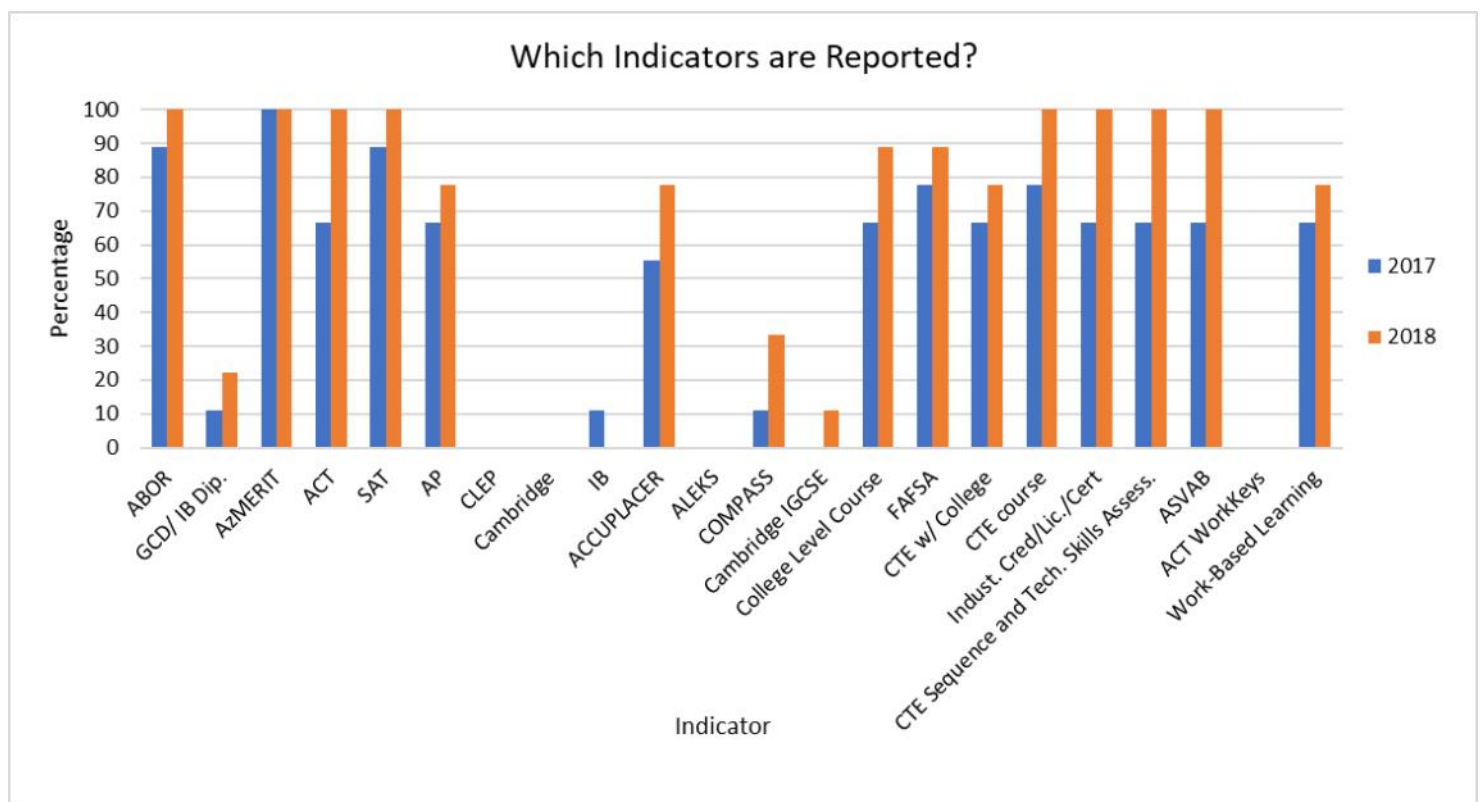
## 4. More Time

Schools had more time to review the spreadsheet this year and were recording data throughout the year.

## 5. Number of Graduates/N-count

The minimum n-count went from 20 students to 10 this year. This means that some schools that were unable to report last year were able to report this year. With the lower n-count, some schools noted they have some natural variability between cohorts and changes between those years are more pronounced.

We also learned more about which indicators are being used. Below is a graph that shows which indicators schools were using to receive points for at least one student and how it changed from FY 17 to FY 18.



In order to support schools and LEAs, we plan to continue to produce resources for the field (such as the [“Basics” video](#)), release the spreadsheet as early as possible, and make ourselves available for support. As always, please email [Achieve](#) with any questions you have concerning CCRI or the audit.

# ADEConnect Reports

FY 2018 Graduation and Dropout rate reports are available in ADEConnect under “Accountability.” In ADEConnect select “Accountability” and then under “Accountability Reports” you can select either the “Grad Rate Report” or the “Dropout Rate Report”. Please keep in mind these are live reports and will reflect changes/corrections that have been made when the report is updated weekly. There has been an issue with the number of students being flagged as EL in both reports, but our IT team is working to correct this issue.

## W1 Withdrawal Code

The W1 withdrawal code is one of the most common across the state. During our data inquiry and correction period, we found that schools and districts had large amounts of students that were marked as “W1s” but never showed up at any other school in the state or who were re-enrolled in the same school a couple days later or even the next day. Schools need to make sure they are completing an [Official Notice of Pupil Withdrawal Form](#) for each of these students and have received appropriate documentation from the receiving school in order to code the student correctly. If a school has not received appropriate documentation, even if a student or parent has expressed they will be attending a different school, the school should code the student as a W4, status unknown, until appropriate documentation is received. This documentation is subject to audit and schools that fail to maintain the required documentation may face consequences.

## Dropout

ADE has been calculating dropout rates for several years. Although these rates are not currently used for Accountability purposes, they are used in federal and state reporting and should be monitored by schools. We have several tools in order to help schools maintain accurate records and make corrections to their data.

The first tool is the Dropout Tracker Report in AzEDS. To access this report, Login to ADEConnect, Select “AzEDS Portal,” “Reports,” then select “STUD79 Dropout Tracker” under “Accountability” on the left. This report will indicate whether students coded as W4 or W5 (or the corresponding summer codes) have re-enrolled in another school within the state.

The second tool available to schools is the Dropout Report in ADEConnect. To access this report, login to ADEConnect, select “Accountability” then “Dropout Rate Report.” This report is “live” and has current state, LEA, school, and student-level data. To see which students are showing in your dropout calculation, select “student detail.” You can then follow up with specific students and make corrections to current FY data or submit a [15-915](#) to correct prior years.

# Update from PELL Conference

For those readers that attended the Accountability and Research Team's presentation at the Practitioners of English Language Learning (PELL) conference on September 7th, we want to say thank you. We appreciate your attendance and questions. It was so great getting to meet and talk with several of you.

At PELL we were asked to clarify if the EL indicator of the A-F Accountability System includes mid-year AZELLA reassessments which result in a student classifying as proficient. The answer is yes, a school's EL indicator score includes students who reassess as proficient outside of the Spring AZELLA testing window, in addition to those that do so during the testing window. Both the proficiency and growth indicators in the A-F Accountability System include these students.

## AzMERIT Public File

The AzMERIT 2018 public file is available on the Accountability data page [here](#). Other public files including AzMERIT and MSAA, AIMS and AIMS A Science, Oct. 1 Enrollment, and Graduation rates will be available in the coming weeks.

## Meet the Team

### Education Program Administrator—Director of Accountability and Data



Dr. Alan Simmons serves as the Director of Accountability and Data. He has seven years of high-quality research experience and has spent the past five years at Arizona State University, where he completed a Ph.D. in Political Science and conducted academic research. In addition to his Ph.D., Dr. Simmons has an MA from the University of Illinois, a BS from Northern Arizona University, and additional graduate training from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan and the International Political Science Association-National University of Singapore Summer School for Social Science Research Methods. Before his time at Arizona State University, Dr. Simmons worked at the Survey Research Office at the University of Illinois, where he worked on numerous projects for the Illinois government. He comes from a multigenerational family of K-12 Arizona educators and administrators, which instilled in him a passion for education in Arizona. He began at ADE in June of 2018.

Married to his wife, Valerie, they have a one-year-old daughter named Prynne and a second daughter, Mara, arriving in fall of 2018. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, their two dogs (Rebel and Maverick), reading, hiking, fishing, camping, and playing/watching soccer.

# Meet the Team cont.

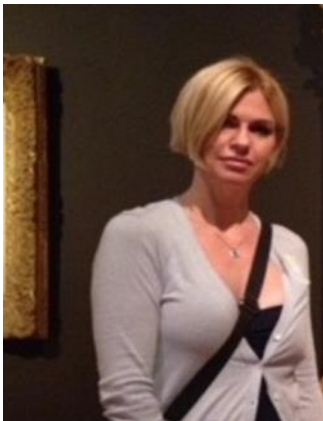
## Data Analyst



Jayanthi has played an essential role in the Accountability and Research Section during her time at the Arizona Department of Education. She works diligently to write complex code that is needed to calculate letter grades for schools and districts, produce public data files, and assist with research efforts. She also uses her analytic skills to produce data for state and federal reporting purposes.

During her time with the department, she has assisted numerous research partners as well as internal staff. Her hard work has helped countless researchers, schools, families, and other constituents within the State of Arizona.

## Education Program Specialist



Kimberly Shinault serves as the Education Program Specialist. She has a Master's of Public Health in Biostatistics from the University of Oklahoma, and a Master's of Science in Psychology -Research Methodology from Walden University. She joined ADE in June 2018. Her responsibilities include data analysis on a variety of projects within the Accountability department, utilizing programs such as SPSS, SAS, and Excel. Her previous research experience with complex and vulnerable populations has prepared her to largely specialize on English Language Learner data within the state.

Kimberly is an Arizona native. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling and spending time with her four children.