



Exceptional Student Services

Arizona's Public Education Agency (PEA) Determinations

Policies and Procedures

June 2026



Exceptional Student Services

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Section 1: Purpose and Authority | 4 |
| 1.1 Purpose | 4 |
| 1.2 Authority..... | 4 |
| Section 2: Definitions..... | 4 |
| Section 3: Determination Framework | 5 |
| 3.1 General Requirements..... | 5 |
| 3.2 Determination Structure..... | 5 |
| 3.3 Equal Weighting of Results and Compliance | 6 |
| Section 4: Components and Data Sources | 6 |
| 4.1 Component Inclusion | 6 |
| 4.2 Results Components | 6 |
| 4.3 Compliance Components | 7 |
| 4.4 Data Sources..... | 8 |
| Section 5: Scoring Methodology..... | 8 |
| 5.1 Assignment of Points | 8 |
| 5.2 Results Component Scoring | 9 |
| 5.3 Compliance Component Scoring | 9 |
| 5.4 Additional Points (Growth and Small PEA Adjustment)..... | 10 |
| Section 6: Calculation of Scores | 12 |
| 6.1 Calculation of Results Percentage..... | 12 |
| 6.2 Calculation of Compliance Percentage..... | 13 |



Exceptional Student Services

| | |
|---|----|
| 6.3 Final Determination Score | 13 |
| Section 7: Determination Categories..... | 13 |
| 7.1 Assignment of Determination Categories..... | 13 |
| 7.2 Determination Levels | 14 |
| Section 8: Required Actions | 14 |
| 8.1 General Requirements..... | 14 |
| 8.2 Meets Requirements (MR)..... | 14 |
| 8.3 Needs Assistance (NA)..... | 15 |
| 8.4 Needs Intervention (NI)..... | 15 |
| 8.5 Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI)..... | 16 |
| 8.6 Additional Enforcement Authority | 17 |
| Contact Us | 17 |



Exceptional Student Services

Section 1: Purpose and Authority

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures used by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE)/Exceptional Student Services (ESS) to make annual determinations for Public Education Agencies (PEAs) regarding the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B.

These procedures ensure that determinations are made using a consistent, transparent methodology that incorporates results for children with disabilities and compliance with IDEA requirements.

1.2 Authority

This policy is established in accordance with:

- 34 CFR §300.600 (State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report)
- 34 CFR §300.603 (Monitoring)
- 34 CFR §300.604 (Enforcement and Determinations)
- A.R.S. § 15-741 (Duties of the Department of Education; monitoring and compliance)
- A.R.S. § 15-763 (Special education programs and services)

ADE/ESS makes annual determinations for each PEA consistent with these federal requirements.

Section 2: Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:



Exceptional Student Services

Component: A measure used to evaluate PEA performance as part of the determination process.

Results Components: Components that measure outcomes and performance for children with disabilities.

Compliance Components: Components that measure adherence to IDEA statutory and regulatory requirements.

Growth Point: An additional point that may be awarded to eligible results components based on year-to-year improvement in performance.

Small PEA Adjustment Point: An additional point that may be awarded to results components with fewer than five (5) students to account for variability in small student populations.

Section 3: Determination Framework

3.1 General Requirements

ADE/ESS makes an annual determination, in accordance with 34 CFR §300.600 and §300.603, for each PEA based on:

- Performance on results components
- Compliance with IDEA requirements
- Timely correction of noncompliance
- Data quality and timeliness
- Other federally required elements

3.2 Determination Structure

ADE/ESS organizes components into two categories:



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- Results Components
- Compliance Components

Each component is assigned a point value based on performance. These point values are used to calculate the overall determination score.

Additional detail regarding component definitions and structure are available in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

3.3 Equal Weighting of Results and Compliance

ADE/ESS calculates the final determination score by combining Results and Compliance percentages.

Results and Compliance are weighted equally in the final determination score.

Examples of how Results and Compliance components are weighted and applied in practice are provided in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

Section 4: Components and Data Sources

4.1 Component Inclusion

ADE/ESS uses approved State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators, along with additional required measures, as components in the determination process.

4.2 Results Components

Results components are designed to measure outcomes and performance for children with disabilities and are aligned to State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) indicator definitions and calculation methodologies. These components reflect APR measurement specifications, including federally required



Exceptional Student Services

numerator and denominator definitions, and are used in the determination process as follows:

- Graduation Rate (Indicator 1)
- Dropout Rate (Indicator 2)
- Assessment Performance (Indicator 3B)
- Least Restrictive Environment (School-Age and Preschool)
- Preschool Outcomes (indicator 7)
- Parent Survey Participation (Indicator 8)
- Post-School Outcomes (Indicator 14)

Detailed definitions, calculation methodologies, and data source descriptions for each results component are provided in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

4.3 Compliance Components

Compliance components measure adherence to IDEA requirements and include both State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators and additional federally required accountability elements included in the determination process. APR-based indicators reflect federally defined measurement and calculation requirements, while additional components (e.g., Timely and Complete Data, Maintenance of Effort, and Longstanding Noncompliance) represent required elements under IDEA for monitoring compliance and accountability.

- Assessment Participation (Indicator 3A)
- Disproportionality (Indicators 4B, 9, and 10)
- Evaluation Timeline (Indicator 11)



Exceptional Student Services

- Preschool Transition (Indicator 12)
- Secondary Transition (Indicator 13)
- Timely and Complete Data (data quality and timeliness)
- Maintenance of Effort (MOE)
- Longstanding Noncompliance (more than 1 year of noncompliance)

Detailed information regarding compliance component measurements, thresholds, and data sources is available in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

4.4 Data Sources

ADE/ESS uses data collected through federally required submissions and state monitoring activities, including but not limited to:

- IDEA Section 618 data
- ED Facts data collections
- State monitoring systems
- State-administered surveys

Section 5: Scoring Methodology

5.1 Assignment of Points

ADE/ESS assigns point values to each component based on performance relative to defined targets and scoring methodologies.

Each component has a defined maximum point value.



Exceptional Student Services

5.2 Results Component Scoring

5.2.1 Two-Point Results Components

For applicable results components, PEAs are assigned:

- 2 points for meeting or exceeding the target
- 1 point for performance below target but qualify for an Upper Rank Point
- 0 points for performance below target and does not qualify for an Upper Rank Point

Detailed information regarding the Upper Rank Point is available in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

5.2.2 One-Point Results Components

For applicable results components, PEAs are assigned:

- 1 point for meeting or exceeding the target
- 0 points for not meeting the target

Detailed scoring steps, examples, and scenarios for results components are provided in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

5.3 Compliance Component Scoring

Compliance components are scored based on adherence to required thresholds or criteria.

PEAs are assigned points based on defined compliance methodologies, including:

- Threshold-based scoring
- Percent compliance scoring



Exceptional Student Services

Growth Points and Small PEA Adjustment Points are not applied to compliance components.

Specific scoring thresholds and methodologies for compliance components are described in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

5.4 Additional Points (Growth and Small PEA Adjustment)

ADE/ESS applies additional points to eligible results components based on year-to-year comparison of performance. Growth Points and Small PEA Adjustment Points are applied only to results components and do not apply to compliance components. Additional points may only be awarded to PEAs that do not meet the target.

Note that if the prior year data is not available for a particular component, the PEA is not eligible for growth-based or Small PEA Adjustment Points.

Examples illustrating the application of Growth Points and Small PEA Adjustment Points are available in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

5.4.1 Point Limits

Total points assigned to any component cannot exceed the maximum allowable score for that component.

5.4.2 PEAs with Five or More Students

For components with five (5) or more students:

- A Growth Point may be awarded based on defined progress criteria
- Growth Points are applied only to eligible results components

5.4.3 PEAs with Fewer Than Five Students

For components with fewer than five (5) students:

- A Growth Point may be awarded based on defined progress criteria



Exceptional Student Services

- A Small PEA Adjustment Point may be awarded based on year-to-year comparison
- Small PEA Adjustment Points and Growth Points are applied only to results components

5.4.4 Application of Additional Points by Component Type

For results components with a maximum of two points:

Fewer than 5 Students

- Below target = Small PEA Adjustment Point (+1), if performance is maintained or improved compared to the prior year
- Growth Point (+1) may be awarded, if applicable, for improvement based on defined criteria
- Both Growth Points and Small PEA Adjustment Points may be applied where eligible
- Final score is capped at 2 points

5 or More Students

- Meet Target = 2 Points
- Below Target (Ranked)
 - Upper Rank Point awarded = 1 Point
 - Did not meet criteria for Upper Rank Point= 0 Points
- Growth Point (+1) may be awarded for PEAs below the target based on defined progress criteria
- Final Score is capped at 2 points

For results components with a maximum of one point:



Exceptional Student Services

- PEAs may earn the point through either Growth or Small PEA Adjustment, but not both
- Final score is capped at 1 point

Fewer than 5 Students

- Meets target = 1 point
- Below target = Small PEA Adjustment Point (+1), if performance is maintained or improved compared to the prior year
- Growth does not apply

5 or More Students

- Meets target = 1 point
- Below target = Growth Point (+1), if improvement criteria are met
- Small PEA Adjustment does not apply

Section 6: Calculation of Scores

6.1 Calculation of Results Percentage

ADE/ESS calculates a Results Percentage for each PEA based on performance across all applicable results components.

The Results Percentage is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Results Percentage} = (\text{Total Points Earned} \div \text{Total Possible Points}) \times 100$$

Components designated as “Not Applicable” (N/A), defined as components for which a PEA does not have applicable or reportable data, are excluded from the total possible points used in the calculation.



Exceptional Student Services

6.2 Calculation of Compliance Percentage

ADE/ESS calculates a Compliance Percentage for each PEA based on performance across all compliance components.

The Compliance Percentage is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Compliance Percentage} = (\text{Total Points Earned} \div \text{Total Possible Points}) \times 100$$

Components designated as “Not Applicable” (N/A) are excluded from the total possible points.

6.3 Final Determination Score

ADE/ESS calculates an overall determination score for each PEA by combining the results percentage and compliance percentage.

The overall determination score is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Overall Score} = (\text{Results Percentage} + \text{Compliance Percentage}) \div 2$$

Results and Compliance are weighted equally in the calculation of the overall determination score.

Examples of determination score calculations are provided in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

Section 7: Determination Categories

7.1 Assignment of Determination Categories

ADE/ESS assigns an annual determination to each PEA based on the overall determination score in accordance with 34 CFR §300.604 and applicable Arizona state statutes, including A.R.S. §§ 15-741 and 15-761 et seq.



Exceptional Student Services

7.2 Determination Levels

PEAs are assigned to one of the following categories based on the overall determination score.

- Meets Requirements (MR): 80%–100%
- Needs Assistance (NA): 60%–79%
- Needs Intervention (NI): Less than 60%
- Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI): Not defined systemically. Left up to the discretion of the SEA.

Assigned at the discretion of ADE/ESS based on the severity, scope, or persistence of noncompliance, including significant failure to comply with IDEA requirements.

Additional explanation of determination categories and example scenarios are provided in the [PEA Determinations TA Guide](#).

Section 8: Required Actions

8.1 General Requirements

ADE/ESS will take action(s) in response to PEA determinations in accordance with 34 CFR §300.604 and applicable Arizona state statutes, including A.R.S. §§ 15-741 and 15-761 et seq. Actions are based on the assigned determination category and the duration of the determination status.

8.2 Meets Requirements (MR)

For PEAs identified as Meets Requirements, ADE/ESS may:

- Continue routine monitoring and support
- Encourage continued improvement in results and compliance

No additional enforcement actions are required.



Exceptional Student Services

8.3 Needs Assistance (NA)

For PEAs identified as Needs Assistance for two (2) consecutive years, ADE/ESS will:

- Advise the PEA of available sources of technical assistance, including guidance and technical assistance documents from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), other federal or state agencies, SEA-approved technical assistance providers, and SEA-developed guidance documents and trainings
- Require the PEA to engage in targeted technical assistance activities, which may include participation in professional development, implementation support, or consultation with subject matter experts
- Provide guidance on improvement strategies related to identified areas of need in results and/or compliance
- Direct the use of state-level IDEA funds, as appropriate, to support improvement efforts
- Consider additional special monitoring or support.

8.4 Needs Intervention (NI)

For PEAs identified as Needs Intervention for three (3) or more consecutive years, ADE/ESS will implement additional actions beyond those required for Needs Assistance, which may include:

- Requiring the PEA to develop and implement a corrective action plan and/or improvement plan that addresses identified areas of noncompliance and/or low performance
- Increasing monitoring activities, including targeted reviews, data validation, and required reporting on progress toward improvement



Exceptional Student Services

- Requiring participation in specified technical assistance, professional development, or coaching aligned to identified needs
- Directing the use of IDEA funds to support correction of noncompliance and/or improvement efforts
- Withholding, in whole or in part, up to fifteen percent (15%) of IDEA funds until the PEA demonstrates sufficient progress in addressing identified areas of concern
- Implementing additional enforcement actions as permitted under federal and state law
- Notification to the Charter Authorization Board for consideration of further actions or sanctions

ADE/ESS will tailor interventions based on the severity, scope, and persistence of identified performance and compliance issues.

8.5 Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI)

For PEAs identified as Needs Substantial Intervention, or in cases of significant failure to comply with IDEA requirements, ADE/ESS will take immediate and substantial enforcement actions, building on all actions available under Needs Intervention (NI), which may include:

- Withholding, in whole or in part, IDEA funds
- Requiring intensive corrective action planning and implementation with continuous monitoring and oversight
- Implementing any additional enforcement actions necessary to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements



Exceptional Student Services

ADE/ESS may take one or more of these actions immediately based on the severity of the identified noncompliance or failure to meet IDEA requirements.

8.6 Additional Enforcement Authority

ADE/ESS may take additional action(s) as necessary to ensure compliance with IDEA, consistent with 34 CFR §300.604 and other applicable federal and state requirements.

Contact Us

General Questions about PEA Determinations, please send an email to the [ESS Operations inbox](#).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)