

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Proposed Revisions to the School-Specific Academic Goals

Issue

Consideration of adding an element to the eligibility criteria for allowing schools to apply for school-specific academic goals. The recommended change is attached to this report (*see Appendix A: School-Specific Academic Goals*).

Background

A.R.S. §15-183(R) requires that in implementing its oversight and administrative responsibilities, the Board must adopt a performance framework that includes “the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic expectations.” The purpose of the Academic Performance Framework (“academic framework”) is to communicate the Board’s academic expectations for ensuring all schools provide a learning environment that will improve pupil achievement and provide an additional academic choice for parents and pupils.

In the academic framework, State Accountability is the default indicator used to evaluate the academic performance of all charter schools sponsored by the Board. It also recognizes that there are charter schools serving preponderant populations of at-risk students that are not included in the State’s criteria to obtain Alternative School status and has provided an opportunity for those schools to request use of school-specific academic goals in place of State Accountability if they meet certain risk factors. If at least 70% of the students served by a school operated by a charter holder are identified as needing special education services or are homeless, the charter holder may apply to use school-specific academic goals to determine the charter school’s overall academic performance.

Board staff is recommending to add a risk factor to the eligibility criteria that takes into consideration a higher than average English Language Learner “ELL” student population. To determine the percentage of ELL students served by a school, Board staff utilizes enrollment data from the Arizona Department of Education “ADE”. According to ADE, the ELL data includes all ELL students in all categories, except those who are withdrawn due to being identified for special education services. The four remaining categories of ELL students include those:

- with an ELL need but not enrolled in ELL services,
- with an ELL need who are enrolled for ELL services,
- who have been withdrawn by a parent from ELL services, and
- who had an ELL need during the school year but reclassified as proficient during the mid-year or spring testing window.

All four categories are taken into consideration in the total percentage of ELL students.

Public Comment

The proposed recommendation was open for its first opportunity of public comment from December 17, 2018 through January 7, 2019. Board staff received three comments (*see Appendix B: Combined Public Comment*) within the stated timeframe. Two of three comments provide support for Board staff’s recommendation.

The third comment requests additional clarification on what is meant by “English Language Learners” since several categories of identification exist as defined by the ADE. Board staff has defined the ELL categories that will make up the total percentage.

APPENDIX A:
School-Specific Academic Goals

School-Specific Academic Goals

The Board recognizes that there are charter schools serving special populations that do not have an achievement profile pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-241(I) and has provided an opportunity for those schools to request use of school-specific academic goals in place of the State Accountability indicator.

The School-Specific Academic Goals indicator is not intended to replace State Accountability measures for schools that are identified as Alternative, or for any schools that have an achievement profile pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-241(I).

Subject to adoption by the State Board of Education, the Department of Education is required to use appropriate achievement profiles to assess accommodation schools, alternative schools, and extremely small schools and may develop achievement profiles for Arizona Online Instruction schools and others.

Schools Eligible to Apply for School-Specific Academic Goals

A charter holder that operates a school that serves a special population (e.g. majority homeless, ~~or~~ students with disabilities, or a higher than average English Language Learner population) that does not have an achievement profile pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-241(I) may petition the Board to adopt unique performance standards. The Board shall consider a petition for use of the school-specific academic goals if at least 70% of the students served by the school are identified as having at least one of the following risk factors:

- Identified as needing special education services
- Identified as an English Language Learner
- Homeless

Schools that meet the criteria shall be approved by the Board to use school-specific academic goals. The charter holder shall provide verification that it meets the eligibility criteria at the time of initial application for use of school-specific academic goals and at subsequent five-year interval reviews.

Indicators and Measures

If approved by the Board, five to six school-specific academic goals along with specific metric(s) and target(s) must be developed and agreed to by the charter holder and the Board. School-specific academic goals will be incorporated into the charter contract for the charter holder. School-specific academic goals must address each of the indicators listed below and select one or more of the accompanying measures:

Student Growth – Academic improvement over time on valid and reliable assessments of Arizona academic standards.

Student Achievement – Academic proficiency on valid and reliable assessments of Arizona academic standards.

Post-secondary Readiness (high school only) – Outcomes in key subjects that indicate future success or that are aligned to college and career readiness such as graduation rates, SAT/ACT performance, workforce readiness, credit/course completion, or other metrics.

Student Engagement – Predictors of student achievement such as suspension rates, in-seat attendance rates, and positive socio-emotional or psychological adjustment rates.

Appendix B:
Combined Public Comment



Charter School Board - ASBCS <charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov>

Fwd: Proposed changes to Appendix A: School Specific Academic Goals of the Academic Performance Framework and Guidance

1 message

Charter School Board - ASBCS <charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov>

Fri, Dec 28, 2018 at 10:46 AM

To: Rachel Hannah <rachel.hannah@asbcs.az.gov>, Johanna Medina <johanna.medina@asbcs.az.gov>

Charter School Board Staff



Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Steve Sarmiento** <ssarmiento@edkey.org>

Date: Thu, Dec 27, 2018 at 7:54 AM

Subject: Proposed changes to Appendix A: School Specific Academic Goals of the Academic Performance Framework and Guidance

To: Charter School Board - ASBCS <charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov>

The newly proposed category of "identified as an English Language Learner" requires some clarification. How will these students be identified? Is it participation in an English Learner Program? Is it students that are being assessed with AZELLA? There are complexities that do not make this an easy answer.

According to the Arizona Department of Education "Students who have been identified as second language learners on the Home Language Survey take the AZELLA placement test, and the students' proficiency scores determine appropriate placement for instruction. Students who have been placed into an English language learner program will also take the AZELLA reassessment once per year until they achieve proficiency. Students who have scored proficient on the AZELLA are then monitored for two years to help ensure success after their move into a mainstream classroom." (<https://www.azed.gov/assessment/azella/>)

There are two clearly identified groups here, and one that is not mentioned: 1. Students who have been placed in an English Learner Program; 2. Students who have scored proficient and are monitored; and the unmentioned 3rd group of students who have been withdrawn from the English

Learner Program by their parents. This third group of students is still monitored and assessed with the AZELLA language assessment until the student scores proficient.

If, for the purpose of School Specific Academic Goals, "English Language Learners" is defined as students participating in an English Learner Program, all of the students that have been withdrawn from the program by their parents will not be counted. This is a concern as these students are no different than students participating in the English Learner Program. They are still in the process of developing fluency in English, but because they have been withdrawn from the program by their parents would not be considered "English Language Learners". As a result the school would not be held accountable by School Specific Academic Goals for failing to make progress in English language acquisition for these students.

If "English Language Learners" is defined as students being assessed with AZELLA, the students described above would be included. However, this would also include students that have scored proficient on AZELLA. These students are categorized as Fluent English Proficient (FEP) and are being monitored for the following two years. Since these students have been determined to be proficient their inclusion in the group "English Language Learners" will result in data that inaccurately represents the progress of students developing fluency in English.

The solution to this may be in providing additional clarification as to which categories of students are meant by "English Language Learners". By clarifying which students are considered "English Language Learners" for SSAG, school will be better prepared to write meaningful goals that effectively demonstrate how they are improving student achievement for their students.

Steve Sarmento
Director of Instructional Support
602-317-0314



Charter School Board - ASBCS <charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov>

School Accountability

1 message

Pombo, Lorisa <lorisa.pombo@leonagroup.com>
To: charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov

Wed, Jan 9, 2019 at 1:55 PM

Dear Charter School Board Members,

In reference to school accountability, I support the recommendation for schools that serve a higher than average English Language Learner student population to request use of school-specific academic goals in place of State Accountability.

Together in education,
Lorisa Pombo
Director of Elementary Initiatives

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Charter School Board - ASBCS <charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov>

Public Comment

1 message

Hariz, Megan <megan.hariz@leonagroup.com>
To: charterschoolboard@asbcs.az.gov

Wed, Jan 9, 2019 at 7:10 PM

The Leona Group, which manages 27 schools in Arizona, agrees with adding a risk factor that includes the English Learner population to the approved list required for a school to be given an opportunity to request the use of school-specific academic goals in place of State Accountability. We are in support of the 70% ELL population for this inclusion factor.

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Megan Hariz, MA Ed.**ELAS Curriculum Coach**

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