

## **Arizona's Assessment Program CFSD Summary Report for 2009**

Students in grades three through eight took the AIMS Dual Purpose Assessment (AIMS DPA) in April 2009. The AIMS DPA is a test that combines AIMS test questions and questions from the TerraNova, a national norm-referenced test. The test covers writing, reading, and mathematics. The test was designed to measure how well students have mastered Arizona's grade-by-grade performance objectives and to allow parents to compare their children's academic progress to their peers across the nation. Thus, the AIMS DPA is both standards-based, measuring students' knowledge against the Arizona Academic Standards, and norm-referenced, comparing students' knowledge against students nationwide.

Students in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade took the high school AIMS test (AIMS HS) that is another form of the AIMS we have been giving since 2000. It is a criterion-referenced test with questions based on the Arizona Academic Standards. It assesses the three content areas of reading, writing, and mathematics and is administered to students annually in the spring. It is again administered in the fall and spring of each year to students in grades 11 or 12 who have not yet met or exceeded the standard (passed) in one or more content areas. Students must pass the reading, writing, and mathematics content areas of AIMS HS to graduate from high school. Students have at least five opportunities to pass AIMS HS.

Both the AIMS DPA and AIMS HS included tests of reading and mathematics which consisted of multiple-choice items. The writing assessment was a single prompt scored on a 6-trait rubric.

Students in grades 2 took just the TerraNova, a national norm-referenced assessment. Students in grade 9 took the TerraNova and the AIMS Science. The TerraNova test assesses language arts and mathematics. AIMS Science measures general understanding of science content, the inquiry process, and problem-solving skills with an emphasis on life science (biology).

The AIMS tests administered in 2005 were the first to be aligned to the 2003 content standards. New scale scores and performance levels were established for each grade level that year. The scale scores and performance levels remained the same for the 2006-2009 AIMS DPA and AIMS HS. They were used to compare student performance with the 2005 test results in the state's proficiency expectations for reading, writing, and mathematics for years 2006-2008.

The AZ LEARNS evaluation awards points to schools based on improvement in the percentage of students passing AIMS. Improvement is measured as an average year-to-year gain from a baseline year to the current year. The baseline year for aggregate growth measure was moved from 2005 to 2006. This is the result of a change made to AZ LEARNS for 2009, and was done for two reasons: (1) It was the first year the use of alternate accommodations was discontinued by the majority of schools; (2) it was the first year the test used for ELL classification was uniform across the state. It is the intent of the Arizona Department of Education that 2006 will remain the baseline year.

### One Test, Fewer Total Questions

In order to reduce the time students spend testing, the AIMS DPA (grades 3-8) has fewer total questions than two separate measures of the AIMS and TerraNova. The AIMS DPA contains both AIMS items and TerraNova items. The AIMS items are based on the Arizona Academic Content Standards. The TerraNova items are nationally normed items. The number of questions asked on the

AIMS DPA allows the state to report on the state standards by strand and concept. This assists parents and schools in determining if students are meeting the state's proficiency expectations in reading, mathematics and writing.

The same is not true for the TerraNova. The number of questions asked is too small to allow for the type of specific feedback that could be used to guide instruction and measure school performance. In fact, the number of questions is so small that missing just one question can lower the national stanine reported for a student. For this reason, the results at the top end of the normed group (students in stanines 7, 8, and 9) are prone to error. Therefore, while the intent of the test was to allow parents to compare their student's performance to the national norm group, parents are instead getting only general information about student performance.

### AIMS Science

The spring 2009 administration of AIMS was the second year that AIMS Science was administered at grades 4, 8, and high school. AIMS Science is part of the NCLB requirement for annual testing. Students at grades 4 and 8 are evaluated in the areas of Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth & Space Science. Approximately one third of the test for grades 4, 8, and high school includes items on Scientific Inquiry.

At the high school level, AIMS Science evaluates learning in a life science course, typically at grade 10. However, grade 9 students enrolled in a life science course (CFHS Biology) are permitted to take AIMS Science. Biology is the first science course CFSD students take at the high school. Therefore, 9<sup>th</sup> graders take AIMS Science so they test in science during the year they are actually enrolled in their life science class. Tenth graders who were enrolled in Biology also took the AIMS Science.

Science AIMS is not included in the graduation requirements and no retests are administered for science.

### AZ LEARNS

AZ LEARNS is the state's plan to measure school performance in Arizona. The emphasis is on the following:

1. Status: The absolute level of student achievement at the school. This measure asks if the students in the school are achieving at acceptable performance levels – uses current year AIMS.
2. School Improvement: Growth in aggregate student achievement at the school. This measure asks if the school is making progress toward or beyond acceptable performance levels. It looks at the change over several years in the percentage of students passing AIMS and the change in the percentage of students in the lowest AIMS performance category.
3. Student Growth (MAP): Growth in individual student achievement at the school. This measure asks if the school is improving the academic performance of individual students from year to year. This is known as the *Measure of Academic Progress* (MAP – all students in grades 4-8 with a score from the previous year).
4. AZELLA Results: Results of English language assessment used in achievement profile. This measure asks if the school met the performance threshold for percentage of students reclassified. Only applicable to students in program for at least 150 calendar days.

5. Graduation & Dropout Rate (high school only): Average graduation and dropout rates. Both are calculated using the most recent three years of data and compared to the baseline data. Baseline data changed from 2005 to 2006.

#### Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)

The measure of academic progress (MAP) is a measure of performance that tracks the growth of individual students from year to year. It is a component of the AZ LEARNS achievement profile for schools.

2005 was a transition year for MAP. The AIMS DPA/TerraNova replaced the Stanford 9. The new norm-referenced scores in 2005 were not comparable at the individual level to the 2004 Stanford 9 scores. Consequently, a transition MAP was approved by the State Board as a one-year stopgap. In 2006, a new AIMS-based MAP took its place.

Now that AIMS is administered at grades 3-8, progress on growth is measured against state standards instead of a national norm or average and is used to measure growth in the elementary and middle schools. This is the fourth year that school profiles include a measure of academic progress based on individual gains on the AIMS test.

MAP is included in AZ LEARNS to give schools credit for improving the academic performance of students even though those students may not attain proficiency. It also gives schools credit for improving the academic performance of students beyond proficiency. MAP is calculated for a school by averaging the individual student MAP scores across all grades, subjects, and students.

#### No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Other measures of performance—the school’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status and, if it is a high school, its graduation and drop out rate—are required by NCLB.

The criteria for determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is as follows:

- 95% of enrolled students must be assessed annually.
- Students in all subgroups specified by NCLB (race/ethnicity, special education, LEP, economically disadvantaged) must meet all annual measurable objectives (AMO). AMOs differ by subject and grade, but not by subgroup. Only students enrolled for a full academic year are included in AMO calculations.
- Meet threshold criteria for the additional indicator (high schools: graduation rate of at least 71%; grades 3-8: attendance rate of at least 90%)

Arizona had to develop Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) that represent the percentage increase (of students) required annually in order to reach 100% proficient by 2013-2014.

The “starting points” for Annual Measurable Objectives were implemented in the 2001-2002 school year for grades 3, 5, 8, and High School. The starting points for grades 4, 6, and 7 were implemented in the 2005-2006 school year. Each of the starting points represents the percent proficient for that particular grade level and subject (meet or exceed based on AIMS). The starting points represent the intermediate goals and annual measurable objectives (AMOs) needed to continue to make AYP in reading and mathematics. There are plateaus in proficiency from the 2001-02 school year until the

2009-2010 school year. After that year, the AMOs increase each year until 100% proficiency is reached in 2013-2014. A new AMO was used to calculate AYP for the 2007-08 school year. This AMO will stay the same through the 2009-10 school year. More information about annual measurable objectives from 2001 – 2014 can be found at <http://www.ade.az.gov/asd/title1/AccountabilityGrants/supportdocs/Tab5-1.doc>.

#### New in 2009

AYP final determinations and AZ LEARNS school profiles were released to the public in July 2009.

The high school evaluation is based on cohort, not 10<sup>th</sup> grade, when making final AYP determinations.

AYP is no longer used in the AZ LEARNS calculations. Originally, NCLB's requirement for a single accountability system was interpreted to mean that AZ LEARNS had to be linked in some way to AYP. Thus, the AZ LEARNS formula awarded a point to a school if it made AYP. The ADE obtained clarification from the US ED and learned that the law does not require the state to incorporate AYP into the state system. To compensate for the loss of a potential point, the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), the measure of student-level growth, received more weight.

The rules for the graduation/dropout rates were updated. A high school may earn one point for meeting the goal for the graduation rate (90%) and one point for meeting the goal of the dropout rate (6%) – or by showing sufficient growth measured against the baseline year. The amount of growth needed is contingent on the school's graduation/dropout rate in the baseline year. The baseline year, which was previously, 2000, has been changed to 2006. 2006 is the first year that the graduation rate was calculated using SAIS.

#### 2009 Achievement Profile

Arizona determines a school profile by comparing the total number of points earned through a complex formula. To earn a label, the school must meet the goals for the percent of students performing at a certain standard at every grade level tested. Points are also given for MAP results (all students in grades 4-8 with a score from the previous year) and graduation/dropout rates (high school).

In order for a school to qualify for a Highly Performing or Excelling Achievement Profile, there is an additional criterion that has to be met. Schools must not only receive a total scale value that places them into either Excelling or Highly Performing, but must also demonstrate the required three year average of students exceeding the standard on AIMS across all subject and grade combinations in the school. This is to ensure continued focus on improving the academic achievement of all students.

For the seventh consecutive year, the 2009 Achievement Profile determined all of our schools were "Excelling." The "Excelling" labels were based on the following point values:

Elementary and Middle School Points Required for Excelling Label: 19-27+

Canyon View	<b>22.4</b>
Manzanita	<b>22.7</b>
Sunrise	<b>23.1</b>
Ventana Vista	<b>23.7</b>
Esperero Canyon	<b>22.5</b>
Orange Grove	<b>24.1</b>

High School Points Required for Excelling Label: 16.5-21

CFHS	<b>20</b>
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AIMS Graduation Requirement

Students whose diplomas are issued after December 31, 2005 are required to “meet the standard” in reading, writing and mathematics on the AIMS HS to graduate. Students who did not achieve a passing score on the AIMS for graduation may have qualified for AIMS Augmentation, a process that allowed eligible courses to be applied to the highest AIMS writing, reading, and mathematics scores in order to improve the score. By state statute, a new AIMS Augmentation formula will be used for school year 2009-10. The State Board of Education adopted the new formula at their August 24 meeting.

AIMS Augmentation was not used for any CFHS seniors in the 2009 graduating class. One student received a certificate of completion.

Currently, the high school has identified eighteen (18) seniors who must pass one or more of the AIMS tests in order to graduate. Of these students, nine (9) are new to the high school this year.

New Legislation Regarding the AIMS Graduation Requirement

At the end of June, the state legislature passed a revision to the AIMS graduation requirement statute that allows the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish minimum scores on the ACT and SAT that can be used in lieu of passing AIMS scores for high school graduation purposes. The SBE has not yet discussed this new provision. In the meantime, students who have yet to pass one or more content areas of AIMS HS, are being advised that they need to continue to test at every opportunity. Just like AIMS Augmentation, the new provision requires that students have tested at every opportunity to qualify.

High Honors Tuition Waiver

The 2007-2008 school year was the last year that seniors could retest for the High Honors Tuition Waiver in Arizona. Beginning with students who graduated in 2009, only a student’s sophomore and junior year were considered to determine eligibility for the tuition waiver. Although “Exceed” scores earned during the senior year will not be eligible for the tuition waiver, seniors are permitted to continue retesting in an effort to “Exceed.”

The Arizona Board of Regents decided to retain the “AIMS Scholarship” or “Regents High Honors Tuition” scholarship with the existing criteria for the graduation classes of 2009 and 2010. All college students currently receiving this scholarship will continue to do so **if** they meet the renewal criteria set by the universities. The impact on the class of 2011 and subsequent classes has yet to be determined by the Arizona Board of Regents.

### District Evaluations

The Arizona Department of Education has developed and published performance evaluations of districts and charter holders. The district evaluations are composed of the elements listed below specified by law. The evaluation ranks districts and charter holders on a point scale that ranges from zero at the lowest end to an unlimited number at the high end. However, the scale ranges from zero to 100. The scale for this evaluation is not divided into performance categories.

1. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). This is a value-added or growth analysis that looks at individual student improvement over time. The measures included in the evaluation examine student growth from grades three through eight, and from eight to high school. The points a district may earn from this component are unlimited, but the maximum awarded by ADE is **48**. (CFSD earned 33 points)
2. Pupil Assessment Data. This measure looks at the aggregate percentage of students passing the AIMS exam, and the improvement shown by the district in the percent passing AIMS. A district may earn up to **36** points from this component. (CFSD earned 32 points)
3. Attendance and Graduation Rates. Districts that award high school diplomas are evaluated based on their graduation rate. Entities that do not award diplomas (e.g., elementary districts) are evaluated based on their attendance rate. A district may earn up to **1** point from this component. (CFSD earned 1 point)
4. The percentage of parents that consider the quality of their child’s education as excellent. This measure is based on the results of parent satisfaction surveys administered by districts. A district may earn up to 15 points from this component. (CFSD earned 11 points)

Catalina Foothills ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state on this evaluation (published March 2009; 195 districts/charter holders) with a score of 77/100. The district that ranked 1<sup>st</sup> was a high school only district (81/100).

### Analysis of 2009 Results

The 2009 AIMS test administration was the fifth year the tests were aligned to the 2003 content standards. The scale scores for the tests that were established in 2005 remained the same for 2006-2009. Therefore, the scaled scores from 2005 can be compared to those of 2006-2009.

Looking at this year's results alone, the district’s performance varies with that of the state’s performance on the subtests. The state’s results, which typically have been near the bottom of the range of scores that “meet the standard,” are moving toward the middle of that range. The district’s results are near or at the top of the range of scores that “meet the standard” with the exception of 4<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, which is near the bottom of the range of scores that “exceeds the standard.” In the area of mathematics, the district’s overall math scores declined somewhat, with the high school showing the lowest decline in overall scores. We believe that this is due to an implementation dip, which typically occurs in the first year of implementation of a new curriculum. We expect to see the scores improve with the 2010 administration of AIMS. However, the 2010 AIMS Math will be the first year of a new test that reflects the revised Arizona Department of Education math standard.

In writing, the district's mean scale scores improved at grades four through seven by 10-20 points. You will recall that grades six and seven had seen a sharp decline in persuasive/expository writing in previous years. This year's scores have increased significantly for both grade levels. This is the third consecutive year that this mode of writing has been assessed at these grade levels. Expository and persuasive writing are articulated benchmarks across the grade levels within the CFSD language arts curriculum. There is a small decline in overall reading results, but the district's scores are still in the middle to upper range of "meets the standard" with the exception of the high school, which had a small increase in scores. In all cases, it is important to note that these scores reflect different groups of students each year.

The table on the next page shows the mean scale scores for CFSD compared to the state of Arizona for 2009. The numbers in the parentheses represent the increase or decrease in the average scale scores for each grade level when compared from 2008 to 2009.

**AIMS Spring 2009  
Mean Scale Score Performance Levels**

Grade	Performance Level	Reading			Writing			Mathematics		
		Scale	AZ	CFSD	Scale	AZ	CFSD	Scale	AZ	CFSD
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Meet	431-515	460 (=)	<b>498 (-6)</b>	424-528	444 (-4)	<b>489 (-15)</b>	420-491	452 (-2)	<b>488 (-7)</b>
	Exceed	516-640			529-650			492-650		
4 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	450-535	478 (+1)	<b>515 (-7)</b>	461-571	484 (+6)	<b>539 (+18)</b>	448-520	488 (+1)	
	Exceed	536-660			572-700			521-675		<b>524 (-3)</b>
5 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	468-555	496 (+2)	<b>532 (-2)</b>	497-614	524 (+1)	<b>581 (+20)</b>	476-549	509 (=)	<b>546 (-13)</b>
	Exceed	556-675			615-740			550-700		
6 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	478-570	501 (-1)	<b>539 (=)</b>	540-629	538 (+16)	<b>574 (+19)</b>	496-573	526 (+1)	<b>564 (-6)</b>
	Exceed	571-690			630-760			574-725		
7 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	489-586	517 (-1)	<b>550 (-6)</b>	510-644	541 (-2)	<b>588 (+10)</b>	517-598	553 (+2)	<b>591 (-9)</b>
	Exceed	587-720			645-770			599-740		
8 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	499-601	527 (+2)	<b>571 (-5)</b>	517-659	564 (+6)	<b>605 (-5)</b>	537-622	561 (+1)	<b>617 (-5)</b>
	Exceed	602-800			660-800			623-800		
10 <sup>th</sup>	Meet	674-772	706 (=)	<b>745 (+1)</b>	678-753	696 (-3)	<b>721 (-9)</b>	683-749	707 (+1)	<b>742 (-4)</b>
	Exceed	773-900			754-900			750-900		