A+ School of Excellence Application

2027-2028 School Year

Thank you for applying for an A+ School of Excellence Award. The Arizona Educational Foundation looks forward to reviewing your application.
Deadline: August 27, 2027, 5:00PM MST
For resources, rubrics, and timeline information, visit our Resource Page which includes:
Printable Application
Deadlines
Application Criteria
Writing Tips
The printable copy of the application is for reference and preparation purposes only. Official applications must be submitted through this online form.

Section 1: School Overview

1) Official School Name *

School's full name as listed by the Arizona Department of Education.

2) School Website Address *

School's official website address.

3) District Name *

Full district name as listed by the Arizona Department of Education.

4) Grade Levels (Click all grades that apply) *

- ☐ Pre-K
- ☐ K
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12

5a) Has your school previously earned the A+ School of Excellence Award? *

- Yes
- No

5b) Please list all years where your school received the A+ Award: *

Please list with commas. (Ex: 1996, 2007, 2014)

5c) Has your principal or AOI Administrator participated as an A+ judge since earning the A+ Award previously? *

- Yes
- No

5d) Is your principal or AOI Administrator willing to serve as an A+ Judge if your school receives the A+ Award? *

- Yes
- No

6) Principal or AOI Administrator Direct School Phone Number *

7a) School Physical Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State / Province

Postal / Zip Code

7b) What county is your school located in? *

Please Select

7c) Is the school's mailing address the same as the physical address? *

- Yes
- No

7d) School Mailing Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State / Province

Zip code

8) Principal or AOI Administrator's Name: *

Prefix First Name Last Name

9) Principal or AOI Administrator's Direct Email Address: *

example@example.com

10) Principal or AOI Administrator's Cell Phone Number: (AEF will call your cell phone if unable to make contact at the school.) *

11) Number of years principal or AOI Administrator has been in their position at the school: *

See eligibility requirements for questions.

12) Name of District Superintendent: *

Prefix First Name Last Name

13) Representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups (i.e. administrators, teachers, other school staff, students, caregivers, and community representatives) must be involved in the preparation of the application. List the individuals actively involved in preparation. List primary authors first. *

Author First Name Last Name Position/Title

14) Is your school or district refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

15) Has the OCR issued a violation letter of findings to the school district, concluding that the nominated school Is your school or district as a whole has violated one of more of the Civil Rights statutes? A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation. *

☐ Yes ☐ No

If the answer to either question above is yes, please contact a member of the Arizona Educational Foundation at (480) 421-9376.

School Site Visit Dates

If your school is granted a site visit, this information will be sent directly to the lead judge of the team who will visit your school. The lead judge will work directly with your school administration to schedule your visit dates.

2027-2028 Site Visits: Between November 8, 2027 and February 11, 2028.

Site Visit Length: Site visits lengths will be determined by school type and student enrollment. Site visits may consist of one full day or day and a half.

16) Given your school's 2027-2028 calendar, which dates would be ideal to host an A+ site visit? *

17) Please provide the dates of any activities that may interfere with the scheduling of an A+ visit. (Ex: Early release, fall break, overnight or all-day field trips, professional development days, etc.)*

Section 2: District & School Demographics

Use 2026-2027 data for questions.

18) Total number of Pre-K-12 students enrolled in the district. *

19) Number of schools in the district by category:

	#
Elementary	
Pre-K to 8th	
Middle/Junior High	
High School	

20) Total number of schools in district.

21) Students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in the school.

Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

22) Total number of students enrolled in the school.

23) Racial/ethnic composition of students in the school.

	Percent
Black or African American	
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander	
Hispanic or Latino	
American Indian or Alaska Native	
White	
Other	

24) Pick the category that best describes the area where the school is located. *

- ◯ Urban, large central city
- ◯ Suburban with characteristics of urban areas
- ◯ Suburban
- ◯ Small city/town in rural area
- ◯ Rural

25) Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year. *

Calculate this rate by taking the total number of students who transferred to or from your school between October 1 and the end of the school year, divided by the total number of students in school as of October 1, and multiplying by 100.

26a) Limited English proficient students in the school.

	#
Total number of students.	
Total percentage of the student population.	
Total number of languages represented.	

26b) Specify languages represented at your school. *

27) Students who participate in free/reduced-priced meals.

	#
Total number of students.	
Total percentage of the student population.	

If the free/reduced-price meals method is not a reasonably accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how the school arrived at this estimate.

28) Alternative method for estimating percentage of low-income families.

29) Students receiving special education services.

	#
Total NUMBER of students in special education services.	
Total PERCENTAGE of student population.	

30a) Indicate if your school is the district site for any specific magnet program(s). *

- Yes
- No

30b) Include the name of the magnet program(s) and student enrollment for program(s). *

31) Indicate the number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below.

	Full Time	Part Time
Administrators		
Classroom Teachers		
Therapists		
Resource Teachers		
Paraprofessionals		
Support Staff		
Other		

32a) Total number of full-time equivalent staff members.

32b) Total number of classrooms.

33) Attendance rate for past four academic school years. Please report in percentages. Data will be needed for school years, 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027.

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
Average daily student attendance rate.				
Average daily teacher attendance rate.				
Teacher turnover rate.				
Student promotion rate.				
Graduation rate (high schools).				

34) Describe any significant changes or trends in the attendance rate data above. Explain why the changes occurred and the impact on your school programs.

Section 3: School Summary

The school summary provides the panel with important background information for understanding the school. Please note that if the school is recognized, the summary may be made available to the press. Structure the school summary narrative as follows:

- Include the school name, district, and city in the first sentence.
- State the school's vision, mission, and values. Briefly describe the process used to develop the school's vision, mission, and values and related goals.
- Summarize the strengths and accomplishments of the school, focusing especially on what makes the school a unique and successful place for learning and what makes it worthy of recognition.
- Emphasize the key initiatives and accomplishments that distinguish the school.
- Describe major challenges the school has faced in the past five years, how the school and community have successfully managed them, and what the school and community have learned from them. Be specific and share evidence.
- Discuss anticipated future challenges and the school's plans to address them.
- Conclude the summary with a strong statement about what makes the school an excellent place for students to learn, grow, and thrive.

35) School Summary Narrative *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Section 4: Effective Schools Evidence

36) Demonstrate your school's academic excellence through indicators of success. Upload a document (max 2 pages) that includes data other than AASA (Arizona Academic Standards Assessment) and ACT that demonstrates significant student academic growth and/or high student achievement over time. A summary of the data should be included as part of the two-pages.
Reviewers will have your school's most recent AASA scores so do NOT use this space for AASA. Other data examples may include but are not limited to:

- Charts and/or graphs depicting quantitative and/or qualitative data
- Quantitative data that reflects evidence of excellence in academics (for example: Benchmark assessments, DIBELS, CCRI data, AP Placement, AzCCRS, etc.)
- Quantitative data from unique programs that you are highlighting in your A+ application. Included in the two-pages should be a summary of the data you are providing.

Note: Attendance and behavior data can be included to support overall excellence of the school but should not be the single indicator.

Note: Any attachment over two pages will be disqualified.
Note: While teacher-created assessment data can be used, it should not be the only data used to show excellence.

Explain additional qualitative and/or quantitative ways your school measures success outside of achievement data.
Provide an analysis of the data and tell how the data demonstrates excellence. Examples may include but are not limited to benchmark assessments, caregiver surveys, engagement surveys, teacher and/or employee satisfaction surveys, etc. Tip: Consider how the data you are sharing supports programs or activities that you are discussing in your A+ application.

37) Additional Explanation of Success *

600-word limit.0/600

Section 5: Strong Instructional Leadership

Describe the leadership structure, roles, and functions that are important at school.
Specifically:

- Describe the role and style of the principal and/or administrative team as visionary leader(s), instructional leader(s), and lead learner(s). Give specific examples.
- Discuss how key stakeholders within the school have a voice in decision-making. In rich detail, describe how other leadership roles and positions held by stakeholders ensure a shared responsibility for the common good of the community. Talk about how these roles and positions are formed, selected, and structured.
- Describe the process in place for leadership to create, promote, support, measure, and sustain specific, concrete goals to guide teachers' efforts and support students' needs.

38) Leadership Structure *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Describe how the school improvement process or strategic plan is organized and managed to ensure continuous growth and improvement.
Specifically:

- Explain how research findings and data analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) inform policies and practices, programs, relationships, and use of resources to establish priorities and prompt school improvements.
- Describe the school's collaborative school improvement or strategic planning process and how major stakeholders are involved in school-wide and classroom improvement initiatives.
- Explain how professional development and collaboration support and sustain staff efforts, commitment and involvement related to the school's improvement process. Give specific examples.
- Discuss how data analysis and interpretation are used to identify, develop, implement and assess the effectiveness of improvement or strategic planning. Give examples of specific changes that have been implemented as a result of the school's improvement or strategic plan.

39) School Improvement Process *

1500-word limit.0/1500

Section 6: School Organization and Culture

Explain how underlying school values, beliefs, and traditions ensure that people work together to solve problems and confront challenges.
Specifically:

- Describe how the school communicates and monitors the culture and values of the school to all stakeholders. Give specific examples.
- Detail how behaviors and actions of all stakeholders reflect a positive climate at the school.
- Describe the activities and celebrations that are routinely practiced to build positive relations among students, staff, parents, and the community. Include participation rates; who and how many are involved?

40) Values, beliefs, and traditions. *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Showcase Your A+ Story Through Images

Please upload three photographs that best represent your school's unique programs, culture, and accomplishments. Select images that capture the essence of an A+ School of Excellence®, highlighting innovative practices, student engagement, positive school climate, community involvement, leadership, or other distinguishing features that make your school exceptional.

For each photograph, provide a brief caption (1–2 sentences) describing what is shown and why it reflects your school's commitment to excellence.

41a) Upload 3 Photographs. *

41b) Photo Descriptions. *

Explain how the school environment or climate is conducive to learning for all.
Specifically:

- Discuss how the school creates, monitors, and sustains a collaborative, cooperative, safe, and orderly environment for all stakeholders.
- Provide specific examples of how non-teaching staff members (i.e. counselors, administrators, paraprofessionals, transportation, maintenance, support, cafeteria, nurse, crossing guards, etc.) support and affect the school culture.
- Describe in rich detail how the school fosters positive interactions, respect, cooperation, and collaboration between and among students and adults, and promotes a healthy peer climate among students. Who coordinates these efforts and how do you know they are making an impact?

42) School Environment *

800-word limit.0/800

Section 7: Guaranteed, Viable Curriculum, Meaningful Assessment

Describe how the school's curriculum reflects the use of best practices across all grade levels.
Specifically:

- Detail the school's implementation of clear curriculum articulation as well as authentic teacher collaboration across and within grade levels and to and from feeder schools. Share how essential content (knowledge and skills) is defined, sequenced, and organized to maximize student learning. Include descriptions of policies and procedures that protect instructional time.
- Discuss the procedures and tools used to monitor the consistent implementation of essential curriculum including how curriculum is attained by different groups of students across grade levels.
- Detail the processes that are in place to review the curriculum. Highlight how these processes reflect a school wide commitment to continuous improvement.
- Reference evidence where appropriate.

43a) Curriculum and Best Practices *

1000-word limit0/1000

43b) How does your school staff intentionally develop Artificial Intelligence literacy? Provide examples. *

43c) How does your school intentionally develop students' Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy? Provide examples.

44a) Does your district have a "Portrait of a Graduate/Learner?" *

☐ ☐

44b) Upload your portrait. *

44c) How does your school intentionally integrate the Portrait of a Graduate competencies into curriculum, instruction, and school culture to ensure students graduate with the skills necessary for success? Provide specific examples of how these skills are taught, demonstrated, and celebrated; include any community or industry partnerships that support this work. *

Choose one unique program to discuss.
Consider the following:

What sets your school apart in your district and/or community?
Do you have a signature program or another unique initiative that may drive enrollment or support a need unique to your school or surrounding community?
How does your school shine?

Tip: Avoid discussing programs that are commonplace or foundational among all schools. For example, all schools use some form of RTI. Highlighting RTI would not be unique unless your school is using it in a truly innovative and groundbreaking way.
Tip: In questions 36 and 37, you were asked to share qualitative and/or quantitative data. Consider using this space to elaborate on that data.
Tip: Use rich detail. Who is involved in the program? Why was this program adopted? Where do you see it making an impact?

45) Unique Program *

1000-word limit.

Describe how all students, including learners with unique needs, have the opportunity to learn challenging content and achieve at high levels.

Specifically:

- Describe the process for identifying and placing students in various programs. Tell how student progress is monitored and adjusted to ensure success.
- Tell how programs for all learners relate to the overall curriculum and how students are integrated into the mainstream classes and activities of the school when appropriate.
- Discuss what strategies are used to address different learning styles and needs. Provide specific examples and outcomes. Examples might include: expansion and modification of instructional time; double blocking; regrouping; co-teaching; flexible grouping; and other differentiated instructional practices.
- Explain how these offerings relate to the overall curriculum and provide examples of their success.

Tip: Do not limit your response to just special education students. Include gifted, ELL students, etc.

46a) Opportunities for Challenging Content *

1000-word limit.0/1000

(High Schools Only) Describe curricular offerings that provide rigorous educational opportunities that transition students to post-secondary education and/or careers.

Specifically:

- Describe outside and honors curricular offerings and programs such as International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, dual credit courses, online learning, CTE, AVID, etc.
- Explain how these offerings relate to the overall curriculum and provide examples of these programs' success.

46b) High School Curricular Offerings *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Section 8: Engaging Instruction & Student Support

Describe what administrators and visitors at your school would observe on any given day.
Use rich detail to describe:

- What might they see and hear teachers and students doing?
- What evidence of student learning would be visible?

-

What systems and practices are in place to support active participation?

47) Description of Systems and Practices *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Explain how your school is helping students understand they are citizens of the world.

- What types of opportunities and resources are available both inside and outside of the classroom?
- How is your school helping students become informed, responsible global citizens by developing media literacy, technology skills, and other real-world competencies?
- How are students engaged in service learning or similar collaboration and communication with local groups that help them connect to the world beyond their schools?
- What resources are provided to support these efforts?
- How does your school develop a student's personal mindset, including critical thinking and problem-solving, adaptability and resilience?

48) Opportunities and Resources *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Using rich detail, share how the non-academic, personal and interpersonal needs of the student population are addressed and responded to through a network of cohesive and integrated programs and services.
Specifically:

- Describe how the school identifies, assesses and meets the specific needs of all its students as defined by its population.
- Describe the non-academic services and programs that are available to support students and detail how they relate to student needs and school goals.
- Describe how all students are encouraged to build sustainable, caring relationships with each other, teachers and other adults on campus.
- Describe systems in place to help students manage oneself. This can include learning accountability, handling frustration, managing conflict; approaches to teasing, bullying, and other negative interactions (e.g. counseling, character education programs, health services, student intervention assessments, etc.).
- Articulate school-wide systems in place to address and minimize the effects on school climate of factors such as absenteeism, serious discipline problems, high turnover of students or staff, or other negative factors.
- Discuss the strategies in place to ease transitions and provide support for transfer students, first-year students, family moves, etc.
- Provide specific examples of student success as a result of student interventions.

49) Needs of Student Population *

1000-word limit.0/1000

SECTION 9: Caregiver and Community Involvement

Articulate the role that families, partnerships and the community play in supporting learning.
Specifically:

- Describe the goals and priorities of school, family and community partnerships and how those same goals and priorities are communicated to stakeholders and aligned with school priorities.
- Describe challenges, if any, the school faces with caregiver involvement or in developing partnerships or participation. Be specific.
- Describe how partnership goals are collaboratively developed with all stakeholders; detail what strategies are used to involve people from all segments of the community in supporting education. Provide examples of community partnerships that resulted in the school being a respected and valued partner.
- Cite ways in which the school involves all families in school initiatives and programs to build a shared commitment to student success; reference participation rates and give evidence of success. Provide specific examples of how the school supports and enhances the caregiver role and involves families in decision-making. Tell how the school establishes two-way communication and ensures authentic involvement of families from all segments of the school community in a way that respects all backgrounds and challenging needs of the families.
- Detail how volunteers are recruited, trained, and made to feel like an integral part of the school.

50) Role of Families, Partnerships, and Community Engagement *

1000-word limit.0/1000

Explain how educational resources in the school and the community are used to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers and families.
Specifically:

- Describe if and how the school partners with outside entities (e.g. museums, public libraries, community enrichment programs, performing arts institutions, nonprofit organizations, etc.) to provide extended learning opportunities, career awarness, and/or professional development opportunities for staff.
- Provide an example(s) of an extended learning opportunity that demonstrates a positive effect on relationships, student learning, and/or improved student performance.
- Detail services, if any, that are provided at or through the school in the areas of health and social services, adult education or referrals to community agencies.
- Describe relationships with outside agencies that utilize school facilities outside of regular school hours.

51) Use of Educational Resources & Community *

800-word limit.0/800

Sign and Submit

Use your finger or stylus to sign.

I have carefully reviewed the information in this application package and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate. If the school receives the A+ School of Excellence designation, the contents of this application may be made available to the public. A+ School of Excellence is a registered trademark of the Arizona Educational Foundation. The applicant school will comply with the logo and name usage agreement related to A+ School of Excellence, which will be given to the school upon earning the award. No school is authorized to promote itself as an A+ School of Excellence award-winning school unless and until notified by the Arizona Educational Foundation. I also certify that my Superintendent (and School Board where appropriate) has been notified and approves of our submission of this application.

Clicking "Submit" below will complete your A+ application. Congratulations, and thank you for applying for the A+ School of Excellence Award.

Submit

Questions?

For any questions relating to the A+ program, please contact program coordinator Brett K. Bonner at brett@azedfoundation.org *