

You can find us on the Web at:
[http://
www.azedresearch.org/](http://www.azedresearch.org/)



P O I N T I N G T H E W A Y T O C L A R I T Y

Summer 2008

Volume 3, Number 1

In This Issue

- Announcement of the 2008 21st Annual AERO Conference
- Reflections on the 2008 AERA Conference in New York City
- Announcement of **New** AERO Web Site Forums!
- Changes to AZLearns
- Calendar of Events

AERO Board Members

Ildiko Laczko-Kerr,
President 2008
ilaczko@susd.org
Joe Ryan, Past President
joseph.ryan@asu.edu
Joe O'Reilly, Secretary
joreilly@mpsaz.org
John Wilson, Treasurer
2jwilson@tempeschools.org
Bryan Palmer, Member
bryan.palmer@phoenix.edu
Cindy Ziker, 2008
Conference Chair,
cindyziker@yahoo.com
Stephen Lawton, Affiliate
Stephen.lawton@asu.edu
Member, Ray Buss, AERO
Member-at-Large,
ray.buss@asu.edu
Ellen Dibble,
Newsletter Editor,
ellen.dibble@srpmic-ed.org

ANNOUNCING The 21st Annual AERO Conference November 6th and 7th, 2008

Location will be the University of Phoenix
Hohokam Campus
4605 East Elwood Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85040

**"Identifying Factors that Support
Effective Change in School Climate:
Impacting Teaching and Learning"**

CALL FOR PAPERS

Educational researchers are encouraged to submit proposals for papers, symposia, workshops, and pre-conference professional development sessions. Appropriate research includes systematic inquiry related to administration, curriculum studies, learning and instruction, measurement and research methodology, counseling and human development, or the social context of education. Additional topics of interest include school evaluation/program development, education in the professions, post secondary education, teaching and teacher education and education policy and politics. Research may be basic or applied in the qualitative or quantitative traditions.

Proposal Submissions

The Proposal Submission System will open on August 15, 2008. Visit <http://www.azedresearch.org> for more information. Submit the proposals electronically to the AERO web page at <http://www.azedresearch.org>. Proposals will be acknowledged electronically.

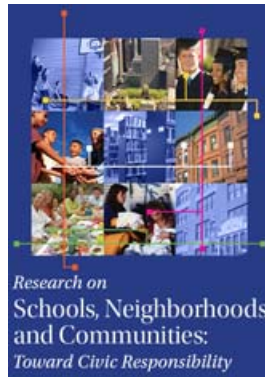
Deadline: October 1, 2008.
This is the final deadline.

Reflections on AERA 2008 From AERO Leaders: Ildi Laczko-Kerr and Joe O'Reilly

What isn't there to like about AERA in New York City? Great food, cultural offerings at every turn and interesting sessions. (OK, so the per diem barely covered the cost of breakfast, but it was still worth it!)

This year's AERA Conference provided a variety of sessions that are directly applicable to the school reform initiatives in which many of us are engaged. Ildi was specifically drawn to research relating to: instructional leadership styles and student achievement; the development and evaluation of professional learning communities; program implementation and evaluation as well as data analysis and utilization. Joe focused on sessions relating to communicating research to the media, policy makers and the public, and using formative assessment and other related data in districts. Both of us attended some of the many sessions relating to NCLB and school improvement. It was clear in the sessions that the focus on assessment and test results has shifted away from a measure of school quality in absolute terms to an element to be incorporated into systemic school improvement initiatives. Data was presented as a means to inform practice and lead change relating to student achievement gains rather than just as an NCLB accountability indicator.

As always, we were able to return to our districts with valuable, practical information to share with our colleagues. Ildi will be integrating the research content directly in the professional development of her district's administrators, teachers and staff. Specifically, she was able to walk away with evaluation tools and research methodologies that will guide future research in



her district. Joe also came back with ideas for reading program evaluations and assessing the implementation of a formative assessment/data warehouse system and some collaborators to help design and carry out these studies. One valuable tool was a CD of all the research reports from districts across the country submitted to the Division H publication competition.

Above all, we discovered that researchers across the nation are engaged in work that we are doing as well or better -- evaluating the effectiveness of programs, intervention models and school reform initiatives. If their work can be presented, ours can be too! It is just a matter of taking the time to share your good efforts.

The due date for 2009 AERA submissions is about August 1st. The conference will be in nearby San Diego, which should make attending much easier. As a first step toward a presentation at the following year's AERA conference, Submit and present your research at AERO. The conference is scheduled for November 6th - 7th.

New Forums on AERO Website

By Ellen Dibble

If you are interested in educational research, visit the AERO website. New forums have been created on the site to discuss current research and state policies that affect research, school improvement, and assessment professionals in Arizona.

The website supports the mission of the Arizona Educational Research Organization and features information about the annual conference, resources from presentations, a brief history of the organization, current news items, copies of the newsletter, and FORUMS!

In order to participate you must register at the site—www.azedresearch.org/forums.

www.azedresearch.org/forums

(continued on page 3)

During the summer months leading up to this year's conference the AERO board will offer the forums without paid membership! An email announcing this opportunity will be sent to those who registered for the conference last year. If you did not, just visit the site and register to participate.

The new forums include "Item Analysis Theory", moderated by Dr. Alex Yu, ASU. Dr. Yu will answer questions and provide tutorials and resources to improve assessment analysis. AERO also plans to start another new forum moderated by the Arizona Department of Education to provide answers to questions about assessment verification and other issues regarding the formulas used by Arizona's Research and Evaluation Section for school accountability.



Changes to AZLearns for 2008

By Lietta "Lee" Scott

Changes to Arizona's school evaluation formula (AZ LEARNS) will take effect this fall. The information presented here was taken from Dr. Robert Franciosi's memo to the Board of Education dated March 24, 2008.

The changes to the growth/improvement portion of the evaluation that affect all schools:

1. The addition of grades 4, 6, and 7 to the growth/improvement portion of the evaluation.
2. The improvement measure for each subject and grade tested will be the average of the annual changes in the difference of percent passing and percent

Forum

AERO Members

	Annual Conference Discuss AERO's annual conference. Moderators Board Members , Forum Moderators
	Test Item Analysis Discuss the statistical techniques, tools, and usefulness to schools of Item Response Theory. Professor Alex Yu, Arizona State University, is willing to answer questions and support AERO members using IRT to improve school assessments. Moderators Board Members , Forum Moderators
	General Discussion General topics of interest Moderators Board Members , Forum Moderators

- scoring "falls far below". (FFB)
Base year is 2005 (or when a school opened, which ever is latest).
3. No minimum group size will apply.

Example: The following shows how this year's improvement measure would be calculated for a single grade and subject.

First the difference in % Passing and % FFB for each year is computed.

Year	% Passing	% FFB	Difference
2005	52	18	34
2006	54	17	37
2007	57	15	42
2008	60	10	50

The year-to-year changes are calculated.

Year	Annual Differences	Year-to-year change
2005 to 2006	37 - 34	3
2006 to 2007	42 - 37	5
2007 to 2008	50 - 42	8

The year-to-year changes are averaged.

$$(3 + 5 + 8) / 3 = 5.3$$

Summary of a memo from Dr. Robert Franciosi, Arizona Department of Education Associate Superintendent for Research and Evaluation
Original document at http://www.ade.az.gov/azlearns/08_03_24AZLEARNChanges.pdf

(continued on page 4)

Link to

www.azedresearch.org

*History of AERO
Membership Information
Upcoming Events
and more...*

Membership Information

The Arizona Educational Research Organization (AERO), founded in 1987, is a professional organization affiliated with the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Members come from public and private schools, community colleges and universities, and public and governmental agencies.

Membership in AERO is a great way to establish friendships and collegial contacts with educators, researchers and policymakers in Arizona. To join AERO visit our website, www.azedresearch.org and become a member of a vibrant organization that is concerned with pressing educational issues.

Contact Us

Please e-mail your suggestions, comments, and questions about the AERO Edge Newsletter to edible@gmail.com

The conversion table for the growth measure for each subject and grade is unified and simplified.

NEW AZ LEARNS Improvement Points Table							
Grade	Subject	Points 1	Points 2	Points 3	Points 4	Points 5	Points 6
3 - 8	Math	< -16	-16 to -9	-8 to 0	1 to 9	10 to 17	≥ 18
3 - 8	Read	< -14	-14 to -8	-7 to 0	1 to 7	8 to 14	≥ 15
3 - 8	Write	< -16	-16 to -8	-7 to 0	1 to 11	12 to 20	≥ 21
HS	Math	< -16	-16 to -7	-6 to 4	5 to 15	16 to 25	≥ 26
HS	Read	< -12	-12 to -5	-4 to 4	5 to 13	14 to 21	≥ 22
HS	Write	< -10	-10 to -2	-1 to 7	8 to 16	17 to 25	≥ 26

Changes that affect schools that serve both elementary/middle grades and high school grades:

One unified achievement profile for schools serving elementary/middle and high school grade spans comprised of all the components of the AZ LEARNS evaluation at both levels:

1. AIMS results
2. Measure of Academic Progress
3. Graduation and dropout rates
4. AYP evaluation
5. AZELLA scores

A unified scale of the number of points required for each profile will require 14 points to achieve a “Performing” rating.

Profile Scale for K-12 Schools	
AZ LEARNS Profile	AZ LEARNS Points Earned
Underperforming	< 14
Performing	14
Highly Performing	17
Excelling	20

Calendar of Events

AYP/AZLearns profiles released to schools—August 1, 2008

AERO 21st Annual Conference—Nov. 6th and 7th, 2008

AERA Annual Conference, San Diego—Apr. 13th to Apr. 17th, 2009