USING EXPLORE AZ SCHOOLS – Practitioner Training

This guide is offered to you as a resource as you prepare to train other practitioners to use the Explore AZ Schools tool. The content of this guide aligns with the PowerPoint slides developed for the training. Each slide of the Explore AZ Schools PowerPoint guides practitioners, as well as parents through the Explore Arizona Schools website.

This website is designed to help others explore school information such as: location, school performance, and demographic information. There are thousands of schools in Arizona and it can be overwhelming to know where to start to search for the right school. The Read On Arizona Explore Arizona Schools website is a comprehensive search tool that allows you to easily find and navigate information on schools throughout the state.

As trainers, you are encouraged to become familiar with the Explore Arizona Schools website yourselves. Please visit the Read On Arizona website.
Each PowerPoint Slide has a screenshot from the Read On Arizona Explore AZ Schools website. The upper right-hand corner displays an icon that represents a practitioner (i.e. teacher/administrator) along with a script bubble of explanations and/or questions to be spoken by the practitioner regarding that page. There are also notes at the bottom of the PowerPoint slides that contain helpful tips that can be used by the practitioner. These would not be scripted, but can help the practitioner discover important search criteria for the website user.

**SCRIPT BUBBLE**
Explanations and/or questions to be spoken by practitioner.

**PRACTITIONER ICON**
Represents a practitioner who is guiding a parent or individual through the Explore AZ Schools site.

**NOTES**
Helpful tips that the practitioner can use to help guide others through the website.

Choose a Specific Location

Looking at schools for your child?

Learn more about the education options for your family, from pre-k to high school. Explore schools in your Arizona community or search by the factors that are most important to you.

- English Language Arts scores
- Math scores
- Student demographics
- Full or half-day kindergarten
- A-f School Letter Grades
- More

You can search by address, city, or zip code. What would you like to search by?

Hey/she can enter a specific address, city or zip code. They can also select "Use Current Location" which will allow GPS to access their location to find nearby schools.
Read On Arizona and the Arizona Department of Education have created the *Using Explore AZ Schools – Practitioner Training* tool to help guide families to find information about Arizona schools all in one place.

The purpose of this training is to help train practitioners know how to use the tool to help families or individuals navigate the website and find the schools and information they are looking for.

Practitioners can guide individuals/families to the Read On Arizona home page: [http://readonarizona.org/](http://readonarizona.org/)

From the homepage, they will direct website users to hover over the “Resources” tab on the top menu bar.

You can have participants do a Google search for “Read On Arizona” or send an email with a website link.
AZ Family Engagement Center

SLIDE 3

Below the “Resources” tab, click on the Family Engagement Center link.

SLIDE 4

From the AZ Family Engagement Center Home Page, click on the Explore AZ Schools icon. This will take participants to the page with the Explore AZ Schools tool link.
SLIDE 5
From the Explore AZ Schools page, click on the orange “VISIT TOOLS” button to enter the Explore AZ Schools Tool.

SLIDE 6
Now we are in the Explore AZ Schools Tool. Again, you will see a list of search criteria that can be used to explore. The Home Icon on the bottom left is for “Search by Location” and the School Icon on the bottom right is for “Search by School”. These are both explained in detail on the next slide.
You will see under the “Notes” section that you can search by Location or School. If you click on “Search Location” on the left-hand side, you will be taken directly to Slide 9 where you can enter specific location information. If you click on “Search by School” it will take you directly to Slide 35 where it gives instructions on how to learn about a specific school. The next page gives specific questions to ask to find out what search criteria to use.

Is LOCATION important to them? If so, are they looking for a school close to:
- Home?
- Work?
- Caregivers?

Does he/she already have a specific SCHOOL in mind they want to look at? Do they have a child or friend who attends a school that they are interested in?
Near Work or Home – Enter City or Zip:

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Let’s Search by Location. Is it important for you to find a school closer to your home, work, or a different location?

This is where you really start to learn what is important to the parents or individuals about their child’s school

- Will there be a friend or relative dropping off or picking up the child to/from school?
- Is it easier to have a location within proximity to work or a caregiver?

The following page gives some additional questions you can ask to discover what location information is important to the family.
QUESTIONS TO ASK

Do you know the name of the school you would like to look at?

YES

If YES, click on “Search by School” and it will take you to Slide 35. You can type in the name of the school and search or filter information specific for that school.

NO

If NO, click on “Search by Location” and it will take you to Slide 9.

What is important to you as far as school location?

You can search near:
- Home
- Work
- Child care
- Family Member
- Church
- Other

Would you like to search by Address, City or Zip Code?

Click in the “Search by Location” box and type in the location information.

After searching by LOCATION (address/city/zip) a list of schools will appear. On the next page, we will look at ways to filter the list and create a more focused search.
You will see under the “Notes” section that you can filter the list of schools or view the schools on a map. If there are too many schools, you can narrow the search radius. If there are too few schools (perhaps in a rural area) then you can increase the radius to broaden the search results. On the next page, you will see some suggested questions to ask before filtering the school list.
QUESTIONS TO ASK

SORT THE LIST

Are there too many schools on the list?

YES

NO

Are there too few schools on the list?

YES

NO

Would you like to view the schools on a MAP?

YES

NO

You can narrow the list by decreasing the search radius. Click on the distance slider on the lower left column and slide the button to the LEFT.

You can increase the list by broadening the search radius. Click on the distance slider on the lower left column and slide the button to the RIGHT.

You can view the list of schools on a Map. You can view on a Map before or after selecting different filters. Click “View on Map” on top of left-hand column.

VIEW ON MAP
If the individual would like to go to Map View, you can click on “Map View Filters” on the lower left of the slide to go to Slide 21.

If the individual would like to continue filtering the school list, the practitioner may continue to Slide 12.
After filtering distance radius, you can sort the list of schools by category. The default is to sort by School Name alphabetically A-Z.

Please note that clicking once on a feature will list schools in descending order, clicking twice will list schools in ascending order (or vice versa depending on the category).

*Each sorting feature will be highlighted on subsequent slides.*
**SLIDE 13**

By clicking on **School Name** you can sort the list alphabetically from A-Z or Z-A. Clicking once will sort in ascending order (Z-A) and clicking twice will revert back to descending order (A-Z).

**SLIDE 14**

You can also sort by **School Type**, which sorts by Public or *Charter school. The filter on the left-hand side is a little easier to use for this sorting feature. (A brief explanation of charter schools is given below that can be used to explain to individuals and families as needed.)

*Charter Schools are publicly funded, privately managed and semi-autonomous schools of choice. They do not charge tuition and do not have geographical boundaries for enrollment. They receive public funding similarly to traditional public schools and must hold the same academic accountability measures.*
SLIDE 15
Clicking on the Grade Level feature will sort the list by schools in the following order:

- All Grades
- Elementary
- High School
- Middle School

SLIDE 16
Clicking on the Grades feature will show schools that serve grades: PreK, K-5, K-8, 9-12, K-12, etc.
SLIDE 17

Enrollment will sort the list by school enrollment numbers. Clicking once will sort the list from smallest enrollment to largest. Clicking twice will sort from largest enrollment to smallest.

SLIDE 18

ELA will sort the list by the school’s average *ELA (English & Language Arts) scores.

*ELA scores are based on the school’s annual English & Language Arts scores from the AzM2 tests (formerly known as AzMERIT).
SLIDE 19

MATH will sort the list by the school’s average Math scores from the AzM2 test.

* Math scores are based on the school’s annual Math scores from the AzM2 tests (formerly known as AzMERIT).

Now would be a good time to explain the different colors of arrows next to the ELA and MATH scores.

Dark Green = Very High

Green = High

Yellow = Middle

Orange = Low

Red = Very Low

Purple = Not Rated
You can give a brief explanation of how Letter Grades are determined for each school.

The State Board of Education (SBE) determines the criteria for each school classification. The A-F Letter Grade system includes the following:

- Percentage of proficient students on AzM2 (previously AzMERIT).
- Indicators of student gain/growth.
- English Language Learners (ELL) proficiency and growth.
- Graduation rate (for high schools only).
- College and career readiness.

More information on School Letter Grades and AZ Schools Proficiency can be found on pg. 25 of this Trainer’s Guide.
You can view all of the schools on your list on a Map. The green circle shows your search radius. Would you like to look at specific schools or narrow the results even further? What is important to you when looking at schools?

### Questions to Ask

- Are you looking for elementary, middle, high school?
- Are you interested in full day or half day kindergarten?*
- Do you have a preference between public or charter schools?
- Would you like to narrow the search radius to be in closer proximity to: home, work, child care location, etc.?

*There is additional information about full/half-day kindergarten in the notes of Slide 21 of the PowerPoint and pg. 22 of this Training Guide.

Individuals can view all the schools from the list in Map View. The green circle shows the current search radius. There are some helpful questions to ask to narrow the radius and/or search results even further.
Zoom In/Out to get a different view of a certain area. Point out that the zoom buttons are found on the lower right-hand corner of the map. Clicking on the [+] sign will zoom in to a specific location and clicking on the [-] sign will zoom out. To return to the original map view location, click on the [Home] button any time.

Grade Level allows you to filter by Elementary, Middle, or High Schools. This will significantly narrow down the search by removing schools that are not within the desired grade level search.
SLIDE 24
The Public or Charter schools filter can narrow the map list by either school type. Note that Charter schools are shown in RED and Public Schools are shown in BLUE.

You may want to provide a brief explanation for individuals and/or parents regarding charter schools. You can use the box below as a narrative for this explanation. This narrative is also found in the notes on Slide 24 of the PowerPoint.

Charter Schools are publicly funded, privately managed and semi-autonomous schools of choice. They do not charge tuition, and do not have geographical boundaries for enrollment. They receive public funding similarly to traditional schools, and must hold to the same academic accountability measures as public schools.
The State of Arizona only provides funding for half-day kindergarten; therefore, schools are only required to provide half-day options. Some schools provide full-day kindergarten at a cost to parents/guardians, while other schools provide free full-day kinder options to families utilizing other funding sources.

If it has not been previously discussed, you can give a brief explanation about AZ legislation regarding full/half-day kindergarten.

Full and Half-day kindergarten is also addressed on pg. 19 of this Training Guide.
You can filter the ELA and Math proficiency scores by selecting schools that are above the State Average.

More information on ELA and MATH scores can be found on pgs. 16-17 of this Training Guide.

You can then select a range of proficiency scores you would like to look at for ELA and MATH Proficiency.
Choosing a MATH or ELA Range:
Slide the left circle for minimum

The slider buttons under ELA and MATH Proficiency can be moved right/left to select a range of scores. The left button/circle can be used to set the minimum proficiency score.

Choosing a MATH or ELA Range:
Slide the right circle for maximum

The right button/circle can be used to set the maximum.
The Map View can be sorted by School Letter Grade. Please note that you can only select one letter grade at a time: A, B, C or D.

More information on School Letter Grades can be found on pg. 18 of this Trainer’s Guide.

- **Minimally Proficient**: Shows minimal understanding of grade level expectations (likely to need support to be ready for next grade).

- **Partially Proficient**: Shows partial understanding of grade level expectations (likely to need support to be ready for next grade).

- **Proficient**: Shows strong understanding of grade level expectations (likely to be ready for next grade).

- **Highly Proficient**: Shows advanced understanding of grade level expectations (highly likely to be ready for next grade).
A school with a Title I Schoolwide Program, which is primarily addressed in Section 1114 of Title I, Part A, is one that receives Part A funds “to upgrade the entire educational program of a school that serves an eligible school attendance area in which not less than 40 percent of the children are from low-income families, or not less than 40 percent of the children enrolled in the school are from such families”.

The focus of a Schoolwide Program is Comprehensive Schoolwide Reform to ensure all students – especially those considered most academically at-risk – are able to attain academic proficiency based upon state academic standards.
Click to view a School’s Name, Address, and Letter Grade

You can click on a specific school on the map to view the School Name, Address, and Letter Grade. Clicking [Zoom to] will take you to a closer view of the school location.

Clicking on an individual school name will show more details for that school, including: physical address and letter grade.

Click [Zoom to] to get a closer view of the school location on the map.
Please remind practitioners and individuals that an “NR” status for a school, this means that the school has not yet been evaluated. This could be due to the one of the following reasons:

- The school is new and there is insufficient data for evaluation
- The school is going through an improvement process
Please let practitioners know that they can search for a Specific School from the Explore AZ Tools home page.

After typing a school name in the Search by School section, you can click on a school name to learn more about that school.
Focus on the School:
Information: name, district, address, phone, grades served, enrollment, letter grade, etc.

- School Name
- District
- Physical Address
- Phone Number
- Link to School Website
- School Type
- Grades Served
- Enrollment
- Free/Reduced Lunch %
- Title I Status
- Grades Served
- School Letter Grade
Focus on the School:
Data: Academics ELA, MATH, Science

**ACADEMICS**

**SLIDE 37**

The ACADEMICS section shows school AzMERIT (AzM2) scores compared with state averages in:

- ELA
- MATH
- SCIENCE

**ENROLLMENT**

**SLIDE 38**

Below the Academics portion, you will find the student % of:

- DEMOGRAPHICS
- MINORITY
- GENDER

Below those charts, there will be enrollment subgroups that include:

- ELL (English Language Learners)
- Free/Reduced Lunch
- SPED (Special Education)
Thank You!

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