



IMPACT REPORT

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

Increased Student Success Through
Continuous School Improvement



PLANNING FOR SUCCESS



As more and more families seek educational choices beyond their neighborhood schools, it's important that they have access to options that provide personalized approaches to meet their children's unique needs. K12, a leader in online and blended learning, recognized the need to remove barriers to a great education and committed to improve schools and drive student success. K12 researched the standards and best practices that guide high-performing schools and developed a plan to replicate them. The goal was to increase school performance and work to close the achievement gap between K12 partner schools and state average performance on assessments by quickly propelling student growth.

In an effort to facilitate improvement, K12 developed the [Academic Excellence Framework \(AEF\)](#). Serving a diverse set of schools and independent boards, K12 realizes that no one approach will work for all students at all schools. Just as students need a personalized approach to education, so do schools. AEF is one of many programs K12 employs to support student achievement and school improvement.

The AEF is designed to strengthen schools and improve student growth by:

- Developing comprehensive strategic plans
- Reinforcing school culture
- Utilizing data-driven instruction
- Establishing goals and measuring progress
- Holding schools, administrators, teachers, students, and families accountable for success

The AEF process enables each school to take advantage of the creativity and ideas of its own faculty and leadership, while scaling the best ideas that have advanced student achievement across other schools. By articulating priorities, identifying challenges, establishing timelines, and setting measurable goals, the framework plan helps each school chart a path toward educational success.

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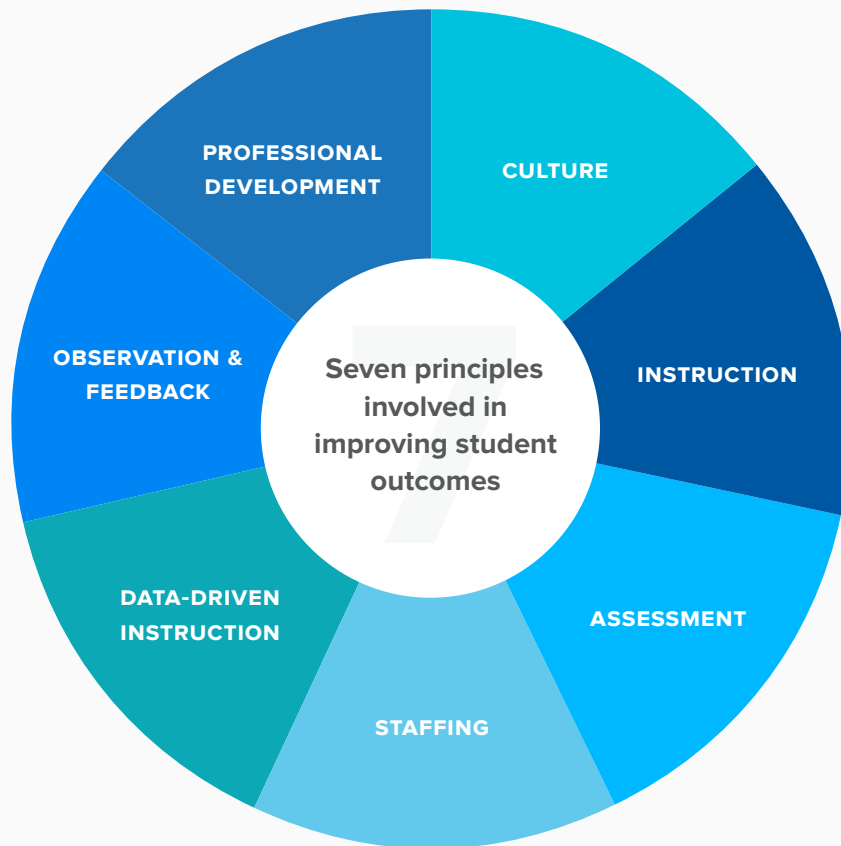
“Improving individual student achievement is the driving force behind everything we do at K12. The Academic Excellence Framework allows our educators to share their most creative thinking and innovations across our network of schools, and allows us to scale successful approaches quickly and effectively. Working with our school leaders, teachers, and parents, we are constantly innovating to solve problems at the student and school levels.”

—KEVIN P. CHAVOUS, PRESIDENT OF ACADEMICS, POLICY AND SCHOOLS



SEVEN GUIDING STANDARDS

K12's AEF is based on an examination of high-performing schools, combined with best practices and resources from more than 70 K12-powered online schools. K12's research identified **seven primary principles** involved in improving student outcomes. The AEF centers on these principles and guides schools in developing comprehensive academic plans that are evaluated and enhanced on a continuing basis.



K12 provides each school with a dedicated team of education experts to support the development and execution of the framework. These resources include:

- Weekly school consultations
- Quarterly school reviews of key performance indicators
- Strategic action planning
- Measurement of program implementation
- Weekly tracking of school-level student outcomes through academic dashboards

THE FRAMEWORK IN ACTION

At Arizona Virtual Academy (AZVA), the AEF is in full swing. As part of the planning process, AZVA leaders solicited feedback from teachers and parents to guide cultural and academic changes. The feedback informed the development of a new school motto and academic requirements, including a new approach to help keep students accountable for their assignments.



RAPID RESULTS

The changes AZVA implemented have already had a big impact on student results and culture at the school. They fully implemented the AEF standards in the 2016–2017 school year and within the first year students have already shown tremendous growth and made great strides in increasing proficiency on state assessments.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

CLOSED
12
POINT GAP

Proficiency growth from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017 narrowed the gap between AZVA students and the state average to less than one percentage point—closing a 12-point gap in just one school year.

↑**8**
PERCENTAGE
POINTS

For grades 9, 10, and 11, AZVA students actually surpassed the state average in proficiency achievement by an average of 8 percentage points.

↑**13**
PERCENTAGE
POINTS

The percentage of students achieving proficiency grew nearly 13 percentage points from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017, bringing the overall total to 38.2 percent in 2017.

MATH

↑**10**
POINTS IN
ALGEBRA I

Algebra I and Geometry students at AZVA outpaced the state proficiency average, with a 10 percentage point advantage over the state average in Algebra I and two percentage points over for Geometry.

↑**2**
POINTS IN
GEOMETRY

ADDITIONAL
27%
MEETING PROFICIENCY

Algebra I students showed the most improvement year over year, with an additional 27 percent meeting proficiency—overall, 49 percent of AZVA Algebra I students achieved proficiency in 2017.

↑**11**
PERCENTAGE
POINTS

The gap between AZVA student achievement and the state average was cut in half in one year, to 10.7 percentage points behind the state average. The percentage of AZVA students achieving proficiency jumped nearly 11 percentage points to 28.6 percent in 2016–2017.

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“Throughout the year, our principals, teachers, and other administrators review school and student data and measure program success or areas for improvement; we then refine our practices to best meet the needs of students we have at that point in time. Our overarching goal is to help our students master concepts and constantly improve.”

—DR. KELLY VAN SANDE, HEAD OF SCHOOL, ARIZONA VIRTUAL ACADEMY, INSIGHT ACADEMY OF ARIZONA

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY

K12 partner schools enroll a high percentage of new students each year compared to traditional schools, and these students are more likely to enter the school unprepared to learn at grade level. To help every student achieve his or her potential and increase proficiency, K12 uses innovative, creative approaches to education that challenge the status quo and produce positive results.

Formalizing this drive to constantly evaluate and improve is a key feature of the AEF. Each school must evaluate annually the outcomes and the plan's implementation to determine whether the academic achievement of all students improved,

whether the goals and objectives contained in the plan were achieved, and if the plan needs enhancement.

This is an ongoing process as more schools implement and enhance the framework each year. K12 teams collaborate with school leaders and provide support through ongoing consultations, plan revisions, improvements, and professional development. During an academic review, the school receives feedback on each component. This includes a set of recommendations that are specific and relevant to meeting the school's academic goals. All data, plan iterations, and feedback are completed during the summer transition so the framework and any enhancements can be implemented at the start of the next school year.



INCREASED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



An essential part of the AEF is increasing the amount of time that teachers provide direct instruction to students and ensuring those who need extra support in certain content areas are receiving it.

Already the focus on direct instruction has had an impact on student engagement, with a 21 percent increase in student attendance and participation in direct instruction hours from the 2016–2017 school year to last year. Students have engaged in 2 million more hours of direct teacher instruction year over year across all K12 partner schools.

21%

INCREASE IN STUDENT
ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
IN DIRECT INSTRUCTION HOURS

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“K12 teachers are the backbone of our students’ educational success. That’s why a key element of the AEF is developing innovative ways for students and teachers to engage more. From increased direct instruction time and chat sessions to family phone calls, teachers are building strong relationships and gaining a better understanding of each student’s unique needs.”

—NATE DAVIS, CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



ZEROING IN ON STUDENTS IN NEED: THE RETEACH MODEL

One innovation stemming from the AZVA reviews was the **Reteach Model**, which leverages individual data to help teachers identify students who have not mastered concepts and enable them to intervene immediately with additional instruction in an effort to help improve outcomes and close achievement gaps.

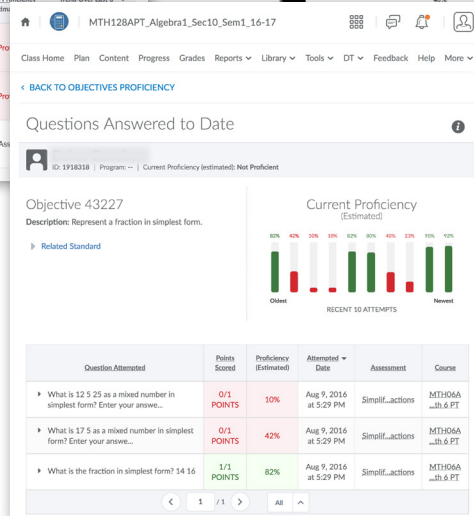
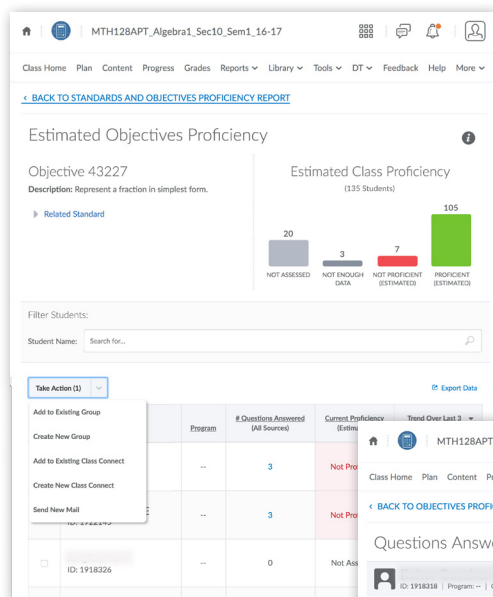
The results of this approach have been remarkable. Students who attend Reteach are improving their scores in follow-up assessments—some going from an F to an A. Students who already achieved a passing grade on the assessment are also participating in Reteach, and their growth is typically smaller (one to two percentage points on average). Each week, teachers collect student data, analyze it to guide instruction, and identify students in need of additional support. They also use it to measure student learning and growth after the Reteach cycle has ended.

Multiple student data points are used to inform in-year instruction and monitor progress. Data is analyzed at the item level to define distractors and misunderstandings as well as the root causes for both. Clear and actionable goals are established for each student during the analysis.

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There is a vast difference between passing a course and mastering the material of that course ... We have to have high expectations if we're going to see high passing rates.”

—AZVA HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER



A CHANGE IN SCHOOL CULTURE

Instilling a strong academic culture in schools is critical—when students are expected to perform at a high level, be accountable for their own work, and fully engage in learning, they are more likely to succeed. A strong academic culture involves school leadership, faculty, students, and families working together in pursuit of student success.



My time ...

TO WORK HARD
TO LEARN
TO ACHIEVE
TO GROW
TO PREPARE
TO HAVE JOY IN MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“This is AZVA, in pursuit of excellence.
And MY time is NOW!”

“Excellence is not an act, but a habit.”

—ARISTOTLE



Within the AEF, AZVA high school leaders developed a comprehensive strategy to develop a school motto and turn it into a force for cultural change within the school. The motto is delivered by teachers and administrators every day, incorporated into course materials and presentations, and repeated during online Class Connect sessions. To improve accountability and engagement among students, teachers worked closely with students to submit coursework and adhere to an accelerated grading

schedule to allow for more timely review of student performance data.

Students noticed the change immediately—not only in the new due-date policies, but also as the “My Time” values were communicated to them across AZVA’s online platforms. One of AZVA’s recent valedictorians noted how each of the values enumerated in the motto tied into her class’s experience with AZVA.

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“This is our time to learn. Learning, of course, doesn’t begin or end in the classroom—or, in our case, the Class Connect session ... we’ve learned from the best, no doubt—from very real, accredited teachers that ... connected to their students through more than merely their internet connections.”


“This is our time to prepare. And what better way is there to prepare for life in this fancy, technologically advanced 21st Century than through an online school? Aside from preparing us both academically and personally, our time with AZVA has prepared us technologically, too.”

—SARAH NEGOVAN, 2016 AZVA GRADUATE



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

The Academic Excellence Framework establishes a process to enable K12 partner schools to pursue the goal of continuous improvement. By encouraging school leaders to implement creative ideas and best practices, the AEF is helping to close achievement gaps and support student growth. Our approach is designed to help each school develop its own path to educational success, and the AEF is one of the many ways K12 is advancing that goal for students, families, and teachers.



ABOUT K12

K12 Inc. is driving innovation and advancing the quality of education by delivering state-of-the-art digital learning platforms and technology to students and school districts across the globe. K12's curriculum serves more than 2,000 schools and school districts and has delivered millions of courses over the past decade. K12 provides online and blended education solutions to charter schools, public school districts, private schools, and directly to families. The K12 program is offered through more than 70 partner public schools, and through school districts and public and private schools serving students in all 50 states and more than 100 countries. More information can be found at [K12.com](https://www.k12.com).
