

# 200 Day School Year Extended Learning Time

## Legislative Recommendations

Arizona is the first and only state in the country to adopt legislation that encourages school districts to extend their calendar to 200 days from the traditional 180 days of most school calendars. The current law (ARS 15-902.04) requires that entire school districts must make the change for all schools but does not allow individual schools within a district to adopt the 200 day Extended Learning Time (ELT) calendar. When a district makes the change to 200 days the law allows for 5% in additional base level funding. Currently three school districts in the state have extended their school year to 200 days, Balsz, Riverside and Nadaberg School Districts. Of these, the Balsz School District has implemented the extended calendar for three complete years and has the positive student achievement data to support the change as an effective reform strategy. (See data slides below)

We are proposing that the current law (ARS 15-902.04) be amended with two modifications to make the change to a 200 day calendar more efficient and attainable.

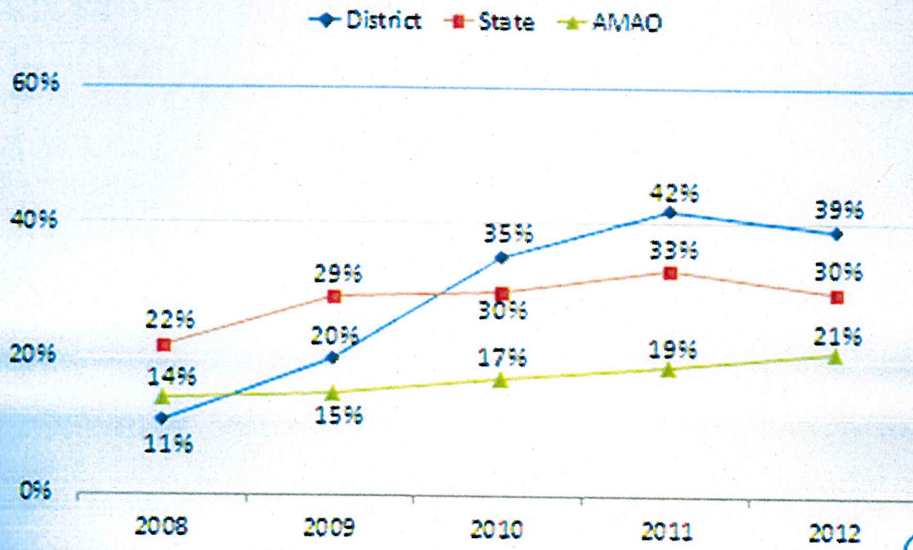
1. Allow individual school to adopt the 200 day ELT calendar. Currently an entire district must make the change to take advantage of this law. The ELT calendar may meet the needs of individual schools who want to make significant changes in order to boost student achievement. Individual schools that are underperforming or may be at risk of failing can adopt this change as a part of their reform strategy.
2. Increase the base level funding from 5% to 8%. The current funding is not adequate to cover the costs of the 200 day ELT. An increase in the funding to 8% will allow schools and districts to adopt the 200 day ELT without reducing other programs to accommodate the shortage of funding at the state level. Funding the base level of support at 8% is essentially a break-even point for schools and districts and is a real bargain for the state. The 200 day ELT is an additional 11% increase in time that would be supported with only an additional 8% in funding.

Numerous schools and school districts across the state have indicated an interest in changing to a 200 day ELT. However, the inadequate funding and the inability of individual schools to make this change have proven to be very difficult obstacles to overcome. Changing the standard for the school calendar requires leadership, commitment and a high degree of cooperation from all stakeholders in a school community. In addition, this is currently being considered by the Arizona Ready Council as a strategy for low achieving schools in their efforts to improve.

Our goal is to remove the three barriers listed above so that this bold and innovative school reform strategy can be implemented in more schools and districts in the state of Arizona. Our interest is in gaining support for legislation that could go into effect for the 2013-14 school year.

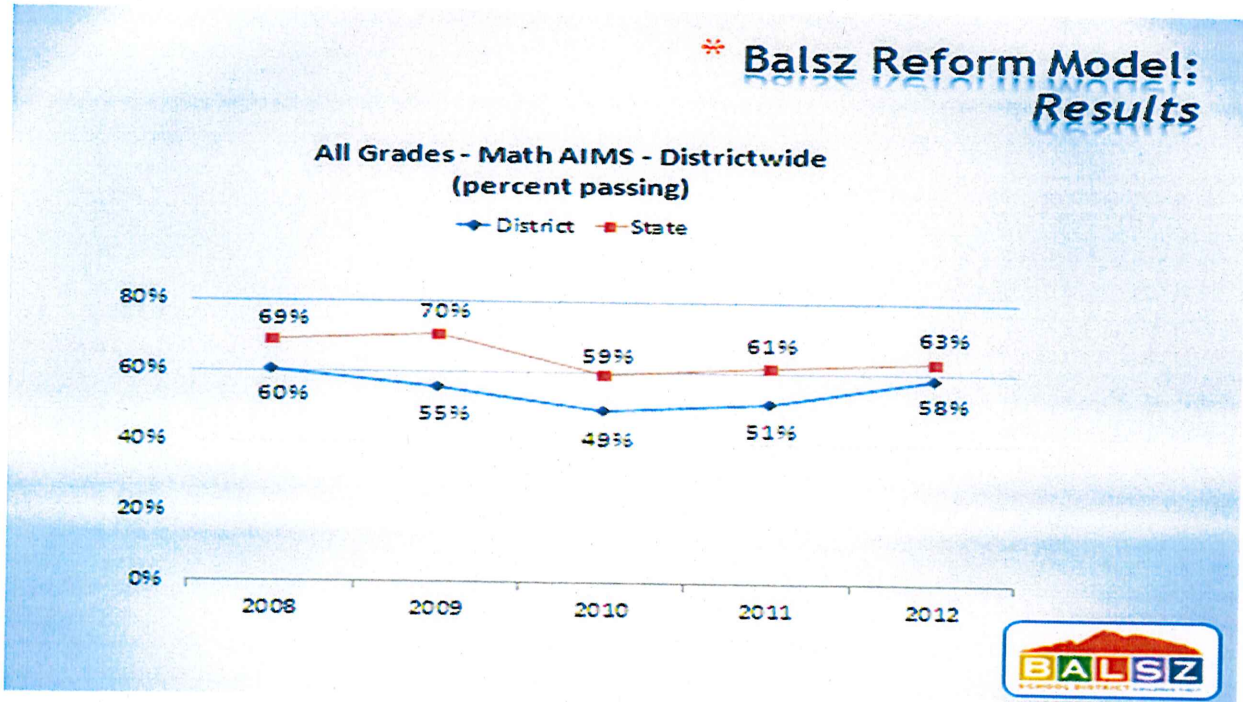
## \* Balsz Reform Model: Results

All Grades - ELL Reclassification Rates - Districtwide  
(percent passing)

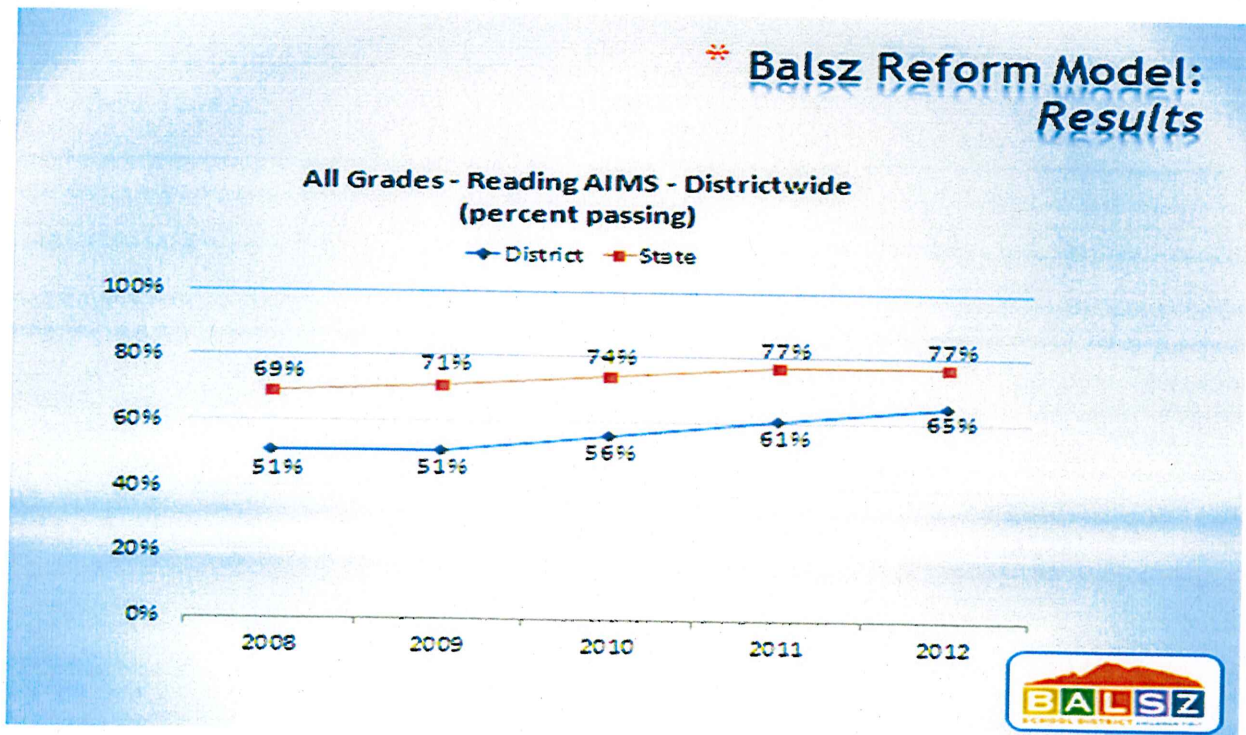


English Language reclassifications rates have more than doubled since implementation of 200 days calendar in Balsz Schools.





The Math AIMS performance gap has narrowed between Balsz and the state average. Since inception of the 200 day calendar student performance has steadily closed the gap from 10 points down to 5 points with a positive trajectory for student achievement in just three years.



The Reading AIMS performance gap has narrowed between Balsz and the state average. Since inception of the 200 day calendar student performance has steadily closed the gap from 18 points down to 12 points with a positive trajectory for student achievement in just three years.