

Arizona State Profile

ASU Prep Digital, a DLC State Affiliate, was instrumental in conducting the research for this profile.

Updated September 2023

There is no state virtual school but Arizona has [115 school districts](#) authorized to provide both full-time and supplemental online options through the [Arizona Online Instruction](#) (AOI) program as of September 2023. The AOI is a program of the Arizona Department of Education (established [A.R.S. §15-80](#)) and allows approved school districts and charter schools to develop online learning programs. The State Board of Education approves district AOI programs. There were 39 AOI approved [charter schools](#) providing online options for students as of July 2023. Charter schools can be authorized by [multiple entities](#) in the state.

State virtual school?	NO
Multi-district fully online schools?	YES
State approval process for online providers?	NO
State approval process for online courses?	NO

The [Annual Report](#) of the Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction, published in January of each year, provides full- and part-time student enrollment data for all 126 AOI districts and virtual charter schools.

- 93,839 online students for SY 2021-22.
- 121,605 students per SY 2020-21.
- 79,694 students in SY 2019-20.

Primavera Online School is the single largest AOI authorized provider with 17,090 part- and full-time student enrollments in SY 2021-22 after enrolling 16,800 students during the 2020-21 SY. State reporting identifies online students as those who took at least one course through an AOI program. Any student can apply to any approved provider in the state (and to multiple providers) for up to three individual courses or whole programs if the provider has capacity to serve that student.

Student enrollment in district online schools decreased significantly in SY 2021-22 from the pandemic high during the 2020-21 SY per the Superintendent's report.

- 35,784 students for the SY 2021-22
- 65,966 students for the SY 2020-21
- 32,646 enrollments in SY 2019-20

Student enrollment in multi-district full-time online schools decreased but still had a 78% increase over pre-pandemic enrollments.

- 58,055 students for the SY 2021-22
- 65,966 students for the SY 2020-21
- 32,646 student enrollments in the SY 2019-20

There are also consortia, a university-sponsored program, and single district activity in Arizona. Arizona State University Prep Digital is a diploma-granting online K-12 school where students can take a single online course or enroll full-time. It also offers blended and hybrid options. As part of Arizona State University, ASU Prep Digital offers an accelerated path toward college admission and the chance to earn concurrent high school and university credit. ASU Prep Digital served 8,820 full-time students and over 1,500 part-time students in SY 2022-23.

ASU Prep Digital provides [two hybrid options](#). ASU Local has students onsite at a local ASU campus 2 days per week, online 2 days, and the final weekday is a flex day for projects, field trips, or other activities. ASU Experience offers site-based activities on an ASU campus to online students one day per week.

In 2022, the Arizona legislature expanded [Empowerment Scholarship Accounts](#) (ESA) to all students in the state, making the funds available to every family to pursue alternate educational options including instructional models such as microschools. Previously, ESAs were only available to students with special needs. Nearly 68,000 students have participated in the ESA program as of October 2023.

In general, a microschool is a learning pod consisting of small class size (usually fewer than 15 students) of varying ages, with individually designed schedules, curricula, and structures. Sequoia Charter School's [Sequoia Choice](#) program, with one of the largest online enrollments in the state at 9,108 students for the 2021-22 SY, has implemented the microschool model as part of its offerings. Here microschools meet 2-5 days per week. Each microschool is managed by a teacher or guide, with a schedule and curriculum designed to fit the needs of each class.

Many districts in Arizona have online programs for district students. Some of the more established district programs include the following.

- The [Mesa Distance Learning Program](#) serves both Mesa Public Schools students and students from partner districts across the state in grades 4-12.
- [Chandler Online Academy](#) provides online learning for elementary and secondary students.

- [Scottsdale Online Learning](#) is a K-12 program that combines teacher-led and independent study for its K-5 students.
- The Paradise Valley Unified School District's [PVOnline](#) serves students in grades K-12.
- Deer Valley's online academy, [Aspire](#), provides part- and full-time online options for K-12.
- Casa Grande Union High School District [Online Academy](#) has a full-time program that requires students to work in the learning management system for a minimum of 5 hours per school day to receive attendance status. Students are expected to complete six courses per semester.

For details of online learning funding in this state see the DLC's report [A Review of Online Learning Funding](#).

State Policies

No major legislation impacting online and/or blended learning was passed through October 2023.

[HB 2538](#) (2022) expanded Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESA) to all students in the state. Previously, ESAs were only available to students with special needs.

HB 2862 (April 2021) “provides flexibility to schools in meeting statutory instructional time requirements, including a pathway for schools to provide remote instruction without an approved AOI,” per the AZ Department of Education [summary](#).

[ARS §15-701.01\(H\)](#) established AOI and required receiving districts to accept credits earned at a charter or district but allowed the receiving district to determine whether the credit will count as elective or core credit.

[DLC State Profile Key Terms](#)