



## ASCENDER GUIDES



# September



# Table of Contents

September ..... i

September ..... 1

October ..... 3

November ..... 4

December ..... 5

January ..... 6

February ..... 8

March ..... 9

April ..... 10

May ..... 11

June ..... 12

July ..... 13

August ..... 14

Monthly ..... 16

Quarterly ..... 19



This Business Year-at-a-Glance document serves as a suggested timeline for ASCENDER Business processes and tasks that occur throughout the year for a July start fiscal year LEA.

- ☐ Click the tabs above to view the ASCENDER processes that are either due or in progress for that month.
- ☐ Click the Monthly Activities tab to view business activities that occur on a monthly basis.
- ☐ Click the Quarterly Activities tab to view business activities that occur on a quarterly basis (i.e., every three months).

For a complete list of Business tasks or processes for the year (outside of ASCENDER-specific processes and tasks), visit the [TASBO](#) website and search for the Master Calendar worksheet.

If you have a question or suggestion, contact your regional ESC consultant.

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## September

The following business tasks have been identified for September. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [August Accruals](#)
- ☐ [Finance EOY Process](#)
- ☐ [First Payroll of the School Year Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enter campus activity (fund 461) and student activity balances (fund 865), if needed.  <input type="checkbox"/> Begin audit preparations.  <input type="checkbox"/> Review records for retention and filing.  <input type="checkbox"/> Review and verify prior year Near-Final Summary of Finances and TEA settle-up. Also, review the Excess Wealth Cost of Recapture report and settle-up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student data should match PEIMS.</li> <li>• Tax revenue should match the amount reported by the LEA via the TEAL FSP System in August.</li> <li>• Be sure certain staff allotment and transportation allotment have amounts. If zero, the LEA missed the reporting deadlines. Take the appropriate steps to complete the required reporting so that TEA can revise in the spring when the Final SOFs are generated.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal agents should send the estimate of Mid-Year PEIMS 033 records to LEAs to use in reviewing the IDEA_B MOE compliance status.
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Verify the accuracy of payroll distribution and program intent codes (PIC).  <input type="checkbox"/> Import or update employee benefits and verify data for the new plan year (Sep-Aug).  <input type="checkbox"/> Verify the TRS rates and state minimum salaries prior to processing any payrolls.  <input type="checkbox"/> Report new contracts to TRS.  <input type="checkbox"/> ( <b>Recommended</b> ) Perform a direct deposit audit. Print the HRS1650 - Employee Salary Information Report and send to the campuses for signatures.  <input type="checkbox"/> Generate the EEOC-5 report for the pay date closest to October 1 and maintain data for submission at a later time when required. For further information, reference the <a href="#">Federal EEOC Report Overview</a> .

# October

The following business tasks have been identified for October. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In the second year of each biennium, review the pupil projections in the Foundation School Program.  <input type="checkbox"/> Continue the audit tasks.
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work on unique IDs (UID) for employees.  <input type="checkbox"/> File third quarter payroll reports for 941 and unemployment by the appropriate due dates.  <input type="checkbox"/> Generate the EEOC-5 report for the pay date closest to October 1 and maintain data for submission at a later time when required. For further information, reference the <a href="#">Federal EEOC Report Overview</a> .

## PEIMS Business Reminders:

- ☐ Begin reviewing Business elements for the Fall PEIMS Submission.
- ☐ The Fall PEIMS snapshot date is the last Friday in October.
- ☐ Coordinate the timing of the PEIMS fall submission with the PEIMS Coordinator and student campus PEIMS staff.

# November

The following business tasks have been identified for November. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

Application(s)	Task
Payroll	<input type="checkbox"/> Order W-2 and 1099 tax forms, if needed.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Verify access to the Social Security and IRS sites for calendar year-end reporting.
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Transportation Operations report. (Due December 1st.)

## PEIMS Business Reminders:

- ☐ Continue reviewing Business elements for the Fall PEIMS Submission.
- ☐ The Fall PEIMS snapshot date is the last Friday in October.
- ☐ Coordinate the timing of the PEIMS fall submission with the PEIMS Coordinator and student campus PEIMS staff.



# December

The following business tasks have been identified for December. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance, Payroll</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> W-2 preparation: balance payroll for each month, quarter, and the year. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete your LEA's Payroll calendar year-end tasks. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the time and effort documentation for employees who are paid wholly or partially through federal grants, and who may use semi-annual certifications rather than monthly records of time and effort. Perform any required payroll adjustments. <input type="checkbox"/> During the holiday break, monitor incoming mail for unemployment filings in order to allow sufficient time for the LEA to respond.
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Begin preparing for the indirect cost rate application if needed. ( <b>Note:</b> LEAs claiming SHARS/Medicaid reimbursement will usually need to do this.) <input type="checkbox"/> Draw down federal funds to avoid possible high-risk auditee status. (Due by December 31st)

## PEIMS Business Reminders:

- ☐ Finish reviewing Business elements for the Fall PEIMS Submission.
- ☐ The Fall PEIMS snapshot date is the last Friday in October.
- ☐ Coordinate the timing of the Fall PEIMS Submission with the PEIMS Coordinator and student campus PEIMS staff.
- ☐ Complete the Fall PEIMS submission by the appropriate due date in December. Once the final file is submitted, review all of the final reports to ensure that you have an accurate record of submission.
- ☐ Begin working on the Mid-Year PEIMS Submission (Business only).

# January

The following business tasks have been identified for January. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [First Payroll of the Calendar Year Checklist](#)
- ☐ [Process W-2 Forms](#)
- ☐ [Process 1099 Forms](#)
- ☐ [Process 1095 Forms](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the template estimate using first semester data.  <input type="checkbox"/> In odd years, begin bank depository contract renewal or prepare for RFP or RFQ.  <input type="checkbox"/> Complete indirect cost rate application if needed. (Note: LEAs claiming SHARS/Medicaid reimbursement will usually need to do this.)  <input type="checkbox"/> File the Annual Financial Report (audit) with TEA. (Due January 28th.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the audit draft, and pay attention to the items that impact FIRST rating: unmodified audit opinion, no material weaknesses in internal controls, no instances of noncompliance material to financial statements, and positive net assets on the Statement of Net Assets.</li> <li>• Ensure that the board will accept the audit prior to TEA's due date.</li> <li>• Verify if the auditor or LEA will electronically submit the audit to TEA.</li> <li>• Verify if the auditor will send to MAC if the LEA has outstanding bonds. Verify if any other entities should receive a copy of the audit (grant agencies, etc.).</li> <li>• Publish the audit Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances in the local newspaper.</li> <li>• Post audit opening balances, if needed. Review the opening balances and correct them as needed.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the PEIMS Mid-Year submission.  <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal agents should send member districts 033 records to use in reviewing final prior year compliance with IDEA-B MOE.

Application(s)	Task
Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete the W-2 filing to the SSA. (Due by January 31st.)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin processes for ACA 1095 reporting.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete fourth quarter payroll reports for 941 and unemployment.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Compare tax tables to IRS Circular E. After the last December payroll or prior to the first January payroll, upload the new tax tables.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Review the limits in payroll tax tables for Social Security and Medicare wages as published in the IRS Circular E.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Remind employees to file a new W-4 to claim exemption from withholding.</li></ul>

# February

The following business tasks have been identified for February. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [Process 1095 Forms](#)
- ☐ [Process 1099 Forms](#)
- ☐ [Budget Process](#)
- ☐ [Next Year Payroll Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make first payment according to the TEA published calendar (typically by February 15th).  <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the 1099-NEC filing to the IRS by the appropriate due date.  <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the 1099-MISC filing to the IRS by the appropriate due date.  <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the PEIMS Mid-Year resubmission if required.  <input type="checkbox"/> E-Rate submission, check with TEA for the deadline.  <input type="checkbox"/> Make district bond payments by the required dates according to the debt schedule.  <input type="checkbox"/> (If applicable) Transfer funds from Existing Debt Allotment (EDA) or Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) to Interest & Sinking (I&S) account since they will be deposited to the same bank account as Available School Fund (ASF) and Foundation School Program (FSP) payments.  <input type="checkbox"/> Review the IDEA-B MOE compliance status using the TEA template prior to TEA releasing their preliminary reports. Gather information for any exceptions or adjustments that the LEA intends to claim.  <input type="checkbox"/> Review the ESSA MOE compliance status using the TEA template prior to TEA releasing their preliminary reports.
<b>Budget</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop the budget calendar for the upcoming year.  <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare the Budget application for the new school year budget.
<b>Payroll</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete ACA 1095 reporting by the appropriate due date.  <input type="checkbox"/> Begin next year payroll preparations for the new school year salaries.

# March

The following business tasks have been identified for March. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [Process 1099 Forms](#)
- ☐ [Budget Process](#)
- ☐ [Next Year Payroll Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the second payment.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the 1099-MISC filing to the IRS by the appropriate due date.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Child Nutrition Program Annual Financial Report. (Due April 1st.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare the SHARS Cost Report. (Due April 1st.)
Personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created.

# April

The following business tasks have been identified for April. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [Budget Process](#)
- ☐ [Next Year Payroll Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the third payment. <input type="checkbox"/> First quarter payroll reports for 941 and unemployment. <input type="checkbox"/> Review, approve, and submit the SHARS Cost Report. (Due April 1st.) <input type="checkbox"/> Update/prepare the Summary of Finance template for the fourth six weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> Review federal grants for any final amendments needed. Begin planning and application for any new grants in the upcoming school year. <input type="checkbox"/> Review budgeted tax revenue and template estimates using certified estimates. (Due from County Appraisal District (CAD) by April 30th.)
<b>Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide letters of reasonable assurance if used.

# May

The following business tasks have been identified for May. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [Budget Process](#)
- ☐ [Next Year Payroll Process](#)
- ☐ [TRS and Summer School Payments Process](#)
- ☐ [Create Service Records \(After May payroll\)](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the fourth payment.  <input type="checkbox"/> Certify the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) proposal if required.  <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the time and effort documentation for employees who are paid wholly or partially through federal grants, and who may use semi-annual certifications rather than monthly records of time and effort. Perform any required payroll adjustments.  <input type="checkbox"/> After the May payroll is posted, review the budget to ensure that there are adequate funds for the remainder of the year.
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created.  <input type="checkbox"/> Update next year's payroll for staffing changes.  <input type="checkbox"/> Supply next year payroll data to employees who are working on federal grants. Include salary and full benefit costs.  <input type="checkbox"/> Payoff retirees and other departing staff for early payoff if requested.  <input type="checkbox"/> For terminated employees, verify the month that the employee's health coverage will end. If the employee completes the instructional school year, the LEA is required to offer, at the same contribution, through August. If the employee is going to another LEA, it is recommended to coordinate with the new LEA.

# June

The following business tasks have been identified for June. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [Budget Process](#)
- ☐ [Next Year Payroll Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the fifth payment.  <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain the final Child Nutrition Program commodity report for the current school year and record the commodity revenue and expense.  <input type="checkbox"/> Set up new grants as approval notifications are received.
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Update/prepare template using PEIMS data.  <input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created.  <input type="checkbox"/> Report new contracts to TRS.  <input type="checkbox"/> Payoff retirees and other departing staff for early payoff if requested.  <input type="checkbox"/> Review/update the employee handbook/administrative procedures manual as needed.  <input type="checkbox"/> In odd years, complete the bank depository process by TEA deadlines. File any necessary documents with TEA. Reference TEA's website for further information: <a href="https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/financial-compliance">https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/financial-compliance</a>

- ☐ Review/update the investment policy with the board.
- ☐ Review/update the list of providers for investment training with the board.



# July

The following business tasks have been identified for July. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the sixth payment. <input type="checkbox"/> Set up any new grants as approval notifications are received. <input type="checkbox"/> File transportation services route services report. (Due August 1st.) <input type="checkbox"/> Update budget and template estimates for certified values. (Due by July 25th from CAD.)
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Second quarter payroll reports for 941 and unemployment. <input type="checkbox"/> Report new contracts to TRS. <input type="checkbox"/> Payoff any terminations. <input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created.

# August

The following business tasks have been identified for August. Processes that are relevant to your LEA should be initiated or in progress. Use the checklist below to ensure all applicable tasks are addressed.

- ☐ [August Accruals](#)
- ☐ [Finance EOY Process](#)
- ☐ [First Payroll of the School Year Process](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Budget</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the budget is prepared by June 19th and adopted by June 30th. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a public notice.</li> <li>• Calculate No New Revenue Tax Rate, No New Revenue M &amp; O Tax Rate, and Voter-Approval Tax Rate.</li> <li>• The public notice of budget and tax rate adoption must be published in the paper 10-30 days before the board meeting to adopt the budget and tax rate.</li> <li>• Post the required website budget posting (<a href="#">ESC-12 worksheet</a>) at the same time as the notice is published in the paper.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Close books/open the new year.
<b>Finance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excess Wealth districts make the seventh payment.  <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare final budget amendments for the current fiscal year.  <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassify transportation costs from function 34 to function 11 or 36 if needed.  <input type="checkbox"/> Make district bond payments by required dates according to the debt schedule.  <input type="checkbox"/> Submit estimate of tax collections by TEA deadline (typically August 31st) report Sep-Aug or Jul-Jun.

Application(s)	Task
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pay comp time if applicable. (payroll run)  <input type="checkbox"/> Report new contracts to TRS.  <input type="checkbox"/> Update leave on the current year service records if already created.  <input type="checkbox"/> Be sure TRS On-behalf is recorded for the entire year after the final payroll is processed.  <input type="checkbox"/> Accrue salaries through August 31st for 10-month employees who receive their first payment in September.  <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate/update employees about employee handbook and administrative procedures manual.  <input type="checkbox"/> Accrue state revenue and set receivables/deferred revenue from the state.
<b>Security Administration</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inactivate/replace security for non-returning employees in Security Administration.

# Monthly

In addition to the tasks listed on the individual month tabs and the quarterly tab, the following recurring tasks should be addressed monthly, if applicable, throughout the fiscal or school year.

- ☐ [Bank Reconciliation](#)
- ☐ [New Employee Setup](#)
- ☐ [TRS Processing](#)
- ☐ [Process Payroll](#)
- ☐ [Payroll Liability Wire Transfer Transactions](#)
- ☐ [Requisition Process](#)
- ☐ [End-of-Month Closing Checklist](#)

Application(s)	Task
<b>Bank Reconciliation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconcile bank statements to general ledger cash balances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be certain that IRS and TRS withdrawals are displayed on the monthly bank statement. If not, determine if a payment was overlooked.</li> <li>• Investigate any prior month deposits in transit that do not clear.</li> <li>• Review outstanding checks for any items that are old or seem unreasonable.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Reconcile investment account statements to general ledger account balances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare monthly/quarterly investment report for the board. (required by statute)</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate outstanding checks to determine if action is required. <input type="checkbox"/> Reconcile Due To and Due From accounts (126X/217X). <input type="checkbox"/> Reconcile specific general ledger accounts such as "receivables" (12XX).

Application(s)	Task
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verify that all cash receipts are entered for the month.</li> <li>•</li> <li>Pull the TEA payment report and post receipts dated during the current month.</li> <li>•</li> <li>Verify that NSLP breakfast and lunch funds were received (districts only have 60 days to claim after the month ends or will lose that month's child nutrition program reimbursement).</li> <li>•</li> <li>Verify Foundation School Program funds are recorded.</li> <li>•</li> <li>Verify Available School Fund payments are recorded.</li> <li>•</li> <li>Verify other grant receipts are payment report are recorded.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verify that all check payments are entered.</li> <li>•</li> <li>1099 reporting - Obtain W-9 forms for any new vendors.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verify that all fund transfers are recorded.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Record interest earned on bank accounts and investments.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Record received commodities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review general ledger accounts for any expenditures with 00 for function; 000 for organization, or 00 for program intent code.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review and validate remaining balances in the payroll clearing fund (163).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Report federal and state grant expenditures to the LEA to file for reimbursement.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review board reports (no detail) for percent expended compared to % expected for this month of the year; if any vary more than 5% above or below, review the detail line item budgets to determine the cause and whether an item was incorrectly coded.</li> <li>•</li> <li>Prepare budget amendments as needed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep the superintendent and the board informed of finance issues.</li> <li> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verify time and effort and make any necessary payroll adjustments for those employees who are required to track time and effort monthly.</li> <li> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor cash balances (daily) to ensure all LEA funds are secured.</li> <li> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawdown federal funds monthly as needed to avoid possible high-risk auditee status.</li> </ul>

Application(s)	Task
<b>Payroll &amp; Personnel</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The TRS ActiveCare payment is due through TEXNET the 15th of the month. If the 15th of the month is not a business day, payment is due by the last business day prior to the 15th.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Work on staff unique IDs (UID).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New Hire Reporting - Generate the <a href="#">Personnel &gt; Reports &gt; Personnel Reports &gt; New Hire Report</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verify that all payroll transactions are recorded or interfaced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular payroll(s) is/are processed and interfaced.</li> <li>• Supplemental payroll(s) is/are processed and interfaced.</li> <li>• Payroll transfer has been automatically posted by the system or manually posted.</li> <li>• Payroll deduction checks are processed and/or posted.</li> <li>• TRS wires are submitted and recorded by the 6th of the following month.</li> <li>• IRS wires are submitted and recorded immediately after payroll. Reference the IRS website for further information: <a href="#">Publication 15 (Circular E)</a>.</li> <li>• TRS reports are filed and the status is complete.</li> <li>• TRS On-Behalf calculations are recorded monthly or annually if preferred.</li> <li>• Other payroll-related items such as recognizing rent income are posted.</li> <li>• Verify all new hire reporting is done.</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Run the <a href="#">Payroll Accrual Variance Extract</a>. This extract can be run before any payrolls are processed for a new school year or during the school year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reconcile accrued payroll to 216X (accrued wages) and 22XX (accrued benefits).</p>

# Quarterly

In addition to the tasks listed on the individual month tabs and the monthly tab, the following tasks should be addressed quarterly, if applicable, throughout the fiscal or school year.

- ☐ Prepare the 941 report to send to IRS by the last day of the month. Retain the signed copy for your records.
- ☐ Prepare and file unemployment reports by TASB deadline or TWC deadline.
- ☐ Review the status of State Allotment Monitoring Program (SAMP) compliance for the current year. Reference the TEA website for further information:  
<https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/financial-compliance/state-allotment-programs>.

