



State Accountability System Profiles: Colorado

Overview of State Accountability System

This summary provides an overview of the Colorado accountability system using the components of the *Roadmap for Next-Generation Accountability Systems* (Council for Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2011b) as a framework.¹

Crosswalk of Roadmap Components and State Accountability System

Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
1. Performance Objectives of College and Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common Core State Standards, adopted August 2010 (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011a)• Until 2012, all Colorado schools are required to adopt the Colorado Model Content Standards, after which they will be required to use the New Colorado Academic Standards that will align to the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) (Colorado Department of Education [CDE] 2011c, CDE 2011h, CDE 2011i).

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Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
<p>2. Measures of Student Performance Outcomes</p>	<p><u>Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado student performance will be measured, using TCAP, beginning in spring 2012 (CDE, 2011c). • Students are tested in reading, writing, and math in Grades 3-10 and science in Grades 5, 8, 10 (CDE, n.d.a). • Eleventh-grade students are required to participate in Colorado ACT (CDE, 2011n). The State Board of Education will determine high school graduation requirements on or before December 15, 2011 (CDE, 2011k). • Colorado is currently a part of both the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which are funded to develop a set of standardized assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards that will be ready for administration during the 2014–15 school year. (State of Washington n.d., PARCC, 2011, CDE 2011d) <p><u>School and District:</u></p> <p>Annually, CDE reviews each school and district’s performance, based on the School Performance Framework. The framework has four performance indicators that are assigned value to achieve the final accountability determination in the following way (CDE 2011a, CDE 2011g, pp. 6,18):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Achievement: How students are performing on the state's proficiency tests; the percentage of students proficient or advanced on Colorado's Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), CSAPA (reading, writing, math and science), Lectura, and Escritura. • Academic Growth: Student academic progress, using the Colorado Growth Model, which reflects the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Median Growth: The academic progress of an individual student compared statewide to other students with similar CSAP score histories in a particular subject area. ▪ Adequate Growth: The level of growth that is adequate for the typical (median) student in this school to reach proficiency in three years or by the 10th grade, whichever comes first, as measured by the CSAP. • Academic Growth Gaps: The academic progress of disadvantaged student subgroups and students below proficient. Data is disaggregated by student subgroups (free/reduced price lunch, minority students, students with disabilities, English language learners (ELLs), and students who scored at the below proficient level) and shows their median and adequate growth. • Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness: The preparedness of students for college or careers upon graduation—graduation rates (80 percent or above), dropout rates (at or below state average), and average Colorado ACT (at or above state averages) composite scores.

Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
3. Determinations	<p><u>Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student scores on CSAP (e.g. TCAP) are categorized into four performance levels [cut scores] for Grades 3– 10 and for subject areas—reading, writing, mathematics, and science (CDE, 2011o; CDE, 2011f). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced: Students who have success with the most challenging content of the Colorado Model Content Standards. These students answer most of the test questions correctly, including the most challenging questions. ▪ Proficient: Students who have success with the challenging content of the Colorado Model Content Standards. These students answer most of the test questions correctly, but they may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content. ▪ Partially Proficient: Students who have limited success with the challenging content of the Colorado Model Content Standards. These students may demonstrate inconsistent performance, answer many of the test questions correctly, but are generally less successful with questions that are most challenging. ▪ Unsatisfactory: Students who have little success with the challenging content of the Colorado Model Content Standards. <p><u>Schools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the state, districts are responsible for accrediting each of their schools (see the process explained in the following district section) and may also adopt local criteria in addition to the four performance indicators discussed earlier. (CDE 2011g, p. 16). • Schools are required to meet federal adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements. A school must have a 95-percent participation rate on the reading and math state assessments, meet or exceed performance expectation on state reading and math assessments, reach safe harbor (a 10-percent reduction in the percentage of students scoring non-proficient from the prior year), or match safe harbor (a 10-percent reduction in the percentage of students, among students continuously enrolled and tested in concurrent years, scoring non-proficient). In addition, elementary and middle schools must meet advanced reading and math targets, and high schools must meet graduation rate targets (2011e).

Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
3. Determinations, continued	<p><u>Districts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the state level, district determinations are made by CDE and are based on district performance on the four indicators of the District Performance Framework. Performance on the four indicators is aggregated for an overall evaluation score. Districts are also required to meet a school safety requirement, compliance with budgeting, accounting and reporting requirements, and a 95-percent test participation rate. (CDE, 2011j, CDE 2011g). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Districts can earn between 1–4 points on each component within the four performance indicators: Exceeds (4 points), meets (3 points), approaching (2 points), and does not meet (1 point). Ratings are assigned to each performance category. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Achievement (reading, writing, mathematics, science), 16 points ○ Academic Growth (reading, writing, math), 12 points ○ Academic Growth Gaps (subject areas such as reading, writing, math x gap such as free/reduced price lunch, minority students, students with disabilities, ELLs, students needing to catch up), 60 points ○ Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (graduation rate, dropout rate, Colorado ACT composite score), 12 points ▪ Percentage of points earned (points earned divided by the points eligible) is multiplied by the weighted performance indicator score (academic achievement—15 points; academic growth—35 points; academic growth gaps gap—15 points; postsecondary and workforce readiness—35 points) to determine a weighted performance indicator score.* ▪ The weighted performance indicator scores are summed to determine the district’s overall framework score. * Elementary and middle schools do not have postsecondary and workforce readiness ratings (weighted: achievement–25, growth–50, gap–25) • Districts are required to meet federal AYP requirements. For a district to achieve AYP, it must meet the requirements defined under Determinations in the school section.
4. Transparent Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SchoolView (schoolview.org) was designed by the CDE to be highly interactive and encourage educators to explore their student and school-level performance differences. The CO SEA believes that this website will strengthen its schools' capacity to understand their own data and make better decisions. It includes K–12 data on student achievement and growth, district and school annual accountability determinations, standardized assessment summaries and disaggregated performance data, the Colorado Growth Model analyses, and other contextual school information, including postsecondary and workforce components and safety indicators (CDE, 2011i).

Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
<p>5. Diagnostic Reviews and Classifications</p>	<p><u>Schools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually, schools are given a plan type assignment based on their overall framework scores [cut scores] (CDE 2011g). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary and middle schools can be assigned to one of the following categories: performance at or above 59 percent; improvement at or above 47 percent but below 59 percent, priority improvement at or above 37 percent but below 47 percent, or turnaround below 37 percent. ▪ High schools are assigned improvement plans based on the following breakdown: performance at or above 60 percent, improvement at or above 47 percent but below 60 percent, priority improvement at or above 33 percent but below 47 percent, and turnaround below 33 percent. • After five consecutive school years of a priority improvement plan or turnaround plan, districts are required to restructure or close schools (CDE 2011g, p. 17). <p><u>Districts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts are accredited annually, based on overall framework scores [cut scores]. Districts can be assigned to one of the following categories (CDE 2011g): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accredited with Distinction (80 percent of possible points): Districts meet or exceed state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators; they are required to adopt and implement performance plans. ▪ Accredited (at or above 64 percent but below 80 percent): Districts meet state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators; they are required to adopt and implement performance plans. ▪ Accredited with Improvement Plan (at or above 52 percent but below 64 percent): Districts have not met state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators; they are required to adopt and implement improvement plans. ▪ Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan (at or above 42 percent but below 52 percent): Districts have not met state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators; they are required to adopt and implement priority improvement plans. ▪ Accredited with Turnaround Plan (below 42 percent): Districts have not met state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators; with the commissioner’s approval, they are required to adopt and implement turnaround plans. • After five consecutive school years with the Accredited Priority Improvement Plan and/or Accredited with Turnaround Plan designation, a districts’ accreditation is removed. (CDE 2011g, pg 8)

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<p>6. Supports and Interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of 2011, all schools and districts are required to submit and follow unified improvement plans, regardless of accreditation category (CDE 2011b, CDE 2011g, pp. 13, 22). Each plan addresses the following (CDE, 2011p): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trends in school or district performance on the four indicators. ▪ Root-cause analysis of the identified performance challenges. ▪ Performance targets in the four indicators. ▪ Specific strategies to address the root causes of challenges identified. ▪ Identifying local, state, and federal resources to implement the specific strategies. ▪ Interim measures and benchmarks to assess progress. (CDE, n.d.b.) • State-level staff will provide online office hours multiple times a week to provide access to educators for questions regarding implementation of the new academic content standards. (CDE, 2011m). <p><u>Schools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools with priority improvement and turnaround plans: The state review panel will review and provide recommendations to local school boards with turnaround plans, and, at the discretion of the commissioner, schools with priority improvement plans (CDE 2011g, pp. 15, 25). • Schools with performance and improvement plans: Local school boards are encouraged to review and approve plans (CDE 2011g, p. 26). <p><u>Districts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts with priority improvement and turnaround plans: The state review panel will review and provide recommendations to local school boards with turnaround plans, and, at the discretion of the commissioner, districts with priority improvement plans (CDE 2011g, pp. 15, 25). • Districts with performance and improvement plans: CDE reviews plans to confirm that federal planning requirements are met (CDE 2011g, p. 15).

Roadmap Component	Description of State Approach
<p>7. Continuous Improvement</p>	<p><u>Schools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School accountability committees provide recommendations to principals concerning spending and preparation and implementation of the school’s improvement plan (CDE 2011g, pp. 4, 20–22) • If a district disagrees with the CDE accreditation assignment given to one of the district’s schools, the district may submit additional evidence on behalf of the school for review and potential category reassignment (CDE 2011e, p. 17). <p><u>Districts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District accountability committees provide recommendations to local school boards about spending district and federal funds and preparation and implementation of district improvement plans (CDE 2011g, p. 4, 11–12). • If a district disagrees with the CDE accreditation assignment given to that district, the district may submit additional evidence for review and potential category reassignment (CDE 2011g, p. 7). <p><u>Overall Accountability System:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information was found on state-level efforts to continually evaluate and improve the overall accountability system.

State Snapshot

Wisconsin and Colorado Public School Enrollment in 2009–10

	Enrollment in					
	<i>US + DC Public Schools, 2009–10</i>		<i>Wisconsin Public Schools, 2009–10</i>		<i>Colorado Public Schools, 2009–10</i>	
Total Number of Operational Schools	98,817		2,242		1,793	
Total Number of Students	49,373,307		872,436		832,368	
<i>Student Enrollment by Gender</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>
Male	25,058,982	51.4	449,894	51.6	426,619	51.3
Female	23,712,836	48.6	422,542	48.4	405,749	48.7
<i>Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>
American Indians/ Alaska Natives	588,507	1.2	13,045	1.5	9,604	1.2
Asian/Pacific Islanders	2,465,167	5.1	32,151	3.7	30,820	3.7
Black	8,197,317	16.8	91,069	10.4	49,413	5.9
Hispanic	10,796,257	22.1	73,472	8.4	237,797	28.6
White	26,393,240	54.1	662,699	76.0	504,734	60.6
Two/More Races	335,350	0.7				
<i>Students in Special Programs</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>
Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	22,423,407	45.4	323,634	37.1	319,404	38.4
Limited English Proficiency (English Language Learner)	4,723,926	9.6	45,168	5.2	95,141	11.4
Individualized Education Plan	6,450,858	13.1	125,503	14.4	83,765	10.1
<i>Student Enrollment by Geographic Locale</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>

City	14,431,591	29.4	239,745	27.5	278,635	33.5
Rural	11,933,156	24.3	243,543	27.9	192,473	23.1
Suburb	16,870,809	34.3	208,010	23.8	269,952	32.4
Town	5,900,330	12.0	181,023	20.8	90,846	10.9
<i>Number of Schools by Geographic Locale</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Percentage of Schools</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Percentage of Schools</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Percentage of Schools</i>
City	26,101	26.2	546	24.3	511	28.5
Rural	32,273	32.4	873	38.8	586	32.7
Suburb	27,195	27.3	401	17.8	468	26.1
Town	14,158	14.2	430	19.1	229	12.8

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.).

Additional Resources

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