

## Review of Key Standards and Requirements in Colorado

What follows is a number of standards and requirements for Colorado students, schools and districts, some of which have been recently updated. This list is not meant to be exhaustive of all requirements that the state requires schools and districts to fulfill, but instead should be considered a refresher or reminder. All language is taken directly from the Colorado Department of Education's website ([www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)) and the available materials it provides.

### **Minimum # of Days of Instruction**

Every child who has attained the age of six years and is under the age of seventeen years shall attend public school for at least one thousand fifty-six hours if a secondary school pupil or nine hundred sixty-eight hours if an elementary school pupil during each school year; except that in no case shall a school or schools be in session for fewer than one hundred sixty days without the specific prior approval of the commissioner of education.

### **CAP4K**

#### ***School Readiness***

In December 2008, the State Board of Education adopted the following description of school readiness as part of CAP4K:

*School Readiness describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten. School Readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.*

Using this description, school districts are required to assess incoming kindergartener and/or first grade children on the following indicators of school readiness within the first 60 days of the school year:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Content Knowledge
- Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

The State Board of Education has approved a menu of school readiness assessments: Teaching Strategies GOLD, Riverside Early Assessments of Learning (REAL), Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-K 2015), and the Teaching Strategies GOLD Survey. Districts determine to what degree, if at all, they assess additional areas within the tool beyond the minimal legislative requirements. Finally, districts may choose to implement school readiness assessments after the first 60 days, in accordance with local needs and goals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CDE website, School Readiness

Districts are also required to have individualized school readiness plans for every kindergartner, and are to be informed by a State Board approved school readiness assessment tool; however, CAP4K does not have specific requirements for the content of school readiness plans.

### ***New Content Standards<sup>2</sup>***

As part of CAP4K, the state is required to regularly review and revise the Colorado Academic Standards. In 2009 and 2010, new standards were adopted in the following areas:

- Dance
- Drama and Theatre Arts
- Comprehensive Health & Physical Education
- English Language Proficiency
- Mathematics
- Music
- Reading, Writing and Communicating
- Science
- Social Studies
- Visual Arts
- World Languages

The first review and revision cycle is set to conclude on or before July 1, 2018 and every six years thereafter.

School districts must ensure their standards meet or exceed the state standards, at a minimum, in those subject matter areas. Additionally, districts are expected to incorporate Postsecondary Readiness and 21st Century Skills- critical thinking and reasoning; information literacy; collaboration; self-direction; innovation; and analysis and interpretation skills- into all areas where appropriate.

### ***Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness***

The definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness (PWR) jointly adopted on June 30, 2009 by the Colorado State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education is as follows:

*“Postsecondary and workforce readiness” describes the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential for high school graduates to be prepared to enter college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy. The description assumes students have developed consistent intellectual growth throughout their high school career as a result of academic work that is increasingly challenging, engaging, and coherent.*

Postsecondary education and workforce readiness means that before graduating high school students are ready and able to demonstrate the following without the need for remediation:

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<sup>2</sup> CDE website, Colorado Academic Standards

1. Content knowledge in the areas of (1) literacy; (2) math; (3) science; (4) social sciences; and (5) the arts and humanities.
2. Learning and life skills in the areas of (1) critical thinking and problem-solving; (2) finding and using information/information technology; (3) creativity and innovation; (4) global and cultural awareness; (5) civic responsibility; (6) work ethic; (7) personal responsibility; (8) communication; and (9) collaboration.

Students will be assessed in these areas and the state is currently determining what this assessment or these assessments will be. Once the assessment system has been identified, CAP4K calls for the State Board and Colorado Commission on Higher Education to review and consider the state’s graduation guidelines, criteria for endorsed diplomas and alignment with the higher education admission placement tests.

### ***Assessments<sup>3</sup>***

The state was also required to revise state assessments in conjunction with the new content standards. As such, Colorado currently requires the following state assessments:

- Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Science/ CoAlt Science in grades 5, 8, and 11
- CMAS Social Studies/ CoAlt Social Studies sampled in grades 4,7 and 11
- PARCC English Language Arts/ CoAlt DLM in grades 3 through 9
- PARCC Math/ CoAlt DLM in grades 3 through 9
- PSAT/SAT for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades
- WIDA-ACCESS Placement

Additional assessments include the Colorado PSAT 10 in 10th grade and Colorado SAT in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Assessments specific to School Readiness and the READ Act are noted separately in the appropriate section.

### **READ Act<sup>4</sup>**

The Colorado Reading To Ensure Academic Development Act (Colorado READ Act) was passed by the Colorado Legislature during the 2012 legislative session. The READ Act repeals the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA) as of July 1, 2013, keeping many of the elements of CBLA such as a focus on K-3 literacy, assessment, and individual plans for students reading below grade level. The READ Act differs from CBLA by focusing on students identified as having a significant reading deficiency, delineating requirements for parent communication, and providing funding to support intervention.

Per the rules for the administration of the READ Act from the State Board of Education, most recently amended in March 2016:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> CDE website, Assessment Unit

<sup>4</sup> CDE website, READ Act

1. All students in grades K-3 shall be assessed with a State Board approved interim reading assessment (Aimswest, DIBELS Next, IDEL Spanish, FAST, i Ready - ISIP ER Spanish, PALS Español, and STAR Early Learning). For students in grades 1-3, a student shall be assessed on a State Board approved interim reading assessment within 30 calendar days of enrollment; for students in kindergarten this administration should occur during the first 90 days of the school year. If a LEA administers the State Board approved interim reading assessment within the first 60 days of the school year, it is not required to administer the literacy component of the school readiness assessment.
  
2. If, based on grade-level cut-scores on the State Board approved interim reading assessment in a specific school year, a teacher finds that a student demonstrates reading competency appropriate for his or her grade level, the LEA is not required to administer the State Board approved interim reading assessments to the student for the remainder of the specific school year. For students who score at or below the cut-off score for a Significant Reading Deficiency, an LEA will:
  - a. Administer a State Board approved diagnostic assessment within 60 calendar days of the previous interim assessment to identify the student’s specific skill deficiencies in one or more of the components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, oral reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
  - b. Diagnostic assessment information shall inform the development of a student’s individualized development plan (READ plan). As appropriate, A LEA local education may integrate into a student’s IEP or Individualized Readiness Plan intervention instruction and strategies to address the student’s reading deficiencies in lieu of a READ plan.
  - c. Monitor their ongoing progress by administering the selected State Board approved interim assessment periodically throughout the school year until a student demonstrates grade level proficiency and is removed from a READ plan.
  - d. Collect a body of evidence to demonstrate they are making sufficient progress to meet grade level or state approved standards.

Districts and schools will be held accountable for student progress in the Performance Frameworks and be expected to address requirements in their Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs).

*Advancement to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade*

Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, if a student is completing third grade and the school personnel or parent decides he/she will advance even though the student has a significant reading deficiency, the decision is subject to the approval of the superintendent (or designee). If the superintendent (or designee) does not approve the advancement decision, the student will not advance. After the decision is made, a subsequent letter to the parent must state the basis for the decision. Districts must include the statement in the student’s

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<sup>5</sup> CDE website, READ Act, State Board of Education, Rules for the Administration of the READ Act

permanent academic record and remove it when he/she achieves reading competency. Superintendents have the ability to decide whether or not a student should advance at any grade level regardless of the reason.<sup>6</sup>

### **Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)<sup>7</sup>**

Originally required as part of legislation in 2009, and ICAP requirements went through a “refresh” in 2014. Per CDE’s website, an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) begins in ninth-grade as an annual process (schools can voluntarily choose to begin ICAP in sixth-grade) that addresses: individual/self-discovery, career exploration, academic planning and personal financial literacy. Further an ICAP is:

1. An expectation for high school graduation beginning in the 2014-15 academic year with graduation guidelines.
2. A key element of PWR that many districts and high school reference as a tool within their unified improvement plan (UIP).
3. Required for all students and reinforced by programs, including concurrent enrollment, Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT) and initial career and technical education (CTE)
4. Connected with the Colorado Academic Standards through the academic and 21st century skills; components.
5. Embedded in multiple educator effectiveness rubrics as a student artifact and educator process.
6. Benchmarked by employers; companies across Colorado continually reinforce their high expectations of student’s ability to articulate their transferable skills.
7. Connected with individualized education programs (IEP), advanced learning plans (ALP) and career and technical education and integrated with students’ industry career pathways.

Each student’s ICAP can be in an electronic or paper format and should be saved with the student’s record.

### **Graduation Guidelines<sup>8</sup>**

In May 2013, the Colorado State Board of Education adopted the graduation guidelines which constitute minimum competency levels in math, English, science and social studies that graduating students need to have met to be considered postsecondary and workforce ready. The graduation guidelines are presented as a menu of options for each content area, such as meeting certain levels on state assessments, ACT, AP/IB, or ASVAB, obtaining a minimum grade in a concurrent enrollment course, successfully completing a student capstone or earning an industry certificate. The specifics of what student capstones or industry certificates will look like are still being developed.

The following tables from CDE’s Graduation Guidelines fact sheet presents the established graduation guidelines:

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<sup>6</sup> CDE website, READ Act, READ ACT Pamphlet

<sup>7</sup> CDE website, ICAP

<sup>8</sup> CDE website, Graduation Guidelines

ACCUPLACER	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
62 on Reading Comprehension	61 on Elementary Algebra
ACCUPLACER is a computerized test that assesses reading, writing, math and computer skills. The results of the assessment, in conjunction with a student's academic background, goals and interests, are used by academic advisors and counselors to place students in a college courses that match their skill levels.	
ACT	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
18 on ACT English	19 on ACT Math
ACT is a national college admissions exam. It measures four subjects - English, reading, math and science. The highest possible score for each subject is 36.	
ACT Compass	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
79	63
The ACT COMPASS is a computerized test that helps colleges evaluate students' skills and place them in appropriate courses. It offers tests in reading, writing, math, and English as a second language.	
ACT WorkKeys - National Career Readiness Certificate	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
Bronze or higher	Bronze or higher
ACT WorkKeys is an assessment that tests students' job skills in applied reading, writing, mathematics and 21st century skills. Scores are based on job profiles that help employers select, hire, train, develop and retain a high-performance workforce. Students who score at the bronze level (at least 3) in applied mathematics, mapping and reading earn the ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate.	
Advanced Placement	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
2	2
AP exams test students' ability to perform at a college level. Districts choose which AP exams will fulfill this menu option. Scores range from 1 to 5 (highest).	
ASVAB	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
31	31
The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a comprehensive test that helps determine students' eligibility and suitability for careers in the military. Students who score at least 31 are eligible for service (along with other standards that include physical condition and personal conduct). Students who take the ASVAB are not required to enlist in the military.	

Concurrent Enrollment	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
Passing grade per district and higher education policy	Passing grade per district and higher education policy
Concurrent enrollment provides students the opportunity to enroll in postsecondary courses, simultaneously earning high school and college credit. School districts and institutions of higher education each determine passing grades for credit. A passing grade is determined by district and higher education policy for concurrent enrollment. An eligible concurrent enrollment course is 1) the pre-requisite directly prior to a credit-bearing course or 2) a credit-bearing course.	
District Capstone	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
Individualized	Individualized
A capstone is the culminating exhibition of a student's project or experience that demonstrates academic and intellectual learning. Capstone projects are district determined and often include a portfolio of a student's best work.	
Industry Certificate	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
Individualized	Individualized
Industry certificates are credentials recognized by business and industry. They are district determined, measure a student's competency in an occupation, and they validate a knowledge base and skills that show mastery in a particular industry.	
International Baccalaureate	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
4	4
IB exams assess students enrolled in the official IB Diploma Programme. Courses are offered only at authorized IB World Schools. Scores range from 1 to 7 (highest).	
SAT	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
430	460
The SAT is a college entrance exam that is accepted or required at nearly all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. The current SAT includes sections on reading, writing and math. The highest possible score for each section is 800.	
Collaboratively-developed, standards-based performance assessment	
<b>English</b>	<b>Math</b>
State-wide scoring criteria	State-wide scoring criteria
<i>(In development)</i>	

Local school boards must establish high school graduation requirements that meet or exceed the Colorado Graduation Guidelines for the graduating class of 2021. School districts may offer some or all of the state menu options, may raise a cut score on an included assessment and may add graduation requirements in other content areas. Graduation Guidelines begin with the implementation of: Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP), Colorado Academic Standards for all content areas, including a course in Civics, and 21st century skills.

*Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Endorsed Diploma*

In August 2013 the Colorado State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education jointly approved and adopted the criteria for students to receive a PWR Endorsed Diploma. According to policy language the PWR endorsed diploma guarantees that students meet "minimum academic qualifications for

admission to, and to be eligible, subject to additional institutional review of other admission and placement qualifications, for placement into credit-bearing courses at all open, modified open, or moderately selective public institutions of higher education in Colorado, as well as to receive priority consideration for admission into Colorado’s selective and highly selective institutions.”<sup>9</sup>

It important to note that the endorsed diploma is not required and local adoption is voluntary. If locally adopted, a student would need to meet the following readiness indicators to receive an endorsed diploma:

1. Student is college ready in Math and English Language Arts, as demonstrated by meeting Higher Education Admissions Requirements (HEAR) for course credits, and meeting certain assessment benchmarks that indicate the student will not require remediation for higher education credit-bearing courses in math or literacy;
2. Student completes ICAP;
3. Student demonstrates 21st Century Skills (Information Literacy, Invention, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Self-Direction) in coursework and through high quality extracurricular activities; and
4. Student demonstrates mastery of academic content in three content areas.

*Higher Education Admission Requirements*

The following chart presents the current Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR) which are entry requirements for students planning to attend any of Colorado’s public four-year colleges or universities.<sup>10</sup>

<b>Existing HEAR and Alternatives</b>						
	English	Mathematics	Social Science	Natural/Physical Science	Foreign Language	Electives
HEAR (Academic course units must total 17)	4	4	3	3	1	2
Remedial	ACT: Writing: 18 Reading: 17  SAT: Writing: 440 Reading: 430  Accuplacer: Sent Skills 95 Rdg Comp 80	ACT: 19  SAT: 470  Accuplacer: Intermediate Algebra 85	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Course Equivalent	ENG 090 = 4 years	MAT 090 = 3 years MAT 106 = 4 years	N/A	N/A	ACTFL = Novice-Mid	N/A
Course Completion Examples*	ENG 121	MAT 120	PSY 101 HIS 101	BIO 111	SPA 101 FRE 111	Combination

<sup>9</sup> CDE website, Colorado’s Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) High School Diploma Endorsement Criteria

<sup>10</sup> CDE website, Colorado’s Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) High School Diploma Endorsement Criteria

## **Concurrent Enrollment**

In May 2009, the Colorado State Legislature passed HB09-1319 and SB09-285 (“Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act”). “The collective intent is to broaden access to and improve the quality of concurrent enrollment programs, improve coordination between institutions of secondary education and institutions of higher education, and ensure financial transparency and accountability.”<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the legislation created the Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT) program which would allow eligible students to be retained for a “5th year” in high school during which they can take classes at a qualified postsecondary institution.

In order to comply with this legislation, districts are required to:

- Enter into a cooperative agreement with a qualified institution of higher education to operate a concurrent enrollment program.
- Reimburse concurrent courses at the in-state (“resident”) community college tuition rate and all concurrently enrolled students will be classified as Colorado residents for tuition setting purposes.
- Allow students to concurrently enroll into any career and technical education course, certificate program, community college course and traditional college course, at a qualifying institution.
- Ensure that all college credit hours earned concurrently apply toward the students’ high school graduation requirements as defined in the students’ academic plan.<sup>12</sup>

In order to be eligible for the ASCENT program, students must meet the following requirements: have an ICAP in place, have completed or are on schedule to complete at least 12 credit hours (semester hours or equivalent) of postsecondary course work prior to the completion of twelfth-grade year; is not in need of basic skills coursework as defined by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education’s remedial education policy; has been selected for participation in the ASCENT program by a high school principal or equivalent school administrator; has satisfied the minimum prerequisites for the course before enrollment in the course; and has not previously participated in ASCENT.<sup>13</sup>

## **Requirements for Gifted Students**

Under the Exceptional Children’s Education Act (ECEA) districts are required to provide education services for gifted students who are” between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs.”<sup>14</sup>

### *Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs)*<sup>15</sup>

Starting in kindergarten through high school, students identified as gifted will have an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The ALP is an annual collaborative review process involving teachers, parents and students which

<sup>11</sup> CDE website, “Concurrent Enrollment Fact Sheet.”

<sup>12</sup> CDE website, “Concurrent Enrollment Fact Sheet.”

<sup>13</sup> CDE website, “Concurrent Enrollment Fact Sheet.”

<sup>14</sup> Exceptional Children’s Education Act (ECEA)

<sup>15</sup> CDE website, Gifted and Talented Education

“monitors student success, makes recommendations for pacing, selection of courses, extension options, social-emotional growth and extracurricular activities to maximize potential.” Further the process will aide students in “understanding academic, affective and behavioral strengths and needs; making decisions about goals and content extensions; becoming a self-directed learner; and using self-advocacy skills.” For high school students, the ALP may be combined with an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) if all contents of the ALP are inclusive in the ICAP, including achievement and affective goals.

## **Educator Effectiveness**

SB 10-191 requirements for the evaluation of educator effectiveness include:<sup>16</sup>

- Annual evaluations for all principals/assistant principals, teachers and specialized service professionals
- Evaluation based on statewide Quality Standards defining what it means to be an effective teacher, principal or specialized service professional; the professional practice Quality Standards account for half of an educator's annual evaluation
- The other half of an educator's annual evaluation is based on the Quality Standard that measures student learning/outcomes over time
- Non-probationary status is earned after three consecutive years of demonstrated effectiveness
- Non-probationary status is lost after two consecutive years of less than effective ratings
- As of July 2013, all Colorado districts and BOCES must have implemented an evaluation system that aligns with the educator quality standards and the State Board Rules. Districts will provide assurance that they are implementing the state model system or a locally-developed system that meets all statutory and regulatory requirements; assurances will be collected annually.

Also, per the more recently passed HB 15-1323, beginning with the 2015-16 school year, and in subsequent years, local boards may use statewide assessment data as a measure of student learning for that year’s evaluation rating only if the data is available two weeks prior to last class day of the school year. If the local board does not receive the data in time to use it in the evaluation report prepared for the school year in which the assessments are administered, the local board must use alternate measures of student learning. If growth, based on state assessments, is not available prior to the last two weeks of the school-year, the local board must then use that statewide assessment data as a measure in the educator’s evaluation the following school year. For educators who are new to a district, state growth measures from the prior year will not be available.<sup>17</sup>

## **Accountability**<sup>18</sup>

The Colorado Department of Education originally established a system of accountability through educational accreditation in 1998 to comply with House Bill 98-1267. The State Board revised the accreditation rules in May 2009 under the directive of SB 09-163 to emphasize student results, particularly focusing on student growth and postsecondary-readiness, and to improve and streamline the accreditation process for schools and districts across the state. The purposes of accreditation are numerous and include aligning conflicting accountability

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<sup>16</sup> CDE, SB 10-191

<sup>17</sup> CDE website, Educator Effectiveness

<sup>18</sup> CDE website, Acco

systems, improving the reporting of performance data, creating a clear, fair, and effective support and intervention system, and enhancing oversight of improvement efforts. New rules created by CDE are further designed to make explicit links between school accreditation and improvement planning.

Accreditation is based upon the following Performance Framework Indicators:

1. Achievement
2. Growth
3. Gaps
4. Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

### *District Accreditation*

The District Performance Framework assigns to each district one of five accreditation categories:

1. Accredited with Distinction: the district meets or exceeds statewide attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a Performance Plan.
2. Accredited: the district meets statewide attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a Performance Plan.
3. Accredited with Improvement Plan: the district is required to adopt and implement an Improvement Plan.
4. Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan: the district is required to adopt and implement a Priority Improvement Plan.
5. Accredited with Turnaround Plan: the district is required to adopt and implement a Turnaround Plan.

After CDE has made their initial accreditation assignment, districts will be given the opportunity to appeal. Finalized accreditation levels will result in districts receiving varying degrees of support from the state. Districts that are accredited but require an improvement plan must develop and implement a correction plan with specific goals, actions, timelines, and resources for improvement. Districts in the lowest two categories will also receive targeted resources from the state including: focused technical assistance, grants, periodic reviews, planning support, implementation follow-up and evaluation (process and outcomes).

Further, the Education Accountability Act of 2009 states that a district or the Institute may not remain Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan or Accredited with Turnaround Plan for longer than five consecutive years before the State Board removes the district's or Institute's accreditation. The calculation of the five consecutive years begins July 1 of the summer immediately following the fall in which the district/Institute is notified that it is Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan or Accredited with Turnaround Plan.

The following table from CDE details this accountability clock sequence:<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> CDE website, "Priority Improvement and Turnaround Districts and Schools: A Supplement to the CDE District Accountability Handbook" (updated September 2015)

**Accountability Clock Sequence for School Districts Based on the Accountability Pause in HB15-1323**

If, on July 1, 2015, a district is entering:	Then on July 1, 2016, district will remain in:	On July 1, 2017, district may enter:	On July 1, 2018, district may enter:	On July 1, 2019, district may enter:
<b>Year 2</b>	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Year 3</b>	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Loss of accreditation
<b>Year 4</b>	Year 4	Year 5	Loss of accreditation	-
<b>Year 5</b>	Year 5	Loss of accreditation	-	-

*School Accreditation*

The School Performance Framework assigns to each school one of four plan types:

1. Performance Plan: the school meets or exceeds statewide attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a Performance Plan.
2. Improvement Plan: the school is required to adopt and implement an Improvement Plan.
3. Priority Improvement Plan: the school is required to adopt and implement a Priority Improvement Plan.
4. Turnaround Plan: the school is required to adopt and implement a Turnaround.

Districts are responsible for reviewing school improvement plans and providing support for school improvement efforts.

The Education Accountability Act of 2009 outlines similar consequences for schools as described for districts. Schools may not implement a Priority Improvement or Turnaround Plan for longer than five consecutive years before the district or Institute is required to restructure or close the school.

*Unified Improvement Plan*

The Education Accountability Act of 2009 requires each Colorado district and school to create an annual improvement plan. In 2016, the legislature expanded flexibility around biennial (every other year) submission of the Unified Improvement Plan through HB 16-1440. The flexibility is now available to all schools with a Performance plan type assignment and all districts that are Accredited or Accredited with Distinction.

The following posting timeline is offered by finalized plan type:<sup>20</sup>

Finalized Plan Type	Annual Submission	Submission Dates
Performance or Distinction	Biennial (every other year)	April 15 (public posting) every other year
Improvement	Annual	April 15 (public posting) every year
Priority Improvement or Turnaround	Biannual (twice a year)	January 15 (CDE review) and April 15 (public posting) every year

<sup>20</sup> CDE website, "HB 16-1440, Flexibility in UIP Submission"

### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver<sup>21</sup>**

In February, 2012, Colorado received a two-year waiver to many federal ESEA requirements through a waiver process offered by the Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. Since that time, CDE has submitted and received approval of several iterations of the waiver, including a one-year extension granted in spring, 2014.

Colorado's current ESEA waiver expired at the end of the 2014-2015 school year. CDE believes the waivers have been helpful to Colorado students, schools, school districts and BOCES by streamlining the state and federal accountability systems and focusing improvement efforts. Therefore, CDE applied for, and received, approval for a one-year renewal of the ESEA Waiver for the 2015-2016 school year.

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<sup>21</sup> CDE website, Colorado ESEA Waiver