# **Alternative Education Campuses**

# **Fact Sheet and Overview**



#### **Background and History**

In Colorado, a foundation of legislation and strong state leadership has allowed the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to support at-risk students in a multitude of ways. Since 2002, the state has supported the development of a robust set of high quality educational settings to ensure that students' needs are met in all educational settings, including alternative education campuses (AECs).



#### **Students AECs Serve**

Through legislation, Colorado has defined alternative education campuses (AECs) as those who have a specialized mission, who have nontraditional methods of instruction delivery, who serve students with severe limitations, and whose student population is comprised of at least 90% "high-risk" students.

According to C.R.S 22-6-604.5, high-risk students are those who meet one or more of fifteen conditions:

- 1. Juvenile delinquent
- Dropped out of school or habitually truant
- 3. Expelled from school
- 4. History of personal drug or alcohol use
- 5. History of personal street gang involvement
- 6. History of child abuse or neglect or in foster care
- 7. Has a parent or guardian in prison
- 8. Has an IEP
- 9. Family history of domestic violence
- 10. Repeated school suspensions
- 11. Pregnant or parenting
- 12. Migrant child
- 13. Homeless child
- History of mental health disorder, behavioral issue, or experienced significant trauma
- 15. Over-age/under-credited

Note: The shared experience of a global pandemic does not qualify as meeting the "other high risk" definition on its own.



#### Accountability Indicators for AECs.

AECs and traditional high schools have three common indicators: Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness. AECs have an additional required measure of student engagement, and weightings of measures are slightly different from traditional schools to account for the high-risk population of students served.



### Accountability and Improvement Planning.

Through the AEC School Performance Framework, AECs are permitted to select optional measures for accountability and improvement planning in addition to the state-required measures. All schools receive a plan type rating: 1) performance, 2) improvement, 3) priority improvement, 4) turnaround or 5. Schools receive a rating on each of the performance indicators: Exceeds (4 pts), Meets (3), Approaching (2), Does Not Meet (1)

All schools, including AECs, then go through the Unified Improvement Planning process, through which CDE compiles performance, demographic, process, and perception/self-assessment data to analyze trends, measures, and inform strategies for school improvement. This information is also used to identify the root causes of poor school performance, and to develop and implement improvement strategies.



Performance Indicator	Academic Achievement (15%)	Academic Growth (35%)	Student Engagement (20%)	Post-Secondary & Workforce Readiness (30%)
ndicator Definition	Students have met the learning objectives described in the standards for a given content area and grade level or course	Students are meeting learning objectives over a given span of time	Students' sense of belonging, safety and involvement in school that leads to academic achievement, regular attendance, and postsecondary and workforce success	Graduates demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in postsecondary settings and to advance in career pathways as lifelong learners and contributing citizens
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Performance Framework Measures	ELA, Math, Science All students, Disaggregated group State & Local Assessment Data	ELA, Math, English Language Proficiency All students, Disaggregated group State & Local Assessment Data	Attendance, Truancy, Student Re-engagement and/or Returning Student Rate, Survey of Emotional/Cognitive Engagement Measures	Dropout Rate, Completion Rate, Course Completion, Post-Completion Success and Workforce Readiness
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Possible Local Measures	NWEA MAP Mean RIT Scores, Galileo students at benchmark, DIBELS % at benchmark	STAR Growth Percentiles; K-3 literacy growth: change in number of students at benchmark from fall to spring	, Change in Attendance Rate, Student Surveys	CTE Participation Rate, FAFSA Completion, Local graduation goals

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Visit the Alternative Education Campus Website for more information:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/stateaccountabilityaecs

**Contact the Accountability Office:** 

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