



Local Accountability System Grant

Background

In 2019, the State Legislature passed [SB 19-204](#) to provide grant money and flexibility to local education providers to enhance their local accountability and continuous improvement systems.

A local accountability system is supplemental to the state accountability system and may be designed to:

- Fairly and accurately evaluate student success using multiple measures to develop a more comprehensive understanding of each student's success, including additional performance indicators or measures, which may include non-academic student outcomes such as student engagement, attitudes, and dispositions toward learning;
- Evaluate the capacity of the public school systems operated by the local education provider to support student success; and
- Use the results obtained from measuring student success and system support for student success as part of a cycle of continuous improvement.

This program is also intended to enable the state to learn from innovation in the field. The department has been convening grantees several times a year, facilitating presentations around the state and is currently evaluating the impact of the grant.

Grant Implementation

Current sites are engaging in a wide variety of initiatives, including public reporting dashboards, site visit protocols and rubrics, development of non-academic indicators, stakeholder engagement processes and alternative approaches to improvement planning. Some sites are working with external experts to create measures, design infrastructure, or support data interpretation. Sites have all worked on defining their values, articulating their underlying structure, and defining a theory of action. Each grantee produced a brief video walking through their project and theory of action [here](#).

State Evaluation

By working with grantees and periodic convenings, the department has produced annual legislative reports (the most recent [report published March 2025](#)). The department hired APA Consulting to provide an external evaluation of the overall grant effectiveness. [Part I of the report](#) (qualitative study) was published in summer 2023 and [part II](#) (including a quantitative examination) was published in the summer of 2024.

Key Facts on Grantees

- Per statute, the first cohort of grants were awarded in March 2020 for three years. However, the pandemic paused the grant shortly after it started. Therefore funding for cohort 1 was extended. Cohort 2 began July 2024.
- Cohort 2 of the grant includes 8 grantees (covering 26 districts, 1 BOCES and 9 individual schools) awarded for a grand total of \$390,000 each year. Awards range from \$25k - \$75k each year.
- In addition to funding, grantees are permitted to submit *supplemental* accountability reports that CDE posts on SchoolView.org. Grantees may also request the use of an alternate approach to the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP); however, all state, federal and program requirements for improvement planning must still be met.
- For more information, go to the Local Accountability System Grant website [here](#) or contact Lisa Medler, Executive Director of Accountability & Continuous Improvement (medler_l@cde.state.co.us), or Lisa Steffen who is the grant manager (steffen_l@cde.state.co.us).





Frequently Asked Questions

Who was funded in Cohort 2 of the Local Accountability System Grant?

- The S-CAP Consortium, including Kit Carson School District, Akron School District Buena Vista School District Burlington School District Dolores School District East Otero School District Ellicott School District Hanover School District Haxtun School District Holyoke School District Ignacio School District Karval School District La Veta School District Las Animas School District Monte Vista School District Sargent School District Sierra Grande School District West Grand School District Wiggins School District
- District 49
- BASIC AEC Consortium with New America School – Lakewood, AUL Denver, HOPE Online High School, Southwest Open School, Rise Up Community School and Goal Academy High School
- Rise Up Community School
- Southwest Open Charter School
- High Point Academy
- AXIS International Academy

What kind of flexibility do grantees gain? Do state performance frameworks still apply? Do they complete a Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)?

For grantees that choose to design and/or implement a supplemental performance report, the report does **not** replace the state performance frameworks, nor does it affect state plan types (e.g., official ratings and total percentage of points on the state frameworks will not reflect the supplemental measures). The report may include complementary information about students, staff, families, community, or school characteristics.

For applicants that choose to design and/or implement an alternate plan format, the plan may replace the use of the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) template. However, the plan must meet all state, federal and program requirements that are covered by the state UIP process. The grantee must submit their local plans to the department for public posting and are still expected to follow typical state submission timelines (e.g., October, January for districts/schools on performance watch or identified for improvement through ESSA, biennial submission flexibility for performance plans) and must submit their plans for state review when required. Alternative plans often display local data reports paired with data analysis, root cause analysis, strategies, action plans and progress monitoring.

How can I see what grantees are doing? How are the supplemental performance report or alternate improvement plan publicly posted?

To learn more about the Local Accountability System Grant and see artifacts from the grantees, go to CDE's website [here](https://www.cde.state.co.us). You may also see publicly posted supplemental reports and alternative improvement plans on SchoolView (alongside their other state reports, including performance frameworks and accreditation contracts) at: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/frameworks/welcome/>