

Term	Definition
Accountability	The process of evaluating school and teacher performance on the basis of student performance measures.
Achievement	Student performance relative to specified goals (e.g., standards) as determined by educational measures
Achievement Gap	The persistent disparity in academic performance on educational measures between different groups of students, for example, between students from higher-income and lower income-households or between majority and minority groups or between male and female students.
Aggregated	Individual student level data combined to create summary data about a class, a grade level, a school, a district or a state. When data are aggregated it is not possible to identify individual student data.
Advanced Placement	A program of college-level courses offered at most high schools. Courses are available in many subject areas, including English, history, humanities, languages, math, psychology and science. Students who pass the end-of-course exam receive college credit for the course.
Assessment	A process of gathering information through a variety of methods to make inferences about the status of student learning relative to specified goals or outcomes. Also, an instrument used to measure student performance.
At-Risk	At-risk students are individuals or groups whose prior performance and individual characteristics are associated with school failure and/or the potential to drop out of school. In most cases, risk factors are situational rather than related to his or her ability to learn or succeed academically.
Benchmark	An established point of reference or target against which to compare or measure progress. Not to be confused with benchmarking testing, which is another term sometimes used for interim testing.
Calendar Periods	An established period when assessments are administered to students
Certification	The use of assessment results to determine the eligibility of individuals to acquire a specific designation, for example, teachers determined to be competent to teach, or students determined to be competent at a job or task.
Checklists	A list of performance criteria used to evaluate student performance, for example, through observation of students engaged in tasks, or through analysis of student work against the criteria.

Classroom Formative: Embedded	Planned strategies within a lesson to obtain evidence of students' current learning status with respect to specified goals during the course of teaching and learning and within a lesson. Strategies can include, observation of student discourse, questioning students, observing instructional tasks and asking probing questions to reveal thinking while the student is engaged in the task and other activities designed to engage and support student thinking.
Classroom Formative: Formal	Assessments designed or selected by the teacher to provide information on students' learning status relative to specific goals. These formal assessments contrast with the practice of embedded formative assessment in which teachers use activities and tasks during the flow of the lesson to obtain evidence of students current learning status.
Classroom Summative Assessment	Assessments that are administered at the conclusion of an instructional sequence - a lesson, a unit - to reach an inference about students' achievement of specified learning goals. Often used in grading.
Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)	CMAS are the new state tests in English language arts, math, science and social studies that are given to all Colorado students in grades 3 -12.
Colorado American College Testing (CO ACT)	The ACT is a curriculum- and standards-based educational and career planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college. The 11th grade ACT assessment, which is more commonly known as the Colorado ACT (CO ACT) is equivalent to all other ACT Assessments. Since this is an actual college entrance exam, results from this assessment can be submitted for college entrance by the student to their college or university of choice.
Colorado Alternate (CoALT)	The CoAlt is a standards-based assessment designed to measure the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities in relation to the Expanded Benchmarks (Colorado's alternate standards). The CoAlt reading, writing, and mathematics assessments are administered yearly for students in grades 3 - 10, while the CoAlt science and social studies assessments are administered in grades 5, 8, and 10.
Curriculum-Embedded Assessment	Assessments integrated into curriculum and instructional activities of the classroom at key junctures of complex learning goals. Typically, they consist of performances evaluated against specific criteria. When non-graded and used to by teachers and students to support further learning, the function of these assessments is formative. If they are graded, then the only distinction from other summative assessment purposes is that they have been blended into ongoing instructional activities.
Curriculum-Embedded Measures	Formal measures (often associated with extended performance tasks)that are incorporated into the curriculum at key juncture points along and at the culmination of a complex learning progression. These measures may reflect key en-route components of extended performance tasks.
Curriculum/ Program Realignment	The process of re-examining the correspondence between standards and curriculum or program. The examination typically considers the match between both the content and intellectual demands of curriculum or program, and results are used to improve the match by filling in identified gaps or making changes in the existing curriculum or program.

Curriculum-Based Measurement	Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) is a method teachers use to find out how students are progressing in basic academic areas such as math, reading, writing, and spelling. With CBM, each student is tested briefly - tests generally last from 1 to 5 minutes- each week. The teacher counts the number of correct and incorrect responses made in the time allotted to find the child's score. The student scores are recorded on a graph and compared to the expected performance on the content for that year. If the students rate of learning progress shown on the graph is slower than needed to meet the goal, the teacher makes instructional adjustments.
Diagnostic Assessment	Assessments that indicate what a learner already knows and the nature of the difficulty a learner has. Because of the time intensive and specific nature of diagnostic assessments, they are only used for those students who are identified as not making sufficient progress.
Disaggregated Data	Summarizing data (such as assessment scores) by specific subgroups of students, (e.g., English Language Learners, students with disabilities, grade-level). Such data can be used to identify trends and patterns that can be used to inform programs, curriculum and instructional practices as well as to evaluate accomplishment of subgroup goals.
Discourse	The structure of utterances (e.g., a conversation or speech) longer than one sentence.
Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)	The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment program is designed to measure what students with significant cognitive disabilities know and can do.
Educator Evaluation	System to evaluate educator performance through the use of data and human judgment for the purposes of informing decisions and promoting continuous professional improvement through meaningful and credible feedback.
English Language (EL) Status	A designation as an English language learner. In the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) English learners are defined as students from an environment where a language other than or in addition to English is spoken, and "whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or comprehending the English language may be sufficient to deny [them] the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments; the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; and the opportunity to participate fully in society."
End-of-Course Assessment	Formal assessment administered at the end of a course for summative purposes to determine student achievement relative to course goals.
End-of-Year Assessment	Formal assessment administered at the end of the school year for summative purposes to determine student achievement relative to standards.
End-of-Year Proficiency	A student's level of test score achievement relative to proficiency levels established for the assessment. A student may be deemed to be proficient if he or she has score at or above the proficiency cut score established for a test and may be deemed to be non-proficient if the student's score does not meet the cut score.
English Language Placement Test	A test administered to students who are not native speakers of English to determine their eligibility to receive specialized instruction in English.

Evidence	Information from a variety of assessment methods that enable educators and stakeholders to make judgments about the learning and/or performance of individuals, groups, or organizations..
Evidence of Learning	Information from a variety of assessment methods that provides teachers with insights about students' current learning status relative to short- and long-term learning goals.
Federal Accountability Ratings	The federal accountability system awards letter grades (A-F) to schools and school districts based on student achievement in English/language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and high school graduation rates.
Feedback	Information to learners about their current learning status relative to a specific goal with suggestions, cues or hints about how the learners can take action to advance their learning toward meeting the goal. In the process of formative assessment, feedback also refers to the information that teachers obtain from evidence about the status of student learning relative to goals so they can make decisions about how to advance learning toward the goal.
Formative Assessment	A process used by teachers and students to close the gap between the students' current learning status and desired lesson learning goals.
Gifted Student	Gifted and talented students are those whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are judged so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs.
Grain Size	Refers to the length of time of teaching and learning that the assessment addresses. For example, assessment at a micro level - minute-by-minute, day-by-day is characterized as having a small grain size, whereas end-of-the-year assessments are characterized as being of a large grain size.
Growth	For an individual student, academic growth is the progress shown by the student, in a given subject area, over a given span of time. Academic growth is one of four statewide performance indicators used to evaluate schools and districts in Colorado. This indicator contains measures of both normative and adequate growth. .
Home Language Survey	A survey about languages spoken in the home that is given to parents when they enroll their child in school for the initial identification of students who may need English language support services.
International Baccalaureate (IB)	The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a nonprofit educational foundation. IB's Diploma Program is a high school program offered to students in the final two years of schooling and includes an end-of-course assessment. Each of these subject-area assessments is graded on a scale of 1-7.
Improvement Strategies	Improvement strategies, based on assessment results, are those that inform evidence-based planning and decision-making. End-of -year or interim assessment results, for example, may identify relative curriculum strengths and weaknesses, and the latter in turn may be targets for subsequent improvement through professional development, curriculum revision and/or new programs. Assessment results also may be used to identify students who need special support or teachers who are performing exceptionally well or poorly, which may provide clues to promising practices that can be implemented more widely.

Instructional Moves	Actions teachers take in response to assessment evidence intended to respond to students current learning needs in order to advance learning.
Instructional Plan	A planned sequence of deliberate acts of teaching (modeling, explaining, questioning) and tasks and activities for students, expressly designed by the teacher to support student learning of desired concepts, skills and analytical practices represented in the standards.
Instructional Tasks	Tasks designed by the teacher that students engage in during a lesson to support student learning of desired concepts, skills and analytical practices represented in the standards.
Instructional Units	An instructional unit contains a larger chunk of learning than a lesson. Units are designed to support student learning of specific standards and are organized as a logical sequence of instruction and learning activities over an extended period of time, for example, several weeks or months.
Instructionally Tractable Information	Information from a variety of assessment methods that can be immediately used by teachers in their instruction with the goal of advancing learning.
Interim Assessment/Testing	Interim assessments are formal tests given periodically throughout the year – often quarterly – to determine whether students are on track with expected learning and/or how likely students are to attain proficiency on end of year tests. Results for interim testing can be used to identify students who need special help and/or to inform subsequent instruction.
Interim Summative Assessment	Interim tests are considered “summative” in the Colorado assessment framework, because they usually are given external to on-going classroom instruction and typically do not provide diagnostic information on the source of student difficulties.
International Assessments	International assessments are standardized achievement tests that are developed and administered cross nationally and provide comparative information on student performance by country. Common international assessments are the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), which focuses on 15-year olds ability to use their Reading, Math, Science or knowledge of other subjects to solve problems; Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which assesses math and science achievement at grades 4 and 8; and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which tests reading achievement at grade 4 or its equivalent.
Intervention	Systematic and explicit instruction provided to accelerate growth in response to a learner’s identified need through assessment. Interventions are designed to improve performance relative to a specific, measurable goal. Interventions include ongoing student progress monitoring.
Learning Goals	Specify the intended learning for a period of time, for example, the end of a year, a course, a unit or a lesson. Assessment development begins with learning goals and creates assessments and tasks and success criteria specifically designed to reflect those goals.

Learning Progression	A learning progression lays out in successive, sequenced steps, increasingly more sophisticated understandings of core concepts and principles in a domain.
Lesson	A planned sequence of learning focused on the development of conceptual understanding/ analytical practices/skills/ language use that spans one to five class periods.
Local Accreditation	Schools, programs or courses that are accredited by Local Education Agencies
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. NAEP uses representative samples of students and provides results for the nation as a whole and for states that participate in state-level NAEP. Some large urban districts also participate in NAEP. Results are not available for individual students or schools or most districts.
National Assessments	Standardized assessments that are administered to students across the U.S. These assessments can be used for a variety of purposes, including to determine college and career readiness, and level of expertise in a subject area, and in the college admissions process.
Norm-Referenced Standardized Cognitive Test	A type of test, assessment, or evaluation which yields an estimate of the tested individual's academic performance evaluation relative to a predefined population, with respect to the trait being measured. This type of test identifies how a student performs relative to a comparison group – e.g., whether the test taker performed better or worse than other test takers - but not whether the test taker knows either more or less than is necessary for a given purpose.
Observation	A method of assessment whereby teachers watch students engaged in specific learning activities and interpret their performance against specific criteria.
Observation Inventories	A system for teacher observation that specifies criteria for the observation of student learning activities with methods of recording and interpreting what they see. Often observation inventories provide an item rating scale.
Partnership For Assessment Of Readiness For College And Careers (PARCC)	A consortium of states that received a Race to the Top Grant to develop a state assessment system aligned with the Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics. The system includes summative, interim, and diagnostic tests at grades 3-11 and formative assessments for K-2. The summative assessment is comprised of both an end of year technology based assessment and a performance assessment component.
Performance Assessment	A form of testing that requires students to perform a complex task and provide an extended response rather than select an answer from a ready-made list. For example, a student may be asked to explain historical events, generate scientific hypotheses, or solve math problems. Experienced raters--either teachers or other trained staff--then judge the quality of the student's work based on an agreed-upon set of criteria.

Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS)	The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is a series of international assessments of mathematics and science knowledge of students around the world. It provides data on the achievement of U.S. students compared with that of students in other countries. TIMSS data have been collected from students at grade 4 and 8 since 1995 every 4 years.
Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)	PIRLS is a reading comprehension assessment that tracks international trends in fourth-grade reading achievement. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) has administered the PIRLS assessment on a 5-year cycle since 2001.
Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)	The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years. First conducted in 2000, the major domain of study rotates among mathematics, science, and reading in each cycle. PISA also includes measures of general or cross-curricular competencies, such as collaborative problem solving.
Program (Intervention) Based Assessment	Formal assessment to determine students eligibility for a particular educational program or intervention or the need to continue a specific program or intervention because the target of the program or intervention has not been met.
Program Placement	The eligibility of students, based on assessment results, to participate in a program that provides specialized instruction designed to meet the students' specific needs.
Progress Monitor(ing)	The ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data from formal measures to determine student progress toward specific skills or general outcomes. Progress-monitoring data are used to plan instructional interventions, to determine if the intervention should continue or if the student has met the performance goal and an intervention can be discontinued.
Progress Monitoring Measures	Formal measures that are periodically administered, typically weekly or bi-weekly, to gauge student growth toward meeting specific performance goals of an educational intervention.
Promising Practices	Educational practices that show some evidence of effectiveness. The evidence may indicate that the practice worked in other contexts and may have the potential to benefit another student, group of students, school or district.
Reading To Ensure Academic Development Act (READ)	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. Other components of the Colorado READ Act include a competitive Early Literacy Grant and a resource bank of assessments, instructional programming, and professional development.
Request To Reconsider	The process for districts to submit school accreditation categories and to submit requests for reconsideration if a district disagrees with the Department's initial district accreditation category or initial assignment of a school plan type.

Rubric	Identified and described criteria defining various levels of quality in student work and/or other student responses. Rubrics are structured differently to achieve different purposes. They may be general or task-specific; they may yield multiple or single scores; they may be criterion referenced or based on a developmental continuum.-
Screening Assessment	Screening (including developmental and health screening) includes activities to identify children who may need further evaluation in order to determine the existence of a delay in development or a particular disability. Screening is used to determine the child's present level of performance and early intervention or educational needs.
Self-Assessment	When students engage in deliberate thought, while they are learning, about what they are learning, how they are learning it and the progress they are making. Self-assessment is supported when students have clear criteria about what progress entails - in other words, what will they be able to do if they are making progress - that they can use to gauge their own learning status, and when teachers provide time and/or structures for students to routinely engage in self-assessment while they are learning.
Self-Reflection	When students step back from the learning process and think about their learning. Such reflections might include considering what they think they have learned, what they might do differently next time, what they did when things got challenging or how they engaged in the learning process as a whole.
Semester	A calendar that divides the academic year into 15 - 17 week terms. There are generally two semesters per academic year.
Standardized Standards-Based, Grade-Level Achievement Tests	Tests that are designed to provide information on the degree to which students have achieved end-of-grade level expectations described in the standards.
Standardized Test	Assessments that are administered, scored, and interpreted in a consistent manner whenever, wherever, and to whom-ever they are given.
Standards	Statements of what students should know and be able to do at the end of specific grade-levels or courses of study.
Standards-Based	Standards-based refers to systems of instruction, assessment, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating achievement of the grade-level standards.
Standards-Based Curriculum	Curriculum that is designed to ensure that students learn what they are supposed to learn in order to achieve the expected end-of-grade-level standards.
State Proficiency Standards	State language proficiency standards describe the language, and skills using language that are represented in college-and-career-ready standards and that are necessary for English language learners (ELLs) to be successful in schools. Other state proficiency standards refer to the end-of-grade- level expectations.

Student Subgroup	A subset of students that share the same or similar characteristics drawn from a larger group, such as a the population of a class, a school, a district or a state. Subgroups might be comprised of boys, girls, English learners or students whose families are of high or low socio-economic status.
Student Work	A student produced response of product of classroom instruction, for example, student oral discourse, writing, representations such as models, diagrams, graphs, tables, designs and performances, including drama, music, visual arts, dance and other physical activities that can be used to make inferences about student learning status.
Summative Assessment	A process that establishes what students have and have not accomplished at the culmination of a specific unit of instruction, such as a curriculum unit, grading period, or school year. Summative assessment is intended to evaluate the knowledge and skills of the test taker at a given point in time. Assessments used for summative purposes—often called summative assessments and often used for grading and—also may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, school improvement goals, or curriculum.
Targeted Intervention	Focused and/or specialised instruction for a more or less extended period of time designed to provide support for particular students, for instance, those who are not making sufficient progress from core instruction, to achieve a specific target, for example, improved reading comprehension or computational skills.
Teachable Moments	A teachable moment is an unplanned opportunity that arises in the classroom when a teacher decides to capitalize on the chance to provide insights to students. Teachable moments are possible when teachers are attending to student learning and notice a point where a deliberate act of teaching is opportune for the student or students.
Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)	The Education Accountability Act of 2009 requires each Colorado district and school to create an annual improvement plan. CDE has developed a unified improvement planning template and processes to support schools and districts in their performance management efforts. The UIP template and planning processes used represent a shift from planning as an “event” to planning as a critical component of “continuous improvement.” The UIP template has been designed to meet both state and federal accountability requirements thus reducing the number of separate plans schools and districts are required to complete.
Validity	Validity is the overarching concept that defines quality in educational measurement. It is the extent to which an assessment provides accurate information for making decisions about student learning and the adequacy and appropriateness of the use of assessment results for specific purposes. No one test is valid for all purposes.
World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS For EL’s)	ACCESS for ELLs is a large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to Kindergarten through 12th graders who have been identified as English language learners (ELLs). It is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students’ progress in acquiring academic English.