



COLORADO
Department of Education
Commissioner of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203-1799

June 22, 2016

Dear Superintendents, Accountability Work Group Members, Technical Advisory Panel Members, and Accountability Contacts,

During its meeting earlier this month, the State Board of Education acted on recommendations from the Accountability Work Group, the Technical Advisory Panel and CDE staff. I'd like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to the members of the Accountability Work Group and Technical Advisory Panel. The board, and all of us at CDE, greatly appreciate all of the good thinking and hard work these individuals put into the accountability framework recommendations, and we know they did not make these recommendations lightly. These are a complicated issues, so I wanted to clarify a few things for you because reports in the news media may have left you with a few questions.

1. Combined subgroup

The board recognizes that there are advantages in the proposal to report all subgroups but combine them into one group for the purpose of assigning points. However, with significant stakeholder input being shared and considered, the board recommended that CDE continue to use individual disaggregated groups for accountability points for the 2016 frameworks. There was a strong consensus among the board members, and with CDE staff, that additional "hybrid" options should be investigated for 2017 accountability reports.

2. Targets

The board approved the staff's recommendations, which were based on feedback from stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Panel, on the achievement and growth targets and postsecondary workforce readiness targets for high schools. To see the specific targets approved, please see the attached document, which is also posted [here](#). The approved graduation and dropout rate targets were revised from the targets shared in the 2015 District/School Informational reports based on district feedback that they were too ambitious at this time. As such, the targets have been adjusted for 2016.

3. Weightings

The board recommended weighting achievement at 40 percent and growth at 60 percent for elementary and middle schools. For high schools and districts, the recommended weights of the performance indicators are: achievement at 30 percent, growth at 40 percent and postsecondary workforce readiness at 30 percent.

The [news release](#) from the board meeting also summarizes the major changes. Our Accountability Unit has posted the detailed information around the changes for the 2016 School and District Performance Frameworks [here](#) (also attached). For questions about any of these changes, please feel free to contact Alyssa Pearson at pearson_a@cde.state.co.us.



Again, my sincere thanks to all of you who worked alongside CDE to think deeply about our accountability system and how we can create a system that is fair to all districts and provides useful information to educators, parents and community members. We hope that we can continue to think through these complicated issues together and continue to find meaningful solutions.

I hope you are enjoying a slower pace this summer. I will strive to report back to you following each board meeting with any additional information or context that may be of use to you. And as always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katy Anthes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Interim Commissioner

