Superintendents/Principals to Teachers

*Use this entire article or just portions of it to communicate with educators about the District and School Performance Frameworks.*

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORKS

The Colorado Department of Education recently released the performance framework results for districts and schools. These frameworks show how our school(s) and district performed in the 2015-16 school year on a specific set of statewide measures, and they include our overall ratings.

*[Note: include your school and/or district rating here along with local context. See CDE’s fact sheet on the ratings for explanatory information about ratings and participation descriptors}*

These performance frameworks help parents and communities understand specific, detailed information about academic performance of schools and districts with data that can be compared to other schools and districts around the state. You can find our school’s/district’s framework on the CDE website [here](http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance):

Specifically, the frameworks look at our academic performance on statewide assessments, including students’ growth from year to year. In addition, the performance frameworks factor in the growth of English language learners on the English language proficiency tests. Secondary schools are also measured on their graduation rates, dropout rates, matriculation rates and college entrance exam scores. All of this is combined into an overall accountability rating for the schools and districts.

The Education Accountability Act of 2009 is the state law that created an accountability system to annually review every public school and district in Colorado on these specific indicators and measures. The system was paused last year because students began taking a new set of assessments. The accountability system is based on the notion that every student should have an opportunity to receive an excellent education and graduate ready to succeed. It is intended to help successful schools and districts get recognition so that best practices can be shared while also identifying those schools and districts whose students struggle so additional assistance can be provided.

Participation on statewide tests was noted on this year’s frameworks because low participation makes it difficult to compare results. Schools and districts with 95 percent or lower participation rates on assessments in two or more content areas received an indicator of “low participation.” This occurred even if students were formally excused from the tests by their parents. The Colorado State Board of Education passed a motion that schools and districts cannot be held liable by formal excusals. However, some schools and districts did have their ratings lowered by the state because of participation rates of less than 95 percent by students who did not receive formal excusals by their parents.

It is important to note that the system is set up to provide parents, teachers and the community comparable information about the performance of their children’s school, their district and the state’s public education system in general. The ratings, however, don’t tell the whole story about a school or district and the hard work that goes on every day in every classroom by teachers, staff and students. The scores can be seen as one-time measurements that allow us to reflect on accomplishments we have made and what more needs to happen to continuously improve our schools to ultimately help every child succeed in life.

CDE has created tools to help parents understand the frameworks as well as how to understand the state’s testing system, standards and other important information. All of the resources can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/tools-accountability>.