

# Glossary

<b>21st Century Skills</b>	Within the CDE standards document, 21st century skills and readiness competencies include the following: collaboration, critical thinking, invention, information literacy, and self-direction. (See Prepared Graduate Competencies)
<b>Academic Achievement</b>	A single, point in time score on an assessment. Achievement for an individual is expressed as a test score (or scale score), or it may be described using an achievement level. Academic Achievement is one of four performance indicators used to evaluate schools and districts in Colorado. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Academic Growth</b>	For an individual student, academic growth is the progress shown by the student, in a given subject area, over a given span of time. For a school or district, student growth is summarized using the median of the student growth percentiles for that grouping. 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. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Achievement Gaps</b>	A persistent, pervasive, and significant disparity in educational achievement and attainment among groups of students as determined by a standardized measure. Academic Growth Gaps is a Performance Framework indicator that reflects the academic progress of students in the following disaggregated groups: students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, minority students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and low-proficiency students. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Adequate Growth</b>	A growth level (student growth percentile) sufficient for a student to reach an achievement level of proficient or advanced, in a subject area, within one, two, or three years or by 10th grade; whichever comes first. The Performance Framework reports the median adequate growth rate for a school or district (this number is the growth level sufficient for the typical or median student in the district/school). (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Alignment</b>	The degree to which assessments, curriculum, instruction, textbooks and other instructional materials, teacher preparation and professional development, and systems of accountability all reflect and reinforce the educational program's objectives and standards. Alignment can also refer to consistency, organization or linkage of information, plans, actions and decisions between standards and curriculum, instructional materials, instructional methods, skill expectations, assessments and/or data.
<b>Articulation/Articulated Curriculum</b>	The way things are joined or linked, similar to alignment. This most often refers to the identification of what students should know and be able to do within grade levels or content areas (i.e., horizontal articulation) and across grade levels or content areas (i.e., vertical articulation). In Colorado, a well-articulated curriculum is aligned to the state's Academic Standards, and there are no gaps or unnecessary overlaps in the learning targets within or among grade levels or content areas.
<b>Assessment Practices, High Quality</b>	Practices that raise the likelihood that assessments and assessment results will be accurate, reliable, and useful in shaping sound decisions.

## Assessment Purposes

Purposes for assessment include:

- **Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning).** Defined by CDE as a process used by both teachers and students during instruction that provides “in the moment” feedback for adjusting teaching and learning. Formative assessments are used to monitor or adjust instruction in order to improve learning. It reveals points of confusion, misunderstanding or progress toward mastery of an idea.
- **Diagnostic Assessment.** The purpose of diagnostic assessment is to ascertain, prior to instruction, each student’s strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills in order to remediate students and adjust the curriculum to meet each pupil’s unique needs.
- **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.
- **Interim Assessments (Benchmark Assessments).** Assessments typically administered every few months to fulfill one or more of the following functions:
  - Instructional, e.g., to supply teachers with student diagnostic data,
  - Evaluative, e.g., to appraise ongoing education programs, and
  - Predictive, e.g., to identify student performance on a later high-stakes test.
- **Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning).** Assessment that provides summary information about what students have mastered in terms of content and skills. Summative assessments are formal, more rigorous and are usually given at the end of a grading period, course, or annually to evaluate what students have learned at the conclusion of that time period or course.

## Bell-to-Bell Instruction

Maximizing instructional time during the day. Students are actively engaged in learning from bell to bell. Instructional time is not lost due to transitions or unfocused class time.

## Best First Instruction (First, Classroom, Tier I, Core, Universal, or Universal Tier Instruction)

High-quality, effective, and engaging instruction provided in the general education classroom as outlined in a class or course curriculum, designed to meet the needs of all students. It provides students with their first opportunity to learn standards and grade-level expectations.

## Big Ideas

Sometimes referred to as “lifelong learnings” or “enduring understandings.” Big ideas go beyond discrete facts to focus on larger concepts, principles, or processes that develop over time and support students in future learning endeavors.

## Capacity Building

Any strategy that increases the collective effectiveness of a group to raise the bar and close the gap of student learning through developing individual and collective knowledge and competencies, resources, and motivation.

## Change

A shift in external circumstances, situational variables, or the environment. First-order change is doing more, or less, of something that’s already being done. First-order change is reversible. Second-order change is doing something significantly or fundamentally different from what’s been done before, and the process isn’t reversible: once begun, it’s impossible to return to the way you were doing before.

<b>Coaching</b>	Training and guidance provided to enhance knowledge, skill, and performance. Coaching is provided to individuals or teams of educators to provide feedback and facilitate their continued development and effectiveness as professionals. Coaching involves a cooperative relationship between a coach and teacher(s) who are mutually engaged in efforts to provide better services to students. Coaches may assist teachers in deepening cognitive processes through examining the thoughts and decisions a teacher makes within the context of teaching (e.g., using models such as Cognitive Coaching, Costa and Garmston, 2002). Coaches may also engage in collaborative problem solving – a systematic, structured process to address problems in the classroom that may be keeping students from making adequate gains (e.g., classroom observation, demonstrations, and feedback). Coaches also function as teacher/learners, sharing effective, proven strategies with groups of teachers to enhance professional learning.
<b>Cognitive Complexity</b>	The level of understanding that supports viewing an issue or problem from multiple and competing perspectives.
<b>Coherence</b>	All parts are consistent and logically related; integration of diverse elements, relationships, or values.
<b>Colorado Academic Standards (CAS)</b>	Colorado Academic Standards are the expectations of what students need to know and be able to do and are the basis of the annual state assessment. Colorado’s standards were revised in December 2009 and again in December 2010 to align with the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and English/language arts. The content areas include mathematics, science, reading and writing, social studies, music, visual arts, theatre, dance, comprehensive health and physical education, and world languages. The state also has standards for English Language Learners – Colorado English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards.
<b>Colorado Growth Model</b>	The Colorado Growth Model provides a common understanding of how individual students and groups of students progress from year to year toward state standards based on where each individual student begins. The model focuses attention on maximizing student progress over time and reveals where, and among which students, the strongest growth is happening and where it is not.
<b>Common Core State Standards (CCSS)</b>	The Common Core State Standards are national common standards in mathematics and English/language arts, which grew out an initiative by the National Governor’s Association and the Association of Chief School Officers. The CCSS are part of state-led effort to afford all students the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Colorado adopted the CCSS in August 2010, and fully incorporated the standards into the Colorado Academic Standards in mathematics, reading, writing and communicating.
<b>Communities of Practice</b>	A collection of people who engage on an ongoing basis in some common endeavor or set of practices. In schools, teachers collaborate regularly to “make sense of” the challenges of teaching and learning within their classrooms.
<b>Cooperative Learning</b>	A teaching method in which students of work together to solve problems by using skills and content to complete an assignment. Each student has a specific responsibility within the group and the teacher acts as a facilitator of learning. Students complete assignments together and receive a common grade.

<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Application of thinking skills more complicated than simple recall. Critical thinking involves thinking skillfully about causal explanation, prediction, generalization, reasoning by analogy, conditional reasoning, and the reliability of sources of information and then applying them in evaluative ways.
<b>Curriculum Framework or Guide</b>	An organizational structure that assists in the development of a curriculum or the document itself that guides the delivery of a curriculum. Curriculum documents, guides, or frameworks are often used synonymously. Curriculum guides may provide resources for teachers to deliver the curriculum such as supportive materials, books, and or core programs.
<b>Curriculum Map</b>	Course of study usually linking learning objectives and targets with a designated time period through unit and/or lesson plans. A curriculum map has also been defined as a real-time collection of information about what is actually taught in classes at specific points during the school year.
<b>Curriculum</b>	As defined by CDE, an organized plan or program of instruction or learning that engages students in learning. A curriculum designs and communicates a scope and sequence of concepts and skills students should learn within a course or grade level.
<b>Data Analysis</b>	Data are gathered, disaggregated and analyzed (often collaboratively) and the resulting information is used to make informed decisions.
<b>Data Dialogue</b>	A process or protocol used collaboratively by school staff to make shared meaning of data using data-based facts, examining patterns and trends of performance indicators, generating “root-cause” discussions, and determining action steps to address identified concerns.
<b>Data</b>	<p>Most commonly defined as factual information, often in the form of facts and figures obtained through some type of observation, performance or survey. Data types include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Student learning data.</b> Results of the educational system in terms of test results, grade point averages, academic growth, reduction of academic growth gaps, etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>School demographic data.</b> Attributes about students and staff, (e.g., socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, gender, experience, educational level, attendance).</li> <li>▪ <b>School processes data.</b> Information on what teachers are doing to get the results their work is yielding. These data include information about programs, instructional strategies, and classroom practices.</li> <li>▪ <b>Perceptions data.</b> Data that help school leaders understand and act on issues such as values and beliefs, organizational culture and climate, or what is important to students based on what students, parents, teachers, and others think about the learning environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	A model organized around the assumption that curriculum elements may be categorized based upon the cognitive demands required to produce an acceptable response. The four levels of complexity include recall and reproduction (level 1); skills and concepts (level 2); strategies and thinking (level 3); and extended thinking (level 4).
<b>Descriptive Feedback</b>	Feedback that is specifically and intentionally addresses what is working and points out next steps in learning or performance. Descriptive feedback may provide information about current achievement (“Where am I now?”); with respect to a goal (“Where am I going?”); or identification of appropriate next steps (“How can I close the gap?”).

<b>Direct Instruction</b>	Direct instruction systematically takes learners through the steps of learning, helping them see both the purpose and the result of each step. Direct instruction is especially effective in teaching basic skills (e.g., how to use a microscope) and skills that are fundamental to more complex activities (e.g., basic study skills, the prerequisite skills for long division).
<b>Disaggregated Data</b>	Refers to sorting data (such as assessment scores) by specific subgroups of students, (e.g., English Language Learners, students with disabilities, students needing to catch up) in order to identify trends and patterns that can be used to inform instructional practices.
<b>Disciplinary Concept Maps (DCMs)</b>	Visual representations of unifying themes along with organizing and supporting concepts for each discipline and grade level within the Colorado Academic Standards. DCMs also provide a central purpose for each discipline at each grade level and depict how concepts relate to one another to inform intentional curricular and instructional planning. They provide a framework for working with the standards in a way that emphasizes 21st century learning and interdisciplinary connections.
<b>Distributed Leadership</b>	School leadership involving both administrators and teacher leaders and distributing at least some of the responsibilities for leadership functions and activities within a school.
<b>Diversity</b>	Involves recognizing a variety of student characteristics including those of ethnicity, language, socioeconomic class, disabilities, and gender.
<b>Drop-Out Rate</b>	The drop-out rate reflects the percentage of all students enrolled in grades 7-12 who leave school during a single school year. It is calculated by dividing the number of dropouts by a membership base, which includes all students who were in membership any time during the year.
<b>English Language Learner (ELL)</b>	Students whose first language is a language other than English or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the language of instruction. ELLs may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English.
<b>Equity</b>	A commitment to a diverse population of students, demonstrated by the creation of an inclusive and positive school and/or classroom culture and strategies that meet the needs of diverse student talents, experiences, and challenges. Equity pedagogy values students' individual background as a resource and utilizes approaches to instruction and behavioral support that build on student strengths.
<b>Evaluation (Data)</b>	The process of making judgments about the levels of students' understanding or skill based on an assessment.
<b>Evaluation (Personnel)</b>	In Colorado, the evaluation of educators is addressed by S.B. 10-191, the purposes of which are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasize that a system to evaluate the effectiveness of licensed personnel is crucial to improving the quality of education in Colorado.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that one of the purposes of evaluation is to provide a basis for making decisions in the areas of hiring, compensation, promotion, assignment, professional development, earning and retaining non-probationary status, and nonrenewal of contract.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that educators are evaluated in significant part based on the impact they have on the growth of their students.</li> </ul>

<b>Evidence Outcomes</b>	Evidence outcomes define mastery expected at a specific grade level. Within each standard area, the concepts and skills students are expected to master are listed with evidence outcomes identified for each area.
<b>Evidence-Based Educational or Instructional Practices</b>	Those educational or instructional practices that have been shown to have a positive effect on student learning. Evidence is established through scientific research or evidence. (See Research-Based)
<b>Exemplar</b>	Example that illustrates the knowledge or performance characteristics of a standard, grade-level expectation, big idea, or unit of study. Exemplars provide a model of an expected level of learning or a performance.
<b>Explicit instruction</b>	Explicit instruction is a systematic instructional approach that includes a set of delivery and design procedures including focusing on big ideas, teaching and modeling effective learning strategies, providing scaffolding, regularly monitoring students' progress over, and drawing on student background knowledge.
<b>Extended Enrichment</b>	Giving students opportunities for accelerated progress and access to new, more challenging concepts or content.
<b>Fidelity of Implementation</b>	The delivery of instruction or assessment in the way in which it was designed to be delivered. Deviations or dilutions of program components may yield unintended consequences and different levels of results than were anticipated.
<b>Flexible Grouping</b>	A strategy that allows students to work in mixed groups depending on the goal of the learning as well as the students' prior knowledge, skills, etc.
<b>Flexible Schedule/Flexible Scheduling</b>	Flexible scheduling allows the school to respond to changes by varying time /or assignments in ways that would better meet changing needs.
<b>Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)</b>	The articulation (at each grade level) of the concepts and skills that indicate a student is making progress toward being ready for high school, i.e., what students need to know from preschool through eighth grade. In the Colorado Academic Standards, evidence outcomes define mastery of grade-level expectations.
<b>Gradual Release of Responsibility</b>	Entails the scaffolding of student learning through instruction that provides the appropriate amounts of support to students based on their individual needs until they can independently demonstrate the intended learning.
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	Graduation rate is the percentage of students who received a diploma from the base membership, of a given class of students, within a district or a school. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Growth</b>	For an individual student, growth is the progress shown by the student, in a given subject area, over a given span of time. For a school, district, or other relevant student grouping, student growth is summarized using the median of the student growth percentiles for that group. Academic growth is one of four performance indicators used to evaluate schools and districts in Colorado. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum</b>	A curriculum is guaranteed if it gives clear guidance to teachers regarding the content (knowledge, concepts, and skills) to be addressed in specific courses or at specific grade levels. It assumes that processes and personnel are in place to ensure there is monitoring of the curriculum and delivery, and individual teachers do not have the option to disregard or replace assigned content. A curriculum is viable when there is sufficient time, materials, and instructional tools for teachers to teach the curriculum so students learn and perform at a proficient level.

<b>Information Literacy</b>	The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand. A set of competencies that an informed citizen of an information society ought to possess to participate intelligently and actively in that society.
<b>Instructional Staff</b>	Staff members of a school who have responsibility for teaching students. This may include teachers, teaching specialists, and instructional paraprofessionals.
<b>Intervention</b>	<p>Systematic and explicit instruction provided in response to learner needs as determined through assessment. The response may involve remediation, reinforcement, enrichment, or support. Interventions are designed to improve performance relative to a specific, measurable goal.</p> <p>Tier II Intervention: Targeted, supplementary instructional interventions provided to students when assessment indicates that either (a) the students are not making adequate gains from Universal Tier instruction alone or (b) students whose advanced learning requires extended opportunities. These are generally smaller group interventions designed to provide targeted instruction for students with similar needs.</p> <p>Tier III Intervention: Intensive interventions that offer a student highly individualized, systematic instruction in one or more areas of assessed needs. Tier III interventions are provided with sufficient time, intensity, and frequency to specifically meet (a) individual remedial needs of students at the highest risk of failure or dropping out of school, or (b) individual advanced learning needs. These interventions may be similar to Tier II interventions but are provided with a longer duration and/or increased intensity in order to accelerate student learning.</p>
<b>Job-Embedded Professional Learning</b>	Learning that occurs as educators engage in their daily work activities. It can be both formal and informal and includes but is not limited to coaching, peer coaching, lesson study, mentoring, and study groups.
<b>Keep-Up Growth</b>	Growth needed for a student scoring at the proficient or advanced levels, in the previous year, to continue scoring at least at the proficient level in the current year and future 3 years or by 10th grade; whichever comes first. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Key Transition Points</b>	Key curriculum transition points include the transition from pre-school to elementary, elementary to middle, and middle to high school.
<b>Learning Community</b>	A group who uses a systematic, goal-directed learning process in which people work together in grade level, vertical, special topic, or subject matter teams to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results for students.
<b>Learning Environment</b>	Any condition, setting or location inside or outside the school which contributes to the instruction of students.
<b>Learning Organization</b>	Organization that acquires knowledge and innovates fast enough to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing environment.
<b>Learning Progression</b>	A sequenced set of subskills and bodies of enabling knowledge that, it is believed, students must master en route to mastering a more remote curricular aim.
<b>Learning Target</b>	Identified objective for what students should know, understand, or be able to do at the end of a unit of study, course or grade level. Learning targets may sometimes be called “achievement targets” or “learning objectives.”

<b>Mastery</b>	The application and transfer of skills so that a student has complete expertise of a skill or concept in multiple contexts. This is not an indication that instruction at grade-level expectation begins and only occurs at that grade level. Maintenance of previously mastered concepts and skills and scaffolding future learning are the domain of curriculum and instruction - not standards.
<b>Measure</b>	An instrument or means to assess performance in an area identified by an indicator.
<b>Measurement</b>	Assigning scores to an assessment based on an explicit set of rules. Sometimes used synonymously with assessment.
<b>Median Adequate Growth</b>	The growth (student growth percentile) sufficient for the median student in a district, school, or other group of interest to reach an achievement level of proficient or advanced, in a subject area, within three years or by 10th grade; whichever comes first. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Median Student Growth Percentile</b>	Summarizes student growth by district, school, grade-level, or other group of interest. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Mentors</b>	Mentors are highly experienced educators. They are chosen for their special abilities to work collaboratively with others, inspire trust among colleagues, play a variety of roles comfortably, and maintain confidential relationships with coaches and teachers. Mentors are often asked to work with novice educators.
<b>Metacognition/Metacognitive Strategies</b>	Metacognition refers to higher order thinking which involves active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning. Activities such as planning how to approach a given learning task, monitoring comprehension, and evaluating progress toward the completion of a task are metacognitive in nature.
<b>Metric</b>	A numeric scale typically associated with a measure (assessment) indicating the level of some variable of interest. For example, your credit score is a metric that companies use to decide whether to give you a loan. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Mission</b>	A statement of purpose to define the goals and direction; a guide for decisions and a set of criteria by which to measure the school's or district's progress toward its defined purposes. It emphasizes the conditions that must be present in organizations in which all children succeed.
<b>Modeling</b>	A teaching strategy in which the teacher demonstrates to student/s how to do a task, with the expectation that the student will copy the model. Modeling often involves talking about how to work through a task or "thinking aloud" and is often included as part of the "I do" - "We do" - "You do" gradual release of responsibility to students.
<b>Move-Up Growth</b>	Growth needed for a student scoring at the proficient level in the previous year to score at the advanced level in the current year or in the next 3 years or by 10th grade, whichever comes first. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)</b>	MTSS leverages the principles of Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to integrate a system-wide continuum of evidence-based resources, strategies, structures, and practices to support an agile response to academic and social-emotional needs.



<b>Organizational Change</b>	When an organization transitions from one state to another, usually one that will result in greater success (e.g., increased student performance within a school). Successful organizational change usually requires strategic planning, clear and ongoing communications, attention to the needs of people in the organization, (re)allocation of resources, modifications to structures, and an understanding of change processes.
<b>Pacing Guides</b>	Guide that identifies periods of time or timelines that evidence outcome concepts and skills should be taught and learned. Often pacing guides are included in curriculum guides or documents. In a standards-based system, pacing guides are continuously adjusted, based on the pace and level of student learning.
<b>Performance Description/Descriptor</b>	Level or description of performance expected of a student within a given period of time such as at the end of a course, unit of study or lesson. A performance description usually describes how well students need to perform in various skills and knowledge to be considered proficient at their grade level.
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	A specific component of school or district quality. Colorado has identified four performance indicators that are used to evaluate all schools and districts in the state: student academic growth, student achievement, growth gaps, and postsecondary/workforce readiness.
<b>Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness</b>	The preparedness, of students, for college or a job after completing high school. This is one of the performance indicators used to evaluate the performance of all schools and districts in the state. This indicator includes graduation rate, dropout rate, and Colorado ACT scores. (UIP Handbook, 2011)
<b>Prepared Graduate Competencies (PGC)</b>	Colorado’s goal for public education is to prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce. Prepared Graduate Competencies (PGCs) are the preschool through 12th grade concepts and skills that all students leaving Colorado’s education system must have to ensure success in postsecondary and workforce settings. PGCs highlight what all high school graduates should know and able to do in all content areas. Additionally, 21st century skills are embedded at each grade level in all content areas.
<b>Principles of Change</b>	A systematic, comprehensive framework regarding change that allows leaders to understand what to expect regarding change within an organization, how to manage their own personal change, and how to engage an entire group in the change process.
<b>Problem-Based Learning</b>	A student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject in the context of complex, multifaceted, and realistic problems designed to help students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills, and intrinsic motivation.
<b>Professional Learning</b>	A product of both externally-provided and job-embedded activities that increases teachers’ knowledge and changes their instructional practice in ways that support student learning. Formal professional development represents a subset of the range of experiences that may result in professional learning. Other opportunities for professional learning — such as common planning time, shared opportunities to examine student work, or tools for self-reflection — may occur outside the bounds of formal professional development events.
<b>Progress Monitoring</b>	Progress monitoring is the ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data to determine student progress toward specific skills or general outcomes. Progress-monitoring data are used to adjust instruction for individual and groups of students. (See also Formative Assessments, Interim Assessments)

<b>Reciprocal Teaching</b>	An instructional activity that takes place in the form of a dialogue between teachers and students regarding segments of text. The dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies: summarizing, question generating, clarifying, and predicting. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this dialogue.
<b>Reflection</b>	The active thought process in which educators review past practices to better understand results and to improve future practice. Reflection implies that when current practices are observed and evaluated, effective practices are sustained and less effective practices are improved or modified. Reflection becomes an important part of a continuous improvement cycle in education.
<b>Relevance/Relevant</b>	Relation to the matter at hand; practical applicability; increased likelihood of accomplishing the goal. Relevant curriculum includes examples of how the grade-level expectation could be applied at home, on the job or in a real-world, relevant context.
<b>Reliability/Inter-Rater Reliability check definition</b>	Reproduce-ability of a set of scores under different circumstances, i.e., consistency or stability of a measuring instrument; necessary for, but sufficient for, validity.
<b>Research Based</b>	Educational practices, methodology, strategies, programs, or materials that have been systematically and scientifically studied and shown to have a correlation with, or positive effect on learning and achievement. While educational practices are often identified and promoted in educational literature, such practices are not defined as research based unless they have been shown, through scientific study, to have a positive correlation with, or effect on, student learning and achievement.
<b>Research-Based Instruction (Evidence-Based, Best First Instruction, or Effective Instructional Practices)</b>	A research-based instructional practice or intervention is one found to be reliable, trustworthy, and valid based on evidence to suggest that when the strategy or program is used with a particular group of children, the children can be expected to make adequate gains in achievement. Ongoing documentation and analysis of student outcomes helps to define effective practice. In the absence of scientific evidence, the instruction/intervention is considered "best practice" based on available research and professional literature.
<b>Response To Intervention (Rti)</b>	Colorado has defined Response to Intervention as a framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. A continuum of evidence-based, tiered Instruction and interventions with increasing levels of intensity and duration is central to Rti. Collaborative educational decisions for students are based on data derived from frequent monitoring of student performance and rate of learning. (See Multi-Tiered System of Supports)
<b>Root Cause</b>	The deepest underlying cause(s) of a problem or situation that, if resolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction, of the symptom. If action is required, the cause should be within one's ability to control, and not a purely external factor such as poverty that is out of one's ability to control.
<b>Rubric</b>	Identified and described criteria for various levels of student work. 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.

<b>Scaffolding</b>	The provision of sufficient supports (e.g., learning strategies, guidance, resources) to promote learning. The “scaffolds” selected by the teacher are intended to help the student move to higher levels of achievement and transfer the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student, thereby fostering independence.
<b>School Climate</b>	The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools create a nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others may utilize authoritarian structures in which rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, school climate refers mostly to the school's effects on students, whereas school culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together.
<b>School Culture</b>	The set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the persona of the school. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to the school culture. Generally, school culture may be summarized as “how we do business here.”
<b>School Effectiveness</b>	The performance of a school organization, which can be expressed as the output of the school, which in turn is measured in terms of the achievement and growth of its students.
<b>School Efficiency</b>	The degree to which a school can maximize the access, use, and monitoring of school resources, including time, materials, space, and personnel.
<b>School Leadership</b>	School leadership refers to administrators (e.g., principal, assistant principal, dean), teacher leaders, teacher team leaders (e.g., department chairs, grade-level leaders), coaches, etc.
<b>School Performance Framework (SPF)</b>	The framework used by the state to provide information to stakeholders about each school’s performance based on the four key performance indicators: student academic growth, student achievement, achievement and growth gaps, and postsecondary/workforce readiness. Schools are assigned to a type of improvement plan based on their performance across all of the indicator areas.
<b>School Plan Type</b>	The type of plan to which a school is assigned, by the state, on SPF report. The school plan types are: Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement and Turnaround.
<b>School-Family Partnership</b>	Collaborative relationships between educators and family members based on mutual respect, trust, equality and shared goals that support and focus on student academic success.
<b>Scoring Guide</b>	A scale that describes levels of knowledge or skill that can be demonstrated in some type of assessment or performance task. Scoring guides or rubrics utilize a clear set of criteria that describe the expected learning and quality needed to achieve a specific level of performance or grade. They describe levels of performance and usually assign some type of descriptor (e.g., no progress—fully accomplished) and/or a numerical rating (e.g., 1 – 5) to that performance.
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	Beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments.

<b>Self-Efficacy – Students</b>	Learners' beliefs about their capacity of succeeding when learning specific topics or tasks. Efficacious students tend to “own” their own learning, see themselves as participants (not observers) in the class, and believe that adults are there to support their learning.
<b>Self-Efficacy – Teachers</b>	Teacher efficacy measures the extent to which teachers believe their efforts will have a positive effect on student achievement. Researchers have repeatedly related teacher efficacy to a variety of positive teaching behaviors and student outcomes.
<b>Sheltered English Instruction</b>	An instructional approach in which classes are composed entirely of students learning English. Students are taught using methods that make academic instruction in English understandable. In some schools, students may be clustered in a mainstream classroom.
<b>Student-Led Conferences</b>	Conferences that engage students in direct communication with their parents, peers and/or teacher(s) through the use of portfolios illustrating their learning and achievement. Students take the lead in walking their audiences through a selection of accomplishments and demonstrations of their work.
<b>Supervision</b>	Supervision is a formative process that focuses upon professional development and the improvement of instruction. It is characterized by a collegial, helping relationship between administrators and the teachers in a climate of trust and mutual understanding. Supervision encourages professional growth and development of staff and high quality classroom performance that promotes improved student learning. (See Evaluation – Personnel)
<b>Sustainability</b>	The continuation or maintenance of a set of activities and resources intended to achieve the original objectives of a program or initiative.
<b>Systems Thinking</b>	The process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole. A set of habits or practices within a framework that is based on the belief that the component parts of a system can best be understood in the context of relationships with each other and with other systems, rather than in isolation.
<b>Teaching/Learning Cycle, Standards-Based</b>	The interconnected cycle of instructional planning, teaching, learning, assessing, and remediating/accelerating grounded in the Colorado Academic standards and determined, monitored, and adjusted based on continuous review of data/information. The teaching/learning cycle can be thought of as a practical response to four questions: What do students need to know, understand, and be able to do? How do we teach effectively to ensure students are learning? How do we know that students are learning (and how well)? What do we do when students are not learning or are reaching mastery before expectation?
<b>Theory of Action</b>	A set of underlying assumptions about moving an organization from its current state to its desired future.
<b>Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)</b>	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.

**Universal Tier Instruction**

See Best-First Instruction and Research-Based Instruction

**Validity**

The extent to which an assessment or test does the job desired of it; the evidence may be either empirical or logical. Criterion-related validity is the standard, i.e., based on the content or processes (construction) of other valid measurements or criterion that ensure the assessment measures what it is purported to measure.

**Vision**

A future-oriented aspiration for student outcomes (achievement levels, graduation rates, post-secondary education and adult success) and the teaching and learning environment of the school.

**Walkthrough**

An organized observation that requires the principal or supervisor to frequently visit classrooms to look for specific instructional practices.