CDE District Level Conditions for Dramatic Improvement
District Diagnostic Review Rubric

This rubric outlines the detailed policies, practices and behaviors that map to different rating levels for each indicator on the rubric.

Culture of Performance

Indicator	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary (Proficient +)
1.1 District Led High Expectations	Performance expectations conveyed by the superintendent are unclear or inconsistent. While some leaders are able to articulate the district vision for student success, the path or strategy for success is not consistently defined. The district may have identified priorities, however a clear link to a cohesive theory of action does not exist or is not widely understood.	The superintendent plays a critical role in conveying messages of high expectations for student performance as well as clarifying district priorities and collaboratively established non-negotiable academic and instructional goals. Leaders at all levels can articulate the vision for student success. The district has an articulated strategy that includes the vision, theory of action, non-negotiable goals, priorities and key actions. The district strategy specifically addresses interventions and supports that are tailored to priority schools and grounded in research.	Communications from the district consistently refer back to the strategic plan and address progress towards the goals, priorities and actions identified in that plan. The district proactively looks to improve and refine its priorities based on emerging performance data within and outside the district.
1.2 District Leaders' Accountability	While district leadership may articulate the goals of the district, personal and/or departmental roles in reaching district goals remains unclear. The district lacks systems to hold leaders accountable for contributing to the accomplishment of identified goals. Clear systems for ongoing progress monitoring of goals and reporting of progress to the Board and community are lacking.	Accountability for results begins at the top, with the superintendent and other central office leaders explicitly signaling a willingness to be held accountable to district goals. The district leaders publicly report out progress toward school improvement and academic goals during addresses to the Board and the community.	District leaders lead open and frank dialogues regarding both successes and setbacks in pursuing the district strategy as part of reflective practice and the culture of accountability.
1.3 School	While school leaders may articulate	District leaders create and extend a	School leaders embrace opportunities to

Leaders' Accountability	components of the shared goals of the district, it is not clear how school leaders are held accountable to meeting these goals.	culture of heightened accountability for the achievement of non-negotiable academic and instructional goals, ensuring that school leaders and teachers are accountable to non-negotiable academic and instructional goals.	reinforce public accountability through rituals and visual reminders of the shared goals and the progress towards those goals.
1.4 Strategic Resource Allocation	The district may prioritize funding to specific schools in need, and/or use some aspects of performance data to guide investments, but there is not a systematic way to compare different initiatives' alignment to goals as part of the budget and resource allocation process.	The district leverages funds across multiple funding streams in alignment with district and strategy. Data-driven progress monitoring towards non-negotiable academic goals informs and shapes key financial decisions throughout the district system. When resources are constrained, the district may cut back or drop initiatives that do not measurably contribute towards achieving the non-negotiable academic goals.	The district actively evaluates concepts like return on investment as part of the budget process. Programs that yield greater improvements in student outcomes are prioritized.
1.5 Systems for Continuous Improvement	While the district utilizes the state mandated processes to use data to inform improvement planning, there is not a systematic approach to identifying and monitoring strategies that drive academic improvement. While the district may introduce new strategies for improvement, the expected outcomes for these strategies are not necessarily identified at the outset.	The district establishes and sustains a focus on continuously improving student achievement through timely and continuous use of data. Data is regularly used to assess progress against school improvement plans. Data is used to evaluate implementation of high leverage improvement strategies. The district has the capacity and the willingness to identify and address the root causes of persistently low performance regardless of the finding.	The district models a data inquiry cycle for all functions (not just academics) so that all teams use of feedback and progress data to improve services to schools.
1.6 Publicizing Progress	While the district may communicate some information about the progress and success of programs, there is not a consistent internal or external approach and system for celebrating success. Staff may not feel that recognition systems are meaningful to their job motivation.	The district has an intentional system to recognize and celebrate progress at the school and district level towards the achievement of non-negotiable academic and instructional goals. Ongoing recognition and celebration of progress toward the achievement of non-negotiable academic and instructional goals serve to energize people for future efforts.	The community actively engages with the district in celebrating progress towards achievement of goals.

Academic Systems

Indicator	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary (Proficient +)
2.1 Comprehensive and Aligned Curriculum	The district may provide some curricular resources and/or assessments that are aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards, but they are not yet available in all core subjects across all grade levels and/or translated where appropriate for English Language Learners.	The district provides access to curricular resources and common assessments that are aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards. Specific resources are provided to serve the needs of English Language Learners. District leaders work to ensure that schools align instruction to the written and tested curricula. The curricular and assessment systems provide the foundation for effective instructional practice and are used regularly to monitor student performance and progress towards non-negotiable district goals.	The district regularly gathers feedback from teachers and school leaders as to the efficacy of the curricular resources and uses this feedback to guide decision-making about investment in new resources.
2.2 Curricular Interventions at Priority Schools	The district does not yet provide targeted, differentiated curricular resources to priority schools and/or the resources provided do not fully support teachers in personalizing instruction.	For schools with a higher concentration of students not yet at proficiency, the district provides proven curricular resources and materials to support teachers in differentiating instruction and catching students up with their peers. Curricular resources may employ technology to ensure that content is customized for each student.	The district regularly evaluates supplemental curricular resources to determine how effective they are at accelerating student achievement and supporting teachers in differentiating instruction.
2.3 Defined Instructional Framework	While the district may publish an instructional framework that addresses some expected teacher and principal behaviors, the framework does not fully align to the district goals and/or does not yet identify and recognize high-yield strategies that are most	The district articulates a common district framework for instruction that is tightly coupled with district academic and instructional goals and includes a common instructional language. The common instructional framework is a core component of the system to provide coaching and feedback to school leaders	The common instructional framework is regularly revised and improved based on feedback from teachers, leaders and other instructional experts as well as emerging research and recent publications.

	effective with diverse students.	and teachers. The framework ensures that teachers demonstrate intentional planning for instruction and use researched high-yield strategies that match the needs of a diverse group of students.	
2.4 Assessment Strategy and Implementation	The district may use assessments linked to curricular resources and/or individual schools may administer teacher-created interim assessments, but there is not a common interim assessment that can measure student growth against Colorado Academic Standards. Teachers may use formative assessment data, but there is not a systematic approach to ensuring that teacher teams have time set aside to analyze data in teams and individually.	Rigorous, high-quality interim assessments are selected or created and (1) align to the district's instructional sequence of clearly defined grade level and content expectations; (2) are administered 3-6 times per year; (3) provide a transparent starting point for teachers (i.e. teachers have access to the assessments at the beginning of each cycle and use the assessments to define the road map for teaching); (4) are aligned to state tests and college readiness; (5) are analyzed by teacher teams at each site at the question level with "tests in hand"; (7) are prioritized within the district calendar; and (8) are used by teachers to make decisions about individual and small group interventions.	Students own their own progress and can consistently articulate where they are based on interim data and where they need to go.
2.5 Data Systems and Use of Data	Individual schools and/or classrooms maintain grades and other academic data electronically, but there is not a district-wide resource to store and analyze data. While data review may occur, the district has not consistently implemented each step of the data inquiry cycle across all schools.	The district has a data warehouse or other infrastructure tools that provide all educators with user friendly, timely access to student performance data in a variety of clear reporting formats. The district leads a data review cycle that includes predicting whether or not academic goals will be met and then tracking progress based on interim measures, making course corrections where appropriate to drive toward achievement goals.	Students and parents have access to the student performance data that teachers are using to monitor progress.
2.6 Multi-tiered System of	While there may be specific training and professional	The common instructional framework explicitly recognizes the need for	The district consistently disaggregates academic progress data for students with

| Supports | development regarding the MTSS/RTI process, the specific instructional strategies are not fully reflected in the instructional framework and/or there are not specific curricular resources and wrap-around services to support adequate differentiation. | differentiated supports for students not making progress and articulates high yield instructional strategies to differentiate Tier I instruction. The district provides an exemplary MTSS/RTI process with clear criteria and protocols. The district provides specific curricular resources and professional development for educators to implement the MTSS/RTI process for both academics and social emotional supports. | disabilities and measures progress towards specific goals to ensure equitable outcomes for all kids. |

Talent Management

Indicator	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary (Proficient +)
3.1 Talent Strategy	While the district has several of these human capital pieces in place, there is not yet a comprehensive strategy regarding that fully aligns skills and experience in new hires to the academic goals of the district. Position descriptions may not address questions of fit with values like accountability and a culture of performance.	The district implements a comprehensive approach and long-term plan for recruiting, evaluating, and retaining high-quality teachers, principals, and central administrators with skills that align to district academic and instructional goals. Position descriptions for instructional roles include explicit skills and experience that align to the academic and instructional goals of the district. Position descriptions for all roles include required skills and experience as well as fit with the district's vision for student success and culture of shared accountability.	The district sustains partnerships with local universities or third party organizations that implement intentional feeder programs into the district's talent pool and that align study, practice and mentoring to best practices in the classroom.
3.2 Human Resources as Partner	Human resources supports schools with their efforts but does not yet have procedures to collect satisfaction feedback and/or strategically deploy talent within the HR department specifically to these efforts.	The district human resources department is primarily defined as a service provider for schools with a secondary focus on serving central administration and other parts of the district. Procedures are in place to assess school and departmental satisfaction with centrally provided human resources. District strategy includes an investment in the capacity of the human resources department	The district is continuously refining its approach to talent management based on analytical data concerning how new teachers perform in the classroom and satisfaction survey data from schools.

		to partner with priority schools to make critical staffing decisions and support the schools in meeting district academic and instructional goals.	
3.3 Prioritizing Hiring in Schools of Greatest Need	The district provides support around hiring and assists schools in screening talent, but does not yet have procedures in place to prioritize this work for the lowest performing schools. The budget process for schools that are lowest performing may not support accelerated hiring.	The district implements a system for prioritized hiring for its lowest performing schools. Specific strategies such as initiating the hiring process earlier and compressing the hiring timeline to give offers sooner are employed to ensure that teachers with critical competencies are recruited and hired before they seek employment elsewhere. Where necessary, budget timelines are adjusted to ensure that the lowest performing schools can accelerate their hiring processes.	The district strategically places its highest performing school leaders and teachers in schools with the greatest need to accelerate student achievement.
3.4 Prioritizing Turnaround Leadership	The district seeks leaders for its turnaround schools who have experience leading school improvement efforts, but may not articulate the research-based competencies that are necessary in a turnaround context. The district has referral sources or programs in place to find high quality principals, but does not yet analyze different pipeline programs to evaluate their effectiveness.	The district's strategic plan articulates the school leadership competencies that are necessary for successful school turnaround, including driving for results, influencing inside and outside the organization, problem solving, and showing the confidence to lead. The turnaround leadership competencies directly inform the recruitment, selection, coaching, and evaluation of principals in turnaround schools as well as central staff engaged in supporting turnaround networks or schools. The district uses data to identify its strongest principal pipelines and has a coordinated effort to attract principals from the strongest proven pipelines.	The district has a leadership pipeline approach that extends several years into the future such that potential turnaround leaders are identified and supported in their leadership development two or more years before assuming the principal role.
3.5 Talent Management Flexibility	The district is aware of the human resources flexibilities that school may seek under provisions of state statute, but there are not procedural guidelines available to support priority schools in obtaining these flexibilities.	High priority schools and networks are able to establish greater flexibility and authority over hiring, placement, and non-renewal of teachers and school leaders based on performance and best fit. Changes are made to the negotiated agreement that allow leaders of priority schools greater control over hiring, placement and retention or non-	The district has embedded a framework for human resources flexibility into its overall strategic plan.

		renewal of staff.	
3.6 Teacher Leadership	Components of HR practices support the district in honoring and remunerating teachers with proven results, but there is not yet a clear strategic approach to developing career pathways for these individuals.	District strategy includes key actions to develop career pathways for teachers with demonstrated capacity and proven results.	Differentiated pathways are provided that give teachers flexible access to leadership roles, opportunities for growth and increased responsibility, as well as monetary and non-monetary incentives.
3.7 Principal Professional Development	While principals have access to professional development, it does not fully align to their needs in regards to accomplishing district goals. Principals are regularly evaluated by their supervisors, but the protocols regarding regular coaching do not directly tie to improving principals' capacity to coach and support teachers.	The district implements a clear plan to actively build the knowledge, skills, and competencies of principals as they relate to the accomplishment of district goals. Principal supervisors provide regular, meaningful, clear and timely feedback aligned with principal performance goals and articulated leadership frameworks.	Principals own their own professional development and are empowered to seek development opportunities both within and outside the district. Principals consistently rate the coaching and feedback that they receive as highly relevant to their instructional leadership practice.
3.8 Instructional Professional Development	While the district provides teacher professional development that is timely and consistent, the content and delivery mechanisms for teacher PD do not yet flex and adapt based on the specific student achievement data of the district. While the district may collect qualitative feedback from teachers about their PD, there is not yet a systematic approach to evaluating how professional development is directly impacting instructional behaviors and practice.	The district routinely provides differentiated professional development for teachers that is tightly coupled with district non-negotiable academic and instructional goals, student achievement data, and teacher observations and evaluations. High-quality professional learning opportunities are designed to promote effective implementation of the common instructional framework. The district routinely evaluates and refines professional development practices to ensure that content learned is being implemented with fidelity and is effective in helping students reach high levels of achievement.	Teachers have access to differentiated professional development pathways that directly align to the established career pathways.
3.9 Central Administrator Professional	Central administrative staff have access to professional learning through conferences	The district provides multiple types of ongoing professional development for all central administrative staff to ensure staff	The district has a clear competency-based model to develop, mentor and evaluate central administrative personnel and the

Development	and discipline-specific meetings, but there is not yet a system in place to build and support cross-functional skills like continuous improvement, change management and strategic data analysis.	are equipped with the fundamental skills necessary for continuous improvement, change management, and strategic data reflection and analysis. Central administrative staff also have access to periodic high quality professional development specific to their functional area and expertise.	competency model explicitly articulates those competencies that are unique to functioning in a central administrative and service-oriented role.
3.10 Performance Incentives	The district has clear processes in place to review and evaluate personnel in schools and central admin, but there is not yet a system to fully reward and incentivize high performance among all personnel.	At the district and school levels, performance incentives and performance based contracts are linked to the achievement of the goals outlined in the strategic plan regardless of whether the focus of individual work is at the classroom level. The system gives rewards (monetary and prestige) to schools and teachers who achieve high improvement in student outcomes against targets.	The district can evidence where their differentiated performance incentives have led to greater staff retention among their highest performing staff.

Differentiated Support and Accountability for Low-Performing Schools

Indicator	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary (Proficient +)
4.1 Prioritized Central Office Support	The district analyzes school level performance data and provides some degree of enhanced monitoring for its lower performing schools.	Data is used to identify schools that will receive targeted, supplemental and prioritized support. In turn, prioritized schools are held accountable for accomplishing agreed upon academic and instructional goals.	The district has developed specific systems to ensure that partner-type supports are differentiated for priority schools and that these schools make accelerated progress towards non-negotiable academic goals.
4.2 Prioritized Funding for Turnaround	The district may obtain specific grant funds or supplemental dollars to support turnaround initiatives, but there is not yet a consistent and sustainable prioritization of resource allocation to support turnaround efforts.	District strategy includes strategic resource allocation that reflects the intensity of individual school-level turnaround efforts. Budgets are aligned to the non-negotiable academic and instructional goals.	Schools in turnaround have greater flexibility with their budget.
4.3 School	The district acknowledges	By pursuing changes to formal policy and	The district has extended its framework for school

Empowerment	that schools in turnaround need to approach their work differently, but has not yet developed a clear articulation of the connection between research-based turnaround strategies and necessary changes to decision-making structures and/or policies.	standard operating procedures where appropriate, the district effectively empowers schools to implement their turnaround strategies while balancing centralized and decentralized decision making.	empowerment to articulate the additional flexibilities that schools may earn through demonstrated performance and capacity.
4.4 Central Leadership of School Turnaround	The district provides coaching, support and evaluation to turnaround leaders and schools through its existing school supervision and support structures.	As part of prioritizing resources to the schools of greatest need, the district designates a leader to provide support and oversight to the turnaround schools in the district. The leader may be supported by other team members with specific turnaround experience. The leader is given adequate authority and accountability, and reports regularly to the superintendent on the progress of schools toward meeting district level academic and instructional goals. Turnaround schools are linked through a network or similar structure to access beneficial resources and professional development.	The turnaround network of schools connects with similar networks from other districts to explore new best practices and create opportunities for peer learning.
4.5 Prioritized Performance Management	Priority schools participate in performance management processes like the unified improvement plan and other related processes, similar to schools that are not identified as priority.	In addition to intensified levels of central support, priority schools receive more frequent and outcomes-based performance management from central leadership to ensure district academic and instructional goals are met. Leading indicators are reviewed regularly alongside implementation data in order to ensure key initiatives are on track to produce dramatically improved student outcomes.	Grounded in proven practice, the district customizes qualitative rubrics and frameworks for the unique conditions of school turnaround and uses these customized tools to guide school visits and walk throughs at priority schools.

Board and Community Relationships

Indicator	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary (Proficient +)
5.1 Family and Community Engagement	The district has dedicated staff to perform outreach to parents and community members, but there is not a clear set of expectations for the schools around community engagement. The district may conduct a parent satisfaction survey, but the survey results might not appear in the targeted goals for the district. The communication strategy for the district might not provide multiple modes of engagement to accommodate linguistic and cultural differences.	District strategy includes specific expectations for schools around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, evaluated through regular parent satisfaction surveys. The district facilitates connections and partnerships with community organizations to support student growth and development. A culturally and linguistically appropriate communication strategy supports engaged communication and conversation with all stakeholders.	The district establishes community forums to examine issues relevant to turnaround efforts to inform thought processes.
5.2 Stakeholder Voice in District Strategy	The district shares information about its school improvement efforts through a website or other mechanism, but may not actively engage the public in shaping and creating improvement plans. The district may conduct meetings with community members to discuss potential changes in programs or priority schools, but the conversation is not firmly rooted in academic performance data and/or a comparison of the school's results to non-negotiable academic goals.	The district engages community stakeholders to influence and support the school improvement efforts throughout the district. The district consults with representatives of stakeholder groups, including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and business and community members in developing and reviewing district strategy. The district uses data to serve as the foundation for conversations with the community about school improvement, performance expectations, and the need for change in priority schools. District and school leaders work collaboratively with the community to establish goals that will reflect high expectations for all students in the district.	Survey data demonstrates that strong majority of parents and community members feel that they are empowered to have a voice in the vision and direction of their schools.
5.3 Board Adopted	While the board may have a set of goals for the district, they may not	The board adopts collaboratively set non-negotiable academic and instructional	The board can point to strategies that have been added, subtracted or modified based on

Goals	have been the result of a collaborative community dialogue. It is not fully clear to all stakeholders which key strategies are going to advance schools and the district towards the identified goals. The board adopted budget does not articulate how resources align to the strategic vision for the district.	goals that function as milestones toward achievement of the shared vision of success and are reflected in district strategy. The board works to ensure alignment between agreed upon goals and allocation of district resources.	periodic review of progress data and a clear evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies.
5.4 Unified Vision	The board and superintendent each express goals for the district, but they may not be the same vision and/or they may not emphasize a consistent belief that all kids can achieve.	The board and superintendent present a unified vision for district and school improvement with regard to district goals and philosophy, including an explicit belief in the potential of students and schools.	The vision for student success is supported throughout district facilities with visual reminders.
5.5 Board and Community Interactions	The board may depend on the Superintendent to dialogue with community members.	The board plays a key role in conveying the district vision and goals to the community, and solicits input and feedback from the community to refine the district plan.	The board uses multiple modes of communication to catalyze internal and external support for the district vision and policies.
5.6 Monitoring of District Progress	The board may receive updates on current initiatives, but may not question district leaders about the evidence basis for the initiatives and/or the measures of success for the initiatives.	Throughout the progress monitoring process, the board actively questions the superintendent and district leadership to explain how current initiatives align to district strategy, as well as how leading indicators of success support or call into question the effective implementation of district initiatives.	The board uses progress data to inform long range planning and resource allocation.
5.7 Aligned Board Policy	Thorough board policies exist but may not fully align to the high leverage strategies or reflect a focus on school improvement in priority schools	The board ensures that policies are in place to support and complement the district strategy. The board revises policies that create barriers to meeting district goals.	The board has an established framework regarding which policies may be waived under which circumstances as schools seek specific flexibilities.