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Dear Commissioner Hammond:

Pueblo District 70 received an *Accredited with Improvement* rating and missed the *Accredited* rating by .7%. The district is asking for consideration of the *Accredited* rating for the following reasons:

1. The district made great academic and growth gains during the 2013–2014 school year as shown by comparing the District Performance Framework (DPF) to the DPF from the previous year.
2. District NWEA and DIBELS data for grades K–3 support academic and growth gains in reading and math.
3. The district would like to request that the CDE staff run the data for the district and exclude D70 Online School data.

The information below supports the three reasons the district is requesting to reconsider the Accredited with Improvement rating.

**1. Comparison of District Performance Framework 2012-13 to District Performance Framework 2013-14 (Trends)**

2013 DPF Total	59.5%
2014 DPF Total	63.3%
<b>Total Gain</b>	<b>3.8% (.7% from Performance)</b>

### Specific Categories

Gain in Growth (overall)	4.8%
Gain in Growth Gap (overall)	7.7%
Gain in Postsecondary Readiness	3.2%
Gain in Elementary Growth	7.2%
Gain in Elementary Math (Growth Gap)	15%
Gain in Elementary Grow Gap (Total)	6.7%
Gain in Middle School Growth	7.2%
Gain in Middle School Reading (Growth Gap)	20%
Gain in Middle School Growth Gap (Total)	6.6%
Gain in High School Academic Achievement	4.2%
Gain in High School Reading (Growth Gap)	10%
Gain in High School Math (Growth Gap)	15%
Gain in High School Writing (Growth Gap)	5%
Gain in High School Growth Gap (Total)	10%

(Screen shots of 13 DPF and 14 DPF are attached)

4 schools moved up a category:

- Avondale (Improvement to Performance)
- Desert Sage (Improvement to Performance)
- Liberty Point International (Priority Improvement to Improvement)
- Vineland Elementary (Priority Improvement to Improvement)

We have only one school (District 70 Online) that received a priority improvement rating, but this school has been approved to be an Alternative Education Campus for this school year. District 70 does not have any other schools “on the clock.”

### Reading Trends

The district’s elementary schools have met the academic achievement goal and the growth goal for the 2013-2014 school year. The elementary schools were approaching in growth gaps with three of the subgroups meeting the goal: *Free/reduced Lunch Eligible; Minority students; English Learners*. *Students Needing to Catch Up* were approaching and *Students with Disabilities* did not meet the goal. The 2013-2014 DPF was an improvement from the 2012-2013 DPF in which the only subgroups to meet the goal were *Minority students and English Learners*. *Free/reduced Lunch Eligible* and *Students Needing to Catch Up* were approaching while *Students with Disabilities* did not meet the goal.

The district's middle schools met both the academic achievement goal and the growth goal. This was an improvement from the past in which growth was approaching. The growth gap goal was met which again was an improvement from the past in when this category received an approaching designation with no subgroups meeting the goal.

The district's high schools met both the achievement goal and the growth goal this past year; an improvement since the high school had not made the achievement goal in previous years. Although the growth gaps category was still rated approaching, the high schools made a 10% increase in this area with no subgroups rated as "does not meet."

The district attributed key **root causes** as to why the district is approaching in growth gaps at the elementary level and the high school level.

- Reading assessment data is not consistently used to make instructional decisions; students are being instructed at levels that are too low for their instructional level
- The district's comprehensive and aligned reading curriculum that addresses the five components of reading is not consistently implemented across the district at the elementary level
- Collaborative practices between ESS and classroom teacher are inconsistent and/or not utilized with fidelity
- Differentiated Instructional practices are not consistently utilized
- Progress monitoring is not consistently implemented across the district

### **Curriculum Improvement Strategies**

- Continue the implementation of district reading curriculum based on the Colorado Academic Standards/Common Core
- Revise reading curriculum at the second grade level based on DIBELS/NWEA data
- Monitor curriculum implementation through Classroom Walkthroughs and principal observations
- Instructional units created by CDE content specialists/teachers are introduced and implemented

## **Instructional Improvement Strategies**

- Continue to implement Every Child a Reader (ECAR) instructional strategies at the elementary level
- Implement LETRs at all elementary schools/ESS programs/EL programs
- Continue to implement a Title I School-wide program at 8 elementary schools that provide reading support through inclusion of Waterford; flooding; LETRs; Learning Together; early intervention programs; parent involvement activities
- Implement differentiated instruction in all literacy classes at all levels; monitor through Classroom Walkthroughs, principal observation, scheduling, etc.
- Create literacy co-teaching teams across the district at all levels (ESS/classroom teacher and ELL/classroom teacher)
- Implement research based instructional strategies that include use of technology and various software applications in all literacy classes at all levels
- Continue to implement a research-based instructional program at the middle and high school levels including Springboard and Pre-AP strategies
- Structure daily schedule to provide time for reteach/intervention classes and set up before/after school-Friday tutoring programs
- Provide literacy programs (reading and writing) at all schools that are enhanced by a connection to culture and personal relevance
- Provide tiered literacy lessons (reading and writing) to meet the needs of all students
- Utilization of summer reading book packs for students most at risk of not meeting standards
- Continue to create effective parent involvement programs at all levels and all schools

## **Assessment Improvement Strategies**

- Monitor student progress in reading (DIBELS/BURST/NWEA) using benchmark and interim measures and adjust instruction/ interventions based on data

## **Professional Development Improvement Strategies**

- Provide effective training for building leadership on scientifically based literacy instruction, standards-based curriculum, Common Core, Classroom Walk Through, and effective uses of data
- Provide effective training for building leadership on effective EL/ESS strategies and how to effectively observe/evaluate an EL/ESS teacher
- Provide effective training/coaching for classroom teachers, interventionists, and specialists that include:

- ECAR training
- ECAR assessments
- Curriculum revisions (2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading)
- SIOP training
- LETRS training
- Differentiated Instruction
- READ Act assessments including BURST

- Implementation of training and consistent site visits/coaching for implementation of reading interventions for students on READ plan and/or students below benchmark
- Utilization of School PLC groups to monitor and analyze data

## **Comparison of DIBELS/NWEA to reading state assessments**

When comparing K-5 DIBELS/NWEA to state assessments, similar trends are evident. Overall achievement and growth meet expectations. Students with Disabilities (ESS students) continue to not meet growth expectations.

After intense analysis of DIBELS data, it has become evident that the district has a curricular issue in reading at the second grade level; curriculum is currently being revised. Specialized training on the revisions for all second grade instructional staff has been identified and is being planned.

## **Math Improvement Strategies**

The district has implemented several major improvement strategies and has seen improved results in student achievement, growth, and growth gaps. The district is confident that it will continue to see increased student achievement and growth as the instructional staff continues to implement the strategies with fidelity.

### **Curriculum Improvement Strategies**

- The development of math curriculum that is standards based and not textbook reliant

### **Instructional Improvement Strategies**

- Implement Challenged Based Learning into all levels and all math classes that focus on application of content/skills/real life situations
- Integrate communication skills into math classes where students are required to explain the “why” and the “how”
- Create math co-teaching teams across the district at all levels (ESS/classroom teacher and ELL/classroom teacher)
- Structure daily schedule to provide time for reteach/intervention classes and set up before/after school-Friday tutoring programs
- Continue to create effective parent involvement programs at all levels and all schools

### **Assessment Improvement Strategies**

- Monitor student progress in math using interim measures and adjust instruction/interventions based on data
- Creation of PLCs at each school to monitor data/instructional strategies

### **Professional Development Improvement Strategies**

- Provide effective training for building leadership on scientifically based math instruction, Saxon Math fidelity, standards-based curriculum, Classroom Walk Through, and effective uses of data.
- Provide effective training for classroom teachers, interventionists, and specialists that include:
  - Challenge Based Learning
  - Differentiated Instruction
- Implementation of a Math Science Partnership grant that focuses on math discourse and problem solving

**2. For additional data for reconsideration for the Accredited rating, the district is submitting NWEA and DIBELS data for grades K-3.**

The district reviewed its October 2013 student count numbers as submitted.

The numbers per grade level were:

Kindergarten	674 students
Grade One	658 students
Grade Two	661 students
Grade Three	595 student
Total	2,588 students

The district utilized one consistent report for data for NWEA and one report for DIBELS to report (attached) and has revised the attached template as well. The numbers of students tested were less than the total number of students in grades K-3 as some students are not able to access the NWEA testing (i.e. students eligible for alternative assessments) or DIBELS testing (i.e. non-verbal students). The numbers of students tested are students who tested in the fall and then the same students who tested again in the spring.

**NWEA Data**

The students in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and grade three demonstrated increased RIT scores and overall growth (in the 50th percentile) from fall testing to spring testing in reading.

The students in kindergarten, grade two, and grade three demonstrated increased RIT scores and overall growth from fall testing to spring testing in math. Grade 1 students needed 1% additional growth to reach the 50th percentile.

The students in this data category are the same students from fall testing to spring testing. In order to have a growth score reported, the students had to take the fall test and the spring test. The district has included the NWEA report to show the numbers.

The district and each of the schools use the NWEA assessments to drive improvements in growth on the state assessments and as one measure to determine which students need RtI interventions, literacy plans, etc. The fall testing provides baseline data and determines many of the instructional strategies utilized by classroom teachers. Winter testing provides a great deal of information regarding instruction. For example, reports show how students have progressed; if students are on track for state assessments; which students need more interventions, etc. Spring testing provides information regarding student growth and in many cases provides instructional information for the following school year (i.e. math intervention classes, accelerated programs, etc.). Professional Learning Communities at each school meet on an ongoing basis and utilize NWEA data on a consistent basis in making instructional decisions.

The district had originally submitted NWEA data for kindergarten, grade one and grade two. The district has revised the original template to include grade three data. The grade three data shows that students at this grade level demonstrated a RIT gain greater than the 50th percentile.

### **DIBELS Data**

Schools monitor DIBELS growth for individual students and this information is included in students' portfolios, READ plans, and New Literacy plans. District 70 is part of the CDE grant opportunity, *Early Literacy Assessment Tool Project*, and has been working very closely with Amplify and CDE personnel to monitor and analyze DIBELS data. For the past year, the district has monitored student movement from *Well Below Benchmark* to *Below Benchmark* to *Benchmark*. In addition, we very closely observe progress monitoring data.

Analysis of beginning of the year DIBELS data to end of year data shows, that as a district, last school year we reduced the number of students from *well below benchmark* to *below benchmark* in each grade from kindergarten to third grade. In all grade levels but second grade, we reduced the number of students from *below benchmark* to *benchmark*. When we did not see the same results at second grade (increased numbers moving from *below benchmark* to *benchmark*), we began an in-depth analysis and found we have some curricular and instruction issues that we are currently addressing at the district level and in school site visits and coaching sessions.

### **3. District 70 Online Data**

One of the district's schools, District 70 Online, has qualified for an AEC designation for the upcoming year with a 95% at-risk student population. We would like to request that the CDE staff run the data for the district and exclude D70 Online's data.

We believe all the additional data validates our request to receive the Accredited rating. We would greatly appreciate any consideration you can give to Pueblo District 70 in its request to reconsider appeal. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Ted Ortiviz  
Board of Education President



Ed Smith  
Superintendent



Ginger Andenucio  
Assistant Superintendent