



### Innovation Pathway Plan Rubric for Priority Improvement and Turnaround Schools & Districts

This rubric is intended to guide innovation planning for schools and districts pursuing the innovation pathway at the end of performance watch (C.R.S. § 22-11-209(2) & C.R.S. § 22-11-210(5)) or for early action. Innovation pathway plans will include the school and district’s overall approach to school turnaround, the details of the innovation plan, and the importance of the innovation plan in accelerating achievement in the school.

- Innovation plans [have additional requirements](#) that include voting on waivers by staff, local school board vote, and will also be evaluated using a rubric from CDE’s office of School Choice to ensure that all waivers meet legal requirements and have appropriate replacement policies.
- This rubric will be used to evaluate the **Innovation Pathway Plan**, which should include the specific waivers and approaches included in the innovation plan as well as details on the district’s support plans and how the innovation plan will be supported and implemented. Areas of the rubric that are associated with waivers are also noted in [purple text](#) within the descriptors.

In the beginning of each section of this rubric, there are specific notations of possible state or local waivers addressed by the innovation plan. Plans should address each of the waivers being asked for or rationale for why waivers are unnecessary for the school within that category.

#### Rubric Overview of Sections

<a href="#">Innovation Plan Overview</a>	<a href="#">Instructional Transformation</a>	<a href="#">Talent Management</a>	<a href="#">Culture &amp; Climate Shift</a>	<a href="#">Budget &amp; Operations</a>	<a href="#">District Systems</a>
<a href="#">Need for Innovation</a>	<a href="#">School Calendar &amp; Schedule</a>	<a href="#">Recruitment &amp; Hiring</a>	<a href="#">Culture &amp; Climate</a>	<a href="#">School Leadership &amp; Governance Structure</a>	<a href="#">Accountability &amp; Supervision</a>
<a href="#">Mission &amp; Vision</a>	<a href="#">Instructional Vision</a>	<a href="#">Teacher &amp; Staff Development</a>	<a href="#">Engaging Learning Environment</a>	<a href="#">Budget</a>	<a href="#">District Operational Support</a>
<a href="#">Student Learning Outcomes</a>	<a href="#">Curriculum</a>	<a href="#">Evaluation &amp; Retention</a>	<a href="#">Stakeholder Engagement</a>	<a href="#">Facilities &amp; General Operations</a>	<a href="#">District Instructional Support</a>
<a href="#">Implementation &amp; Monitoring</a>	<a href="#">Assessment &amp; Data</a>	<a href="#">Compensation</a>			
	<a href="#">Individual Student Needs</a>				



<b>Innovation Plan Overview</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Comments
<b>Need for Innovation</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Innovation Plan provides a clear and compelling rationale for innovation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicitly explains how innovation status will ensure a greater level of success for student learning.</li> <li>• Provides clear rationale for why the district is selecting innovation status for the school.</li> <li>• Effectively identifies and justifies the need for increased flexibility and autonomy through waivers.</li> <li>• Describes the barriers or roadblocks to successful implementation of the current school improvement plan that would require innovation status to address.</li> </ul>	
<b>Mission &amp; Vision</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Innovation Plan articulates a vision and mission that reflects high expectations for student learning. The plan explains how innovation status will meet district and school goals to advance the vision and mission.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a clear and concise picture of what the school aims to achieve, what the unique focus of the school is, and the student population and community to be served.</li> <li>• Clearly articulates how the mission and vision are different from what it was previously, if it is being changed OR if mission and vision is remaining, why the existing mission and vision are appropriate for the new direction of the school.</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Innovation Plan thoroughly describes the goals and specific gains in academic achievement the school will</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies actionable goals for student academic achievement.</li> </ul>	



<p><i>commit to as a result of securing innovation status. Articulates clear measures for monitoring learning outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives an in-depth explanation for how the plan will improve student learning and move the school off of Performance Watch.</li> <li>• Explains how student learning and performance will be comprehensively measured by multiple sources of evidence and data.</li> <li>• Shows that anticipated student outcomes are clearly aligned to the mission and vision of the school.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation &amp; Monitoring</b></p>	<p><b>Meets Expectations</b></p>	<p><b>Comments</b></p>
<p><i>Includes timeline for implementation and how the school will monitor the implementation of the Innovation plan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes a timeline for implementation, including key actions with timeframes.</li> <li>• Includes specific implementation benchmarks at regular intervals (at least semi-annually) which identify systems level implementation progress goals aligned to the plan.</li> <li>• Describes how the school leadership team will regularly monitor and adjust the school's plan based on implementation versus specified benchmarks.</li> </ul>	



<b>Instructional Transformation</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
<p><b>Waivers sought:</b> <i>Plan provides a clear description of waivers sought that impact Instructional Transformation. Further details about possible waivers are in purple in the appropriate “Meets Expectations” description.</i></p>	<p>Plan provides descriptions of how the waivers are being leveraged OR why waivers are not being pursued in each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ calendar and scheduling changes</li> <li>○ curriculum and/or instructional model</li> <li>○ Assessment</li> <li>○ Data use and infrastructure</li> </ul>	
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Comments
<b>School Calendar &amp; Schedule</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan articulates any proposed changes to the school calendar and schedule, which may include changes to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length of school day/year</li> <li>• School calendar</li> <li>• Hours of instruction</li> <li>• Number of work days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describes the waivers being sought and how they enable calendar and schedule changes.</i></li> <li>• Clearly describes what changes to the school schedule or calendar will occur and articulates how the changes will address current barriers and lead to increased student achievement.</li> <li>• Provides copies of the school calendar and daily schedules as an attachment to the Innovation Plan.</li> <li>• Explains how the daily schedule maximizes instructional time with an emphasis on core subject areas for all students.</li> <li>• Ensures students have adequate access to grade level instruction and that intervention is used as a way to support that access, instead of a barrier to meet grade level expectations.</li> <li>• Shows that the schedule is designed to meet teacher development and preparation needs by including</li> </ul>	



	<p>adequate time for teacher planning, teacher professional learning, and teacher collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows that the daily schedule and annual calendar reflect the school’s mission and vision.</li> <li>• Identifies the total number of days and hours of instruction students will receive and the number of in-service days for teachers, how those hours and days compare to the prior school year and/or other schools in the district, and the rationale for similarities and differences.</li> <li>• Identifies the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction for core subjects in each grade.</li> <li>• Identifies available opportunities for extended instructional time and explains how that time will be strategically structured and allocated.</li> </ul>	
<b>Instructional Vision</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan articulates proposed vision for instruction.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes the vision for instruction across the school, how that vision is aligned to the school’s mission and vision, and how it will support academic achievement for all students.</li> <li>• Identifies a consistent set of evidence-based non-negotiable practices to be implemented across all classrooms at the school and that are aligned to the school’s mission and vision.</li> <li>• Describes the resources and supports for teacher planning and intellectual preparation aligned to the school’s mission and vision.</li> </ul>	



Curriculum	Meets Expectations	Comments
<p><i>Plan articulates any proposed changes to curriculum.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains all waivers related to the school’s curriculum and instructional model as aligned to the school’s mission and vision.</li> <li>Discusses any special academic/curricular themes the school will feature, if any.</li> <li>Clearly describes how the chosen curricula and instructional methods are aligned to grade-level standards and expected to improve school performance and student achievement.</li> <li>If seeking curricular autonomy, explains why the proposed educational program is more likely to succeed in the school. Includes evidence that the curriculum is research-based and has delivered or will deliver rigorous, engaging and effective instruction for the student population and boost student achievement.</li> <li>Describes the instructional materials and resources that the school will use to support its curriculum and explains how they are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards and the innovation model of the school.</li> </ul>	
Assessments & Data	Meets Expectations	Comments
<p><i>Plan explains innovations around student assessments and data systems, which could include changes to progress monitoring, data-driven practices and differentiated instruction.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies any local and state waivers in assessment and data use.</li> <li>Provides an overview of the school’s proposed assessment plan, including a description of any assessments that will supplement those required by the district and the state, if applicable.</li> <li>Demonstrates that the assessment system is aligned with learning expectations of the Colorado Academic</li> </ul>	



	<p>Standards and will yield reliable, valid and timely information to allow for (1) leadership progress monitoring of the instructional program, and (2) teacher action planning for student instructional needs in ELA and math.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explains any changes to <i>how</i> and <i>how frequently</i> the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community.</li><li>• Provides an overview of how the school will manage their data systems independently if that is an innovation they are seeking.</li><li>• Describes the school’s approach to providing personalized and differentiated instruction that best meets the needs of all students. Includes explanation of how staff will use students’ formative assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction.</li><li>• Describes how collaborative structures will support staff collaboration to maximize time to improve teacher practice and student outcomes.</li><li>• Explains how the school’s leadership team will regularly use assessment data on a cyclical basis to make adjustments to school programming and structures to better improve outcomes for all students.</li><li>• Explains how the school will monitor data consistently including considerations of equitable outcomes for traditionally underserved students.</li></ul>	
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Individual Student Needs	Meets Expectations	Comments
<p><i>Plan articulates how the school will support individual student needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes a problem-solving process, as part of a larger MTSS approach, in place to identify students for behavior and academic intervention using valid data and how a plan is put in place to accelerate growth with clear criteria and protocols.</li> <li>• Provides an overview of how the school model will support students with disabilities, students with special education needs, multilingual learners, gifted and talented students, and other special populations.</li> <li>• Describes how any of those supports will change under innovation status, if applicable.</li> </ul>	





<b>Talent Management</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
<b>Waivers sought:</b> <i>Plan provides a clear description of waivers sought that impact Talent Management.</i> <i>Further details about possible waivers are in purple in the appropriate "Meets Expectations" description.</i>	Plan provides descriptions of how the waivers are being leveraged OR why waivers are not being pursued in each of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment and hiring processes and timeline</li> <li>○ Process, protocols, &amp; stipulations for evaluation of personnel</li> <li>○ Personnel compensation</li> </ul>	
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Comments
<b>Recruitment and Hiring</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Plan articulates any proposed changes to recruitment and hiring processes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describes any local or state waivers in the school's strategy, processes, and timeline for recruiting and hiring strong faculty and staff under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.</i></li> <li>• Details the strategies the school will use to attract and recruit highly-effective, culturally-competent teachers and staff.</li> <li>• Describes the talent selection model and criteria, including the cultural competencies required for staff to support the student population and innovation plan.</li> <li>• Explains the overall hiring process steps and timeline. Includes description of the flexibilities required to hire outside of district processes and timelines.</li> </ul>	



Teacher & Staff Development	Meets Expectations	Comments
<p><i>Plan articulates any proposed changes to the school's professional development plan, which may include changes to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher development and coaching content</li> <li>• Frequency and timing of PD and coaching opportunities</li> <li>• Ability to have teachers start in August for orientation</li> <li>• Onboarding process for new staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes the professional development opportunities that will be offered to the teaching staff, at the start of an academic year and throughout the year.</li> <li>• Describes the frequency, focus, and type of teacher coaching and other supports designed to increase teacher implementation of expectations and effectiveness of instruction across the school.</li> <li>• Explains how plans for professional development differ from the school's current practice and/or district requirements and why these changes are necessary.</li> <li>• Describes how innovations in the school's professional development plan align to the school's mission and vision and will lead to increased student achievement.</li> <li>• Details the onboarding process the school will take to prepare incoming new teachers and ensure new staff understand the school's mission, instructional vision, and priorities before the school year starts.</li> <li>• Identifies the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year and explains how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing plan will be structured to accommodate this plan. Notes when teachers will have time for common planning or collaboration, and how such time will typically be used.</li> </ul>	



<b>Evaluation and Retention</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan describes any proposed changes to evaluation and retention processes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes any local or state waivers to the processes and criteria used to support the strategic evaluation and retention of highly effective teachers and staff.</li> <li>• Provides examples of innovative frameworks, standards, and practices that will be used to evaluate teachers. Specifically addresses the role of student progress and achievement in teacher evaluations.</li> <li>• Articulates strategies to promote retention of the best performing teachers.</li> <li>• Specifies steps or actions the school will take when teacher or leader performance is unsatisfactory.</li> <li>• Describes how the performance management system will be used to drive improvements in teacher effectiveness and student achievement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan explains any changes being made to the school's compensation system.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes any state or local waivers in the school's compensation system under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.</li> <li>• Outlines any incentive or reward programs and how they align with the vision and mission of the school.</li> </ul>	



<b>Culture &amp; Climate Shift</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
<b>Waivers sought:</b> <i>Plan provides a clear description of waivers sought that impact Culture and Climate Shift, if necessary.</i>	There are no areas in this section in which a discussion of rationale around waivers is necessary, but if waivers are pursued in this area, the plan should provide descriptions of how the waivers are being leveraged to support the school’s mission and vision as well as student achievement.	
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Notes
Culture and Climate	Meets Expectations	Comments
<i>Plan articulates any changes being proposed to foster a positive school culture.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes in detail any changes to the systems, programs, structures, rituals, and routines the school will use to foster a positive school culture for <u>all</u> students and teachers.</li> <li>Identifies attendance policy and expectations aligned to the school’s mission and vision and how those expectations will support all students attending and engaging in school.</li> <li>Identifies a culturally-responsive code of conduct and disciplinary procedures aligned to the school’s mission and vision that will support all students’ success.</li> <li>Describes the wraparound services provided by the school aligned to the school’s mission and vision.</li> </ul>	



<b>Engaging Learning Environment</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan articulates any changes being proposed to foster an environment with a positive school culture.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes in detail any changes to the systems, programs, structures, rituals, and routines the school will use to foster a positive school culture and create a culture that is welcoming to <u>all</u> students and teachers.</li> <li>• Explains the school’s vision for clearly defined student engagement during class time and how faculty and staff will be trained and coached in meeting the school’s vision.</li> <li>• Describes how all staff will be equipped with strategies to foster strong student engagement to ensure that minimal time will be spent redirecting students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan includes a variety of strategies to engage key stakeholders in areas of support, events, and communication.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes a highly developed plan for collaboration and partnerships directly linked to school strategies and sets forth a robust plan for parent engagement. Describes how those innovations will increase learning outcomes for children.</li> <li>• <i>Communication:</i> Explains how staff regularly will engage in meaningful communication with all families about students’ academic and social progress and how to support students at home, providing translation as necessary.</li> <li>• <i>Support:</i> Describes how the school will strategically include parents/guardians and community members in cultivating a culture of high expectations for students’ learning and their consistent support of students’ efforts.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Events</i>: Includes a plan for school to invite family and community participation in school activities that are related to school performance goals while taking proactive actions to ensure that language and culture barriers do not reduce participation of different groups of students.</li></ul>	
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<b>Budget and Operations</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
<p><b>Waivers sought:</b> <i>Plan provides a clear description of waivers sought that impact Budget and Operations.</i> <i>Further details about possible waivers are in purple in the appropriate "Meets Expectations" description.</i></p>	<p>Plan provides descriptions of how the waivers are being leveraged OR why waivers are not being pursued in each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School leadership or governance</li> <li>○ Budget autonomy</li> <li>○ General school or building operations</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> <li>○ Procurement</li> </ul>	
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Notes
<b>School Leadership and Governance Structure</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan provides an overview of leadership and governance, including how the implementation of innovations will be monitored.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describes any local or state waivers in regard to school leadership or governance.</i></li> <li>• Identifies the key school administrators, including the school principal, assistant principals, and any other new leadership roles the school plans to create.</li> <li>• Articulates changes to leadership roles and responsibilities under innovation status.</li> <li>• Describes systems and policies for continued monitoring and implementation of the school's Innovation Plan.</li> <li>• Explains how the school will regularly evaluate implementation of its plan to ensure continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	



<b>Budget</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Innovation Plan includes an explanation of how the school will use increased flexibility and autonomy over the funds allocated it by the district, including an estimate of increased operating costs and/or increased costs savings and efficiencies.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Outlines any proposed use of budget autonomies including state or local waivers, for the school and provide reasons for their necessity.</b></li> <li>• Explains any specific resources, material, equipment, staff, programs, and policies that create additional operating costs as a result of the Innovation Plan (e.g., longer school year and school day).</li> <li>• Highlights any one-time implementation costs that will be incurred during the planning year and/or year one of operating with innovation status.</li> <li>• Explains how the school will fund such additional operating costs.</li> <li>• Estimates any cost savings or increased efficiencies due to the implementation of the innovation proposal (e.g. analysis of budgeting using average vs. actual salaries or estimates of centrally budgeted services for which the school intends to access funding directly).</li> </ul>	
<b>Facilities &amp; General Operations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>Plan describes any innovations being pursued in relation to general school or building operations.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Describes any state or local waivers to the general school or building operations.</b></li> <li>• Explains if there are significant construction projects necessary to implement this Innovation Plan. Addresses if there is enough classroom space to implement this Innovation Plan.</li> <li>• <b>Describes any innovations including possible state or local waivers in the way the school will provide transportation for students.</b></li> </ul>	





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details any autonomies including possible state or local waivers regarding procurement processes.</li></ul>	
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District Systems <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Partially meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations		
<p><b>Waivers sought:</b> <i>Plan provides a clear description of waivers District Systems.</i></p> <p><i>Further details about possible waivers are in purple in the appropriate "Meets Expectations" description.</i></p>	<p>Plan provides descriptions of how the waivers are being leveraged OR why waivers are not being pursued in each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School supervision structures, systems, or policies</li> <li>○ Differentiated supports for the school</li> </ul>	
Plan Component	Rating of Evidence	Notes
Accountability and Supervision	Meets Expectations	Comments
<p><i>Plan includes details on how the school district administration will support, supervise and hold accountable school leadership.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describes any state or local waivers in the accountability or supervision structure for the innovation school.</i></li> <li>• Conveys how the principal supervisor will provide consistent support and accountability to the innovation school principal.</li> <li>• Describes reporting and evaluation structures for the innovation school principal, noting if any changes are being made to current practices or management structures.</li> <li>• Explains how the district will monitor the performance of the innovation school on an annual basis and for renewal of innovation status, which must occur every three years.</li> <li>• Includes a dispute resolution mechanism by which the school can efficiently raise issues with district leadership regarding the implementation of innovation waivers in practice.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If joining an Innovation Zone</b>, describes the coaching, support and evaluation structures that will be in place for innovation zone school principals.</li> </ul>	
<b>District Operational Support</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Plan provides an explanation of how the district will support the innovation school with its operations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Outlines the district’s plan for providing differentiated support to the innovation school including any local or state waivers needed.</b></li> <li>• Describes how district staff will respond to requests and support the implementation of waivers, particularly in the areas of budget, procurement, and hiring.</li> <li>• <b>If joining an Innovation Zone</b>, describes the changes to budgeting, organizational structures, routines, and systems. Describes the expected benefits from zone membership and how it will help propel student achievement.</li> </ul>	
<b>District Instructional Support</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Plan provides explanation of how the district will support the innovation school with instructional systems and structures.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlines the district’s plan for providing support for the school’s instructional program, including naming supervision structures and the coaching/support provided to school leadership, including the frequency and focus areas of the supports.</li> <li>• Identifies key personnel within different district departments who can ensure proper and efficient implementation of instructional waivers across various areas including: curriculum, assessment, data use, etc.</li> <li>• <b>If joining an Innovation Zone</b>, describes the collaboration across the zone that will support instructional excellence at the school.</li> </ul>	



## Summary of CDE Plan Review

Plan Section	Overall Rating	Evidence & Rationale
Innovation Pathway Plan Overview		
Instructional Transformation		
Talent Management		
Culture & Climate Shift		
Budget & Operations		
District Systems		

Summary Evaluation	Overall Rationale
<input type="checkbox"/> CDE has determined that the proposed Plan meets the expectations of rigorous standards and, if implemented, can have significant, urgent, and positive impact on student learning.	
<input type="checkbox"/> CDE has determined that the proposed Plan needs substantive revisions in order to meet the expectations described above.	
<input type="checkbox"/> CDE has determined that the proposed Plan is not sufficient to meet the expectations described above.	