



End-of-Clock Pathway Guidance Community Schools

The pathway guidance documents are intended to help districts and schools understand the Accountability Clock pathways outlined in the Education Accountability Act of 2009. Please send any questions related to Accountability Pathways to Nate Goss, Policy & Operations Manager, at Goss_N@cde.state.co.us, or any questions related to the Community Schools Conversion pathway specifically to Shannon Allen, Accountability Specialist, at Allen_S@cde.state.co.us.

		District Pathway ☒	School Pathway ☒
Overview of Pathway	Pathway Definition	<p>The Education Accountability Act outlines a pathway whereby a district may convert a low-performing school to a community school. Community schools are schools that implement the pillars of expanded learning time, collaborative leadership, family and community engagement, as well as wraparound and integrated student supports to help students achieve academically. It is important to note that this route is only available to district-run public schools. It is not available to district or Institute charter schools.</p>	
	Colorado statutory reference	<p>If a district fails to make substantial progress under its turnaround plan or has been in the accredited with priority improvement plan category or lower for five consecutive years, the State Review Panel may evaluate the school district and recommend:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“That one or more of the district public schools be converted to a community school, as defined in section 22-32.5-103 (1.5), or that one or more of the district public schools be converted to a community school, as defined in section 22-32.5-103 (1.5)” C.R.S. § 22-11-209(2)(a)(I)(F).</i></p> <p>If a school fails to make adequate progress under its turnaround plan or continues to operate under a priority improvement or turnaround plan for five consecutive years, the State Review Panel may evaluate the school and recommend:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“With regard to a district public school, that the district public school be converted to a community school, as defined in section 22-32.5-103 (1.5)” C.R.S. § 22-11-210(5)(a)(VI).</i></p>	



		<p>The definition of a “community school” in C.R.S. section 22-32.5-103 (1.5) states that:</p> <p><i>“Community school means a public school that implements the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) An annual asset and needs assessment of and by both the school and the community that engages at least seventy-five percent of families, students, and educators in the community;</i> <i>(b) A strategic plan that includes the creation of problem-solving teams who are dedicated to continuous school improvement and define how educators and community partners use all available assets to meet specific student needs and achieve better results and utilize key tools and lessons from improvement science in the continuous improvement process;</i> <i>(c) A process to engage partners who bring assets and expertise to implement the school's goals; and</i> <i>(d) A community school coordinator who is a school staff member at the community school site and who:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(I) Has the primary responsibility to facilitate the problem-solving teams implemented pursuant to subsection (1.5)(b) of this section; and</i> <i>(II) In consultation with school leadership, shall assemble relevant stakeholders to solve problems identified by the assessment performed pursuant to subsection (1.5)(a) of this section.”</i>
	<p>What is non-negotiable?</p>	<p>As with all public schools, community schools are accountable to federal and state laws and are required to implement the Colorado Academic Standards.</p> <p>The Innovation Schools Act of 2008 (C.R.S. § 22-32.5-103) details the requirements of becoming a community school, as referenced above. If a community school is seeking innovation status, the innovation plan must state that the school will operate as a community school (C.R.S. § 22-32.5-104(3)(b)).</p>



	<p>What is flexible?</p>	<p>In the context of the Accountability Act and a State Board of Education-directed order, community schools can seek different types of autonomies, usually in the areas of extended learning opportunities, academic calendar and educational programs, which will be outlined in the community school plan that is approved by the local school board and the State Board of Education. Unless seeking waivers to state or local rules or statutes through an accompanying innovation plan, the community school would be subject to all existing rules and statutes as a district-run public school.</p>
	<p>What other pathways can this be combined with?</p>	<p>Community school plans are often combined with other school improvement and turnaround strategies. Community school status is most effective when it is helping a school reach its core vision. Community school plans may be combined with innovation or management pathways that focus on creating a community school for district-run schools.</p>
<p>Rationale for Selecting this Pathway</p>	<p>For which causes of underperformance might this pathway be selected?</p>	<p>Community schools provide flexibility to address unique community needs. They can provide a structure for more community voice and ownership with the design and work at the school. Plans may be successful in situations where the needs in a school community are particularly unique, in comparison to other schools in the district, additional community voice and involvement will support stronger attainment of the school’s mission, or the school design and vision requires creative practices rooted in the four pillars of community schools.</p>
<p>Governance Implications</p>	<p>What governance and oversight structures are associated with this pathway?</p>	<p>There are no statutorily required changes to governance and oversight structures. However, it is recommended that the school and district have discussions about how community involvement will play out in the decision making process.</p> <p>There may be governance implications if paired with another pathway.</p>
	<p>What is the role of the local board in implementing this strategy?</p>	



<p>Funding Considerations</p>	<p>What are the financial considerations associated with this strategy?</p>	<p>School planning and implementation may require substantial financial investment to successfully accomplish the changes desired. The community school plan budget would specify whether the district would be responsible for any up-front costs or if the school would fundraise, obtain grants, or reallocate other funding streams to cover these costs. Grant opportunities may be available to the school to support planning and implementation, including these EASI routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability Pathways: Supports exploring the pathways, taking thoughtful action, and increasing readiness for discussions with the State Board of Education. For those who receive a directed action from the state board, the grant can support implementation of the approved pathway plan. • District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies: LEA has a plan or is already implementing a plan that meets school(s) needs and is interested in pursuing grant funds to support activities in CDE’s Major Improvement Strategy Guide for Community Schools.
<p>Resources</p>	<p>What resources would be helpful to look at if considering this pathway?</p>	<p>More information about the community schools pathway is available in the community schools pathway rubric document on the Accountability Clock website.</p> <p>To see materials from State Board of Education hearings for schools and districts proposing a pathway, visit the State Board Accountability Actions website.</p> <p>Other resources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDE’s Family, School, Community Partnerships Community Schools website. • CDE’s Major Improvement Strategy Guide for Community Schools • The Family, School, Community Partnerships asynchronous online course: Essentials of the Community Schools Strategy for Colorado Communities.
<p>CDE Contact Information</p>	<p>Who at CDE should a district contact for more information about this pathway?</p>	<p>Please contact Shannon Allen, Accountability Specialist, at Allen_S@cde.state.co.us for more information.</p>