



End of Clock Pathway Guidance

District Reorganization

These 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 comments or questions to Lindsey Jaeckel at Jaeckel_l@cde.state.co.us

District Pathway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Pathway <input type="checkbox"/>	
Overview of Pathway	<p>Pathway Definition</p> <p>School district reorganization involves any change in school district organization, including the altering of district boundaries. This option is a consideration for a district that may desire to merge with or be dissolved into a district(s) contiguous to its boundaries.</p>
	<p>Colorado statutory reference</p> <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 district reorganization, including consolidation. § 22-11-209(2)(a)(I)(A.5), Colorado Revised Statutes.</p> <p>Senate Bill 19-183 created a simplified process for the dissolution and annexation of a school district, found at § 22-30-129. This process is available when the State Board acts under the Accountability Act.</p>
	<p>What is non-negotiable?</p> <p>The local board of the district to be dissolved and annexed—the district subject to directed action—must form an “organization planning committee” with representation from its board and the local board of “each school district that is contiguous to the dissolving district.” Within 60 days of convening, the committee must adopt a proposed plan of organization to dissolve the district and annex its territory into one or more contiguous districts. The law spells out what must be in the plan of organization. <i>See</i> § 22-30-129(3).</p> <p>After designing a plan of organization, the committee must hold public hearings and work with the Commissioner of Education to finalize the plan. § 22-30-129(4). The local school boards of the affected school districts must vote on the final plan of organization. § 22-30-129(5).</p>
	<p>What is flexible?</p> <p>Flexibility is contained within the details of the plan, but the plan must at least address the following: educational needs of students, facility use, diverse educational opportunities, established boundaries for districts taking over portions of another district, and sharing of property and cash assets.</p>



<p>Rationale for Selecting this Strategy</p>	<p>For which causes of underperformance might this pathway be selected?</p>	<p>This pathway might be selected in cases of persistent academic underperformance, if school district governance proves to be ineffective over a period of time, and if surrounding districts are better positioned to support students’ academic needs.</p>
<p>Governance Considerations</p>	<p>What governance and oversight structures are associated with this pathway?</p>	<p>The local board of the district to be dissolved and annexed must form an “organization planning committee” with representation from its board and the local board of each school district that is contiguous to the dissolving district. § 22-30-129(2).</p> <p>Within 60 days of convening, the committee must adopt a proposed plan of organization to dissolve the district and annex its territory into one or more contiguous districts. The committee must give notice and hold public hearings on the plan. The committee and the Commissioner work together to develop a final, mutually agreeable plan.</p>
	<p>What is the role of the local and state board in implementing this strategy?</p>	<p>The local board of the district to be dissolved and annexed forms the “organization planning committee” with representation from its board and the local boards of contiguous districts. The planning committee and the Commissioner work together to develop a final, mutually agreeable plan within 60 days from the last hearing.</p> <p>Within 60 days of the committee’s and the Commissioner’s final approval, the local boards of the affected districts must each adopt the plan by written resolution.</p>
<p>Conditions Necessary for Success with this Strategy</p>	<p>What kind of leadership does the district need to be able to provide?</p>	<p>The district needs to have the ability to successfully lead and negotiate multiple stakeholder interests for the development of a mutually acceptable plan of district organization that meets the requirements of statute. The district must support the facilitation of public meetings about the plan.</p>
	<p>What kind of school-level leadership must be in place?</p>	<p>Public meeting notices will be posted in all affected schools to announce the time and location of public hearings about the plan.</p>
	<p>What kind of leadership must the local board be prepared to provide?</p>	<p>The local board of the district being reorganized must form the organization planning committee as defined by statute.</p> <p>The local boards of the affected school districts, including the district subject to directed action, need to formally adopt the plan by written resolution.</p>



<p>Funding Considerations</p>	<p>What are the financial considerations associated with this strategy?</p>	<p>There are a few key financial implications under the reorganization process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although an election is not required to approve the plan, voter approval is required for an annexing district to increase a mill levy or assume bonded indebtedness. • If a dissolving district has bonded indebtedness, and the annexing district(s) does not vote to assume the bonded indebtedness, the bonded indebtedness continues to be paid by the existing levy against the property of the dissolved district, collected by the annexing district(s). § 22-30-129(3)(g). • The plan of organization must address equitable distribution of dissolving district assets. § 22-30- 129(3)(e)(I)–(VI).
<p>Special Considerations</p>	<p>What risks associated with this pathway might a district want to consider?</p>	<p>This pathway requires significant time and resources for all involved districts. It may ultimately result in the permanent dissolution of the school district.</p>
	<p>What other information is important to be aware of?</p>	<p>The work is intensive, and the timeline is tightly prescribed. It is a significant change for any local community.</p>
<p>Examples</p>	<p>Where has this pathway been implemented with success? What other resources would be helpful to look at if considering this pathway?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school district has not been reorganized due to the loss of accreditation under the Education Accountability Act of 2009. • Though not due to loss of accreditation, in November 2000, voters dissolved the West Yuma District RJ-1 at the end of the fiscal year. In July 2001, two new districts were formed – Yuma School District 1 and Liberty School District J-4. • Voters in November 2000 also dissolved the East Yuma School District and formed two districts as a result—Wray School District RD-2 and Idalia School District RJ-3. • A valuable resource is the Manual of Procedures for the School Organization Act of 1992 as Amended
<p>CDE Contact Information</p>	<p>Which unit should a district contact for more information about this pathway?</p>	<p>For further information, please contact: Office of Field Services http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performancesupport Jhon Penn, Executive Director of Field Services 303-866-6632; penn_j@cde.state.co.us</p>