

UNIFIED IMPROVEMENT PLAN QUALITY CRITERIA (SCHOOL LEVEL)

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

The Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) is intended to provide districts with a consistent format to capture improvement planning efforts that streamline state and federal planning requirements. To assist with that process, the Quality Criteria offers guidance for creating an improvement plan that incorporates all of the state accountability and federal requirements. Quality Criteria are provided for Section III: Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification, and Section IV: Action Plans of the UIP template. The criteria are also a resource for state and district reviewers to use in reviewing the plans.

Meeting Specific Requirements in the Plan

All schools should respond to the general indicators. However, on some elements, the state’s accountability and the Title I program have additional requirements that are unique to that program. Therefore, clarity around (1) the school’s plan type assignment, (2) particular identifications under Title I, and (3) whether the school is a Colorado Graduation Pathways school, are important to take full advantage of this tool. Answer the following questions to ensure that the school plan is addressing all of the appropriate elements. The pre-populated report (section I of the UIP that CDE populates for each district) is another resource that should help to answer these questions.

Description of School’s Plan Type under State Accountability

What plan type has been identified for the school?

Performance Improvement Priority Improvement Turnaround Other: _____

(Confirm through your district. Once finalized, plan types will be listed at: www.schoolview.org)

Description of School’s Title I Identifications

Is the school identified as a Focus School under Title I?

Yes No

Does the school receive a Title I Tiered Intervention Grant I?

Yes No

Description of School’s Participation in the Colorado Graduation Pathways Program

Is the school a Systems Change or Capacity Building Colorado Graduation Pathways school?

Yes No

In addition to addressing the general indicators, schools should look for the following symbols that apply to the school and address those additional criteria:

-  St - T Turnaround Plan Type Assignment under the State Accountability System¹
-  St - PI Priority Improvement Plan Type Assignment under the State Accountability System²
-  TI - F Title I Focus School
-  CGP Colorado Graduation Pathways Systems Change or Capacity Building School
-  TIG Tiered Intervention Grantee

SECTION III: NARRATIVE ON DATA ANALYSIS AND ROOT CAUSE IDENTIFICATION

Data Narrative

The purpose of the data narrative is to describe the process and results of the analysis of the data for school improvement. This includes: 1) A brief description of the school; 2) An explanation regarding who participated in each step of the data analysis process; 3) The school accountability status and where performance did not meet state/federal expectations, 4) How current performance compares to the targets established in the prior year’s plan; 5) Notable performance trends (positive and negative), what data were considered (including local data sources), and how the team determined which trends were notable; 6) Priority performance challenges, the process that was used to prioritize the performance challenges, and what makes the identified priorities more important to address immediately than other notable trends; 7) Root cause(s) associated with each priority performance challenge; and 8) How the root causes were identified, and the additional data that were reviewed to validate the root causes. A description of the selection process for the corresponding major improvement strategies is encouraged.

The data narrative should meet the overall quality criteria for the data narrative as well as the criteria specific to notable trends, priority performance challenges, and root causes. Two additional worksheets are provided to support development of the data narrative. Information about progress towards the prior year’s performance targets should be included in the **monitoring progress of prior year’s performance targets worksheet**. A short (bulleted list) of notable trends, priority performance challenges, and root causes should also be included in the **data analysis worksheet**. The relationship among these items should be apparent.

¹ In addition to criteria listed here, the Commissioner shall assign the state review panel to critically evaluate a school’s Turnaround Plan in accordance with 22-11-210 (4), C.R.S.

² In addition to criteria listed here, the Commissioner may assign the state review panel to critically evaluate a school’s Priority Improvement Plan in accordance with 22-11-210 (4), C.R.S.

Required Element <i>(definition)</i>	Criteria
<p>Data Narrative (overall)</p> <p><i>Describes the “data story” and process of data analysis; a synthesis of the analysis and presentation of notable findings.</i></p> <p></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a brief description of the school to provide context. • Reflects that a school team reviewed the performance summary provided in the School Performance Framework (SPF) report, (and Section I of the pre-populated UIP Template), and specifies where the school did not meet local, state (approaching, does not meet on SPF) and/or federal performance expectations. • Reflects that the team reviewed progress towards prior year’s performance targets, and specifies the degree to which improvement efforts (major improvement strategies and action steps) were associated with intended improvements in student learning (represented in the performance targets). May also reference interim measures (local assessment results). • Identifies what additional performance data (state and local student learning data) were used in the analysis of trends. • Describes notable trends in data (both positive and negative) and what makes them notable. • Describes priority performance challenges (based on notable negative trends). • Describes the process used to prioritize the performance challenges, and why the identified challenges were prioritized. • Describes root cause(s) of each priority performance challenge. • Describes how root causes were identified and verified with more than one data source (e.g., classroom observations, lesson plan examination) and what data were used. • Describes stakeholder involvement in the different steps of the plan development process (e.g., School Accountability Committee, staff, parents, community members). <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan must address the low achievement of applicable disaggregated groups, including notable performance trends for these groups.
<p>Previous Performance Targets</p> <p><i>Description of previous targets and progress toward meeting target.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides targets set in previous year’s plan. • Describes progress toward targets. • Describes the degree to which previous improvement efforts were effective.

Required Element (definition)	Criteria
<p>Notable Trends</p> <p><i>Description of notable trends for every performance indicator, identified based on analysis of three years of data.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes both positive and negative trends that are notable for all performance indicators using at least three years of data. • Notable trend statements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ measure ○ content area ○ metric ○ group(s) of students ○ direction of the trend (e.g., declining, flat, inclining) ○ Comparison point (i.e. what make the trend notable) ○ Amount of change in the metric ○ Time period • Specifies performance indicator areas where the state expectations were not met (i.e., academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps, post-secondary/workforce readiness) or local performance expectations. • Includes analysis of data at a more detailed level than that presented in the SPF. For example, patterns over time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ within a grade level (per content area, disaggregated group); ○ within a disaggregated group of students; and/or ○ within a sub-content area (e.g., number sense in mathematics). • Includes analysis of relevant local performance data (e.g., interim measures). To the degree that data are available, includes analysis of the performance of all students in the school (e.g., preK-2, 11th and 12th) and includes performance in subjects not tested by the state.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis includes notable trends based on data from submitted for the Annual Performance Report

Required Element <i>(definition)</i>	Criteria
<p>Priority Performance Challenges</p> <p><i>Specific statements about the school’s performance challenges (not budgeting, staffing, curriculum, instruction, etc.), with at least one priority identified for each performance indicator where the school did not meet federal, state and/or local expectations.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies priority performance challenges based on analysis of negative performance trends that are of the appropriate magnitude given the overall performance of the school. • Priority performance challenges describe the strategic focus for the school considering every sub-indicator for which the school did not meet expectations. • Identifies at least one priority performance challenge for every indicator (i.e., achievement, growth, growth gaps, post-secondary/workforce readiness), for which the school did not meet state expectations (e.g., approaching, did not meet on SPF). <i>Note: Priority performance challenges do not need to be identified for every sub-indicator (e.g., math achievement, ELL student growth in reading) for which the school did not meet expectations unless it is a specific program requirement.</i> • If they are closely related, summarizes multiple trends to identify priority performance challenges. Performance challenges may also cut across performance indicators, for example describing both achievement and growth. • Specifies challenges that take into account analysis of data, including analysis at a more detailed level than that presented in the SPF report. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ for cohorts of students (e.g., 3rd grade in one year, 4th grade in the next year, 5th grade in the third year); ○ within a grade level over time (e.g., consistently not meeting expectations in 4th grade mathematics for three years); ○ within a disaggregated group of students; ○ within a sub-content area (e.g., number sense in mathematics).
<p>Root Causes</p> <p><i>Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges, that, if dissolved, would result in elimination, or substantial reduction, of the performance challenge(s).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies at least one root cause for each priority performance challenge. The same root cause may apply to multiple priority performance challenges, and should be listed next to each priority performance challenge to which it applies. • Specifies “causes” the school can control (e.g., the school does not provide additional support/interventions for schools improvement) rather than describing characteristics of students in the schools (e.g., race, poverty, or student motivation). • Reflects analysis of multiple types of data (in addition to performance data and including local data sources) in the identification and verification of root causes. • Root causes reflect the appropriate magnitude given the overall performance for the school. For example, a school that does not meet most or all the state performance indicators/sub-indicators, should identify root causes that are broader and describe issues in the overall system.

SECTION IV: ACTION PLANS

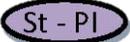
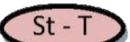
Section IV of the Unified Improvement Plan includes the *Target Setting Form* and the *Action Planning Form*. The School Target Setting Form includes columns for: priority performance challenges, annual targets for two years, interim measures for the current year and major improvement strategies. For each major improvement strategy, action planning worksheets include: the root cause(s) addressed by the major improvement strategy, action steps, resources, people responsible, timeline and status. Quality criteria for each of the components of both of these worksheets are described below. There should be a logical connection among the elements listed in the columns.

School Target Setting Form

Required Element (definition)	Criteria
<p>Performance Targets (2 years)</p> <p><i>A specific, quantifiable performance outcome that defines what would constitute success in a performance indicator area within the designated period of time.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies ambitious but attainable annual targets for every performance indicator (achievement, growth, growth gaps, and post-secondary/workforce readiness) where the school did not at least meet state expectations. • Identifies at least one target related to each priority performance challenge. • Specifies a target for the group(s) of students that is consistent with the related priority performance challenge. (e.g., 3rd grade is identified in the priority performance challenge, targets should be set for that group). • Specifies the measure (e.g., TCAP, CoALT, Escritura, Lectura, ACT) and metric (e.g., % proficient or advanced, % partially proficient, median student growth percentile, % of students making catch-up growth, % reduction in dropout rate) for which the target is being set. • Includes the required state metrics for that performance indicator (e.g. % proficient and advanced on TCAP for Achievement); targets for additional metrics may be identified also. • Sets targets for increasing performance over time in a way that would, at a minimum, result in the school meeting state expectations in a reasonable timeframe (e.g., within 2 years if a school has been on Turnaround for 3 years).
<p>Interim Measures</p> <p><i>A measure (and associated metric) of student performance used to measure performance in a specified indicator area, at more than one point during a school year.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the measure(s) to be used to monitor progress in student performance to monitor progress toward reaching each target. • Includes only measures that are administered/scored/reported more than once during the school year. • Specifies how frequently the data from the measure(s) will be available. • Specifies metrics associated with each interim measure (e.g., NWEA RIT Growth scores, Acuity subscale proficiency scores).

Action Planning Form

Required Element (definition)	Criteria
<p>Major Improvement Strategies</p> <p><i>An overall approach that describes a series of related actions intended to result in improvements in performance.</i></p> <p></p> <p> </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies an overall research-based approach based on a theory about how performance will improve. The research-based strategies must have evidence that it has been effective in a similar context. Identifies the specific approach (e.g., not “improve reading instruction,” rather “implement formative assessment practices in all 3rd -10th grade classrooms during reading instruction”). The identified major improvement strategy is designed to respond to the identified root cause(s), ultimately addressing the associated priority performance challenges and improving student performance. Defines strategies of the appropriate magnitude given the overall performance for the school. (e.g., for a school that does not meet most or all the state performance indicators/sub-indicators, should identify strategies that are broader and address issues in the overall system). <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must include at least one of the state-required Turnaround strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turnaround Partner School Management Innovation School School Management Contract Charter Conversion Restructure Charter School Closure Other Strategy of Comparable or Greater Effect <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies an approach to improvement that will result in enough change in performance for the school to have a plan type assignment of Improvement or above (thus moving off of the accountability clock) within a reasonable time frame. <i>Note: this is a key criterion for evaluation by the State Review Panel.</i>
<p>Action Steps</p> <p><i>Activities that detail how Major Improvement Strategies will be implemented and are specific enough to allow leaders to determine that Major Improvement Strategies have been accomplished.</i></p> <p></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes specific details needed to implement the Major Improvement Strategies (e.g. professional development and associated follow up that will be provided, how parents will be engaged in the Major Improvement Strategy). Includes the development of systems and processes for managing the Major Improvement Strategy. Includes the specific steps that any external consultants or contractors (if the school is working with external consultants/contractors) will take to implement the Major Improvement Strategy. Details when implementation benchmarks and interim measures will be analyzed and interpreted and who will be involved. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action steps (and as appropriate, Major Improvement Strategies) include methods and tactics of the Dropout Prevention Framework.

Required Element <i>(definition)</i>	Criteria
  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes activities to increase parent engagement in the school. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action steps address the needs of identified low achieving disaggregated groups.
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifies the month(s) and year when each action step will take place. Identifies a logical sequence of action steps. Represents a two year timeframe.
Key Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes who will be responsible for implementing the action step(s), may be a position or a role.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies funds (including local, state, federal funds) or other resources (e.g., staff time, expertise, external contracts) necessary to implement the action steps. For example .2FTE of an instructional coach will be devoted to implementing this action step -- local funds and Title I pay for the position). Aligns resources with the proposed action step in a clear manner. Must include total funds and source budgeted for each improvement strategy, including local, state and federal funds. Specifies the amount of the resource (money, time). Identifies use of funds that is appropriate and allowable for each funding source. <hr/>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If CGP funds will support action steps, the funds are included and aligned with the major improvement strategy.
Implementation Benchmarks <i>A measure (with associated metric) used to assess the degree to which action steps have been implemented. (Note: not performance measures.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifies what will be measured (with associated metrics) and when data will be collected to assess the degree to which Major Improvement Strategies and associated action steps have been implemented. <i>Note: implementation benchmarks may be quantitative or qualitative.</i> Includes an implementation benchmark for every action step. <i>Note: a single implementation benchmark may be used to measure implementation for several different action steps.</i> Identifies implementation benchmarks that have a clear relationship with the associated action step(s).
Status <i>Progress toward action step completion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional, unless directed by a competitive grant program. Indicates the status of the action step. May include specific information, such as date completed.

Required Element <i>(definition)</i>	Criteria
Additional Documentation 	Required Addendum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for schools assigned to a turnaround plan type.
	Required Addendum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for schools awarded a Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TIG Schools must complete the addendum that corresponds to the model the school has selected (Turnaround, Transformation, or Closure).