# Unified Improvement Plan Quality Criteria (District Level)

# *General Directions*

The Unified Improvement Plan 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 offer guidance on 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 unified improvement planning 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 districts should respond to the general indicators. However, on some elements, there are additional state and federal requirements that are unique to specific programs (e.g., Turnaround under state accountability, Title I Corrective Action). Therefore, clarity around (1) the district’s accreditation category, (2) whether the district has been identified under other state accountability designations (e.g., required to complete a Graduation and Completion plan), and (3) whether the district has been identified under any of the NCLB programs (i.e., Titles I, IIA and/or III). Answer the following questions to ensure that the district plan is addressing all of the appropriate elements.

*Description of District under State Accountability*

Which accreditation category has been identified for the district?

🞎 Performance 🞎 Improvement 🞎 Priority Improvement 🞎 Turnaround

(Once finalized, accreditation categories will be listed at: [www.schoolview.org](http://www.schoolview.org))

Is the district identified as a designated Graduation district and required to develop and implement a Student Graduation and Completion Plan (Colorado Statute 22-14-107)?

🞎 Yes 🞎 No

*Description of District’s NCLB Programs*

Is the district identified for improvement under Title I? What level of improvement? How long?

🞎 Program improvement – Year1 or 2 🞎 Corrective Action, Number of years: \_\_\_\_

(Once Title I designations are finalized, confirm on your pre-populated report for the UIP, p. 4 or on the CDE website at: www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/danda/aypres.asp)

Is the district identified for 2141c under Title IIA?

🞎 Yes 🞎 No

(Once Title IIA designations are finalized, confirm on your pre-populated report for the UIP, p. 4 or on the CDE website at: www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/tii/a.asp)

Is the district or consortium identified for Title III Program improvement?

🞎 Yes 🞎 No

(Once Title III designations are finalized, confirm on your pre-populated report for the UIP, p. 4)

In addition to addressing the general indicators, districts should look for the following symbols that apply to the district and address additional requirements for the programs identified above.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SGCP  St - T | Turnaround Plan Type under State Accountability System[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| TI - PI | Identified for Student Graduation and Completion Plan |
|  | Identified for Program Improvement under Title I (Year 1 or 2) |
|  |  |
| TI-CA4  TI-CA | Identified for Corrective Action under Title I (Year 1 through 3) |
|  | Identified for Corrective Action under Title I (Year 4 or higher) |
| 2141c | Identified for 2141c under Title IIA |
| TIII-PI | Identified for Title III Program improvement |

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: identifying where the school did not at least meet minimum state and federal accountability expectations, describing progress towards targets for the prior school year, describing what performance data were used in the analysis of trends, identifying trends and priority performance challenges (negative trends), describing how performance challenges were prioritized, identifying the root causes of performance challenges, describing how the root causes were identified and verified (with more than one data source), what data were used, and stakeholder involvement in the analysis. The data narrative should not include a description of major improvement strategies, action steps, etc. The narrative should meet the overall criteria as well as the criteria specific to trends, priority performance challenges, and root causes. A short (bulleted list) of trends, priority performance challenges, and root causes should also be included in the **data analysis worksheet**. Information about progress towards the prior year’s performance targets should be included in the **monitoring progress of prior year’s performance targets** **worksheet**. There should be a logical connection among the elements listed in the columns of the worksheet.

| Required Element *(definition)* | Criteria |
| --- | --- |
| **Data Narrative (overall)**  *Describes the “data story” and process of data analysis; a synthesis of the analysis and presentation of notable findings.* | * Reflects that a district team reviewed the performance summary provided in the District Performance Framework (DPF) report, (and Section I of the pre-populated Unified Improvement Planning Template), and specifies where the district did not meet local, state (approaching, does not meet on DPF) and/or federal performance expectations. * Reflect that the team reviewed progress towards prior year’s performance targets. * Identifies what additional performance data (state and local student learning data) were used in the analysis of trends. * Describes trends in data. * Describes priority performance challenges. * Describes the process used to prioritize the performance challenges. * Describes root causes of performance challenges. * Describes how root causes were identified and verified with more than one data source (e.g., teacher surveys, classroom observations) and what data were used. * Describes stakeholder involvement in plan development (e.g., District Accountability Committee, school staff, parents, community members). |
| TI - PI & CA | * Describes why the previous plan did not bring about increased student achievement or justification for continuation of existing improvement plan. |
| 2141c | * Data analysis and narrative includes a description of the factors that prevented the district from meeting its AYP and/or Highly Qualified targets. District must address each target that was not met. |
| TIII-PI | * Identifies the specific factors that prevented the district from meeting its AMAO targets. * Identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the current plan. |
| SGCP | * Specifically includes description and analysis of the following data: Dropout rate, graduation rate, completion rate, truancy rate, suspension rate, expulsion rate, mobility rate, and number of habitually truant students. |
| **Previous Performance Targets**  *Description of previous targets and progress toward meeting target.* | * Targets set in previous year’s plan provided. * Progress toward targets described. * Meets criteria for Performance Targets. |
| **Trends**  *Description of trends for every performance indicator, identified based on analysis of three years of data.* | * Makes explicit to which performance indicator/sub-indicator the trend applies, and the direction of the trend (e.g., strengths and challenges). * Specifies performance indicator areas where the district failed to meet state (i.e., academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps, post-secondary/workforce readiness), federal (e.g., AYP targets), or local performance expectations. * Includes analysis of data at a more detailed level than that presented in the DPF report, for example, patterns over time:   + for cohorts of students (3rd grade in one year, 4th grade in the next year, 5th grade in the third year);   + 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 (interim assessments, etc.). * To the degree that data are available, includes analysis of the performance of all students in the district (e.g., preK-2, 11th and 12th), and includes performance in subjects not tested by the state. |
| **Priority Performance Challenges**  *Specific statements about the district’s performance challenges (not budgeting, staffing, curriculum, instruction, etc.), with at least one priority identified for each performance indicator where the district did not meet federal, state and/or local expectations.* | * Priority performance challenges describe the strategic focus for the district considering every sub-indicator for which the district did not meet expectations. *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 (e.g., grantees on Title III improvement that miss AMAO 3 will need to examine the missed AYP targets for ELL students).* * Identifies *at least one* priority performance challenge for every indicator (i.e., achievement, growth, growth gaps, post-secondary/workforce readiness) for which the district did not meet state expectations (e.g., approaching, did not meet on DPF). * Specifies priority disaggregated groups. Required for Title I AYP targets or safe-harbor targets as appropriate; recommended for all others. * Identifies priority performance challenges based on analysis of performance trends. * Specifies needs at a more detailed level than that presented in the DPF report, for example:   + for cohorts of students (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; and/or   + within a sub-content area (e.g., number sense in mathematics). |
| **Root Causes**  *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).* | * Identifies one root cause for each priority performance challenge (the same root cause could apply to multiple challenges, and should be listed next to each priority performance challenge to which it applies). * Specifies “causes” the district can control (e.g., the district does not provide additional support/interventions for schools on improvement) rather than describing characteristics of students in the schools (e.g., race, poverty, 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. * For districts with performance that does not meet state expectations on a large number, or all, of the performance indicators/sub-indicators, explicitly considers broad, systemic root causes. |

Section IV: Action Plans

Section IV of the Unified Improvement Plan includes the *District Target Setting Form* and the *Action Planning Form*. The district 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. There should be a logical connection among the elements listed in the columns.

## District/Consortium Target Setting Form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Required Element (definition) | Criteria |
| **Performance Targets  (2 years)**  *A specific, quantifiable performance outcome that defines what would constitute success in a performance indicator area within the designated period of time.* | * Specifies priority disaggregated groups for pre-established federal performance indicator targets or identifies safe-harbor targets as appropriate. * Specifies ambitious but attainable annual target(s) for every performance indicator area (achievement, growth, growth gaps, and post-secondary/workforce readiness) where the district did not at least meet state expectations, including at least one annual target related to each priority performance challenge. Title I districts are expected to include AYP targets as well. * Identifies the group or disaggregated group of students to which the target applies (e.g., 3rd grade, English Language Learners). * Specifies the measure (e.g., CSAP, CSAPA, Escritura, Lectura, ACT Composite) 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; targets for additional metrics may also be identified. * Sets targets for increasing performance over time in a way that would, at a minimum, result in the district meeting state expectations within five years. * Provides specific, actionable targets which may be at the grade or disaggregated group level (e.g., ELL students, truant students) * May include targets associated with required district performance indicators (e.g., English language attainment, educator quality, and high school completion rates). |
| SGCP | * Includes targets for each of the following:   + Reducing student truancy rate;   + Reducing dropout rate;   + Increasing student attendance rate;   + Increasing graduation rate;   + Increasing completion rate. |
| **Interim Measures**  *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.* | * For each annual target, describes what will be used to measure student performance to monitor progress in reaching the target. * Includes only measures that are administered/scored/reported more than once during the school year. * Specifies how frequently the data from the measure 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 |
| --- | --- |
| **Major Improvement Strategies**  *An overall approach that describes a series of related actions intended to result in improvements in performance.* | * Describes an overall research-based approach based on a theory about how performance will improve. There must be evidence that the strategy has previously resulted in improvement in performance, such as that specified by a priority performance challenge. * Describes the specific change in practice that will result from the action steps (e.g., not “improve reading instruction,” rather “implement formative assessment practices in all 3rd -10th grade classrooms during reading instruction”). * Explicitly responds to the identified root cause(s). * Specifically addresses the needed instructional improvements. * Includes strategies associated with required district performance indicators (e.g., English language attainment, educator quality and high school completion rates). |
| St - T | * Must include at least one of the following approaches: * Turnaround Partner * District Management * Innovation Designation * School Management Contract * Charter Conversion * Restructure Charter * School Closure * Other Strategy of Comparable or Greater Effect |
| SGCP | * Identifies at least one major improvement strategy that is designed to result in (1) improved dropout prevention, including student attendance, and (2) improved student engagement and re-engagement. |
| TI-CA | * Major improvement strategy(s) will directly respond to serious instructional, managerial, and organizational problems in the LEA that jeopardize the likelihood that students will achieve proficiency in the core academic subjects of reading and mathematics. |
| TI-CA4 | * Plan goes beyond previous efforts to impact student achievement. |
| **Action Steps**  *The activities or actions that will be taken to implement a major improvement strategy.* | * Describes the specific steps that district personnel will take to implement the major improvement strategy. * Describes the specific steps that any external consultants or contractors (if the district is working with them) will take to implement the major improvement strategy. |
| SGCP | * Identifies the manner in which the district and parents will work together to address dropout risk factors and remediation strategies. |
| TI - PI & CA | * Address the fundamental teaching and learning needs of the schools in the LEA, especially the academic problems of low-achieving students. * Define specific measurable achievement goals and targets for each of the student subgroup whose disaggregated results are included in the State’s definition of AYP. * Incorporate strategies grounded in scientifically based research that will strengthen instruction in core academic subjects. * Provide for high-quality professional development for instructional staff that focuses primarily on improved instruction. * Include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the schools served by the LEA. |
| 2141c | * Strategies (linked to Title IIA funding) meet the state identified priorities, including (1) professional development, (2) recruitment, retention and distribution of effective teachers and/or (3) activities that ensure teachers will be highly qualified. |
| TIII-PI | * Describes specific scientifically based research strategies that will be use to improve achievement in 1) English Language Development, 2) Reading/LA, and 3) Mathematics as identified through AMAO data. * Provides for high-quality professional development that will have a positive and long-term impact on teachers and administrators in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the educational programs provided to ELLs. * Includes strategies to promote effective parental and community involvement at the school and district level. * Describes coordination with other NCLB programs. |
| **Timeline** | * Specifies the month(s) and year when each action step will take place. * Identifies a logical sequence of action steps. |
| **Key Personnel** | * Optional, but recommended * Describes who will be responsible for implementing the action step(s); may be a position or a role. |
| **Resources** | * Clearly aligns resources with the proposed action step. * Must include total funds budgeted for each improvement strategy, including local, state and federal funds. * May include: staff time, expertise, external contracts. (e.g., .2FTE of an instructional coach will be devoted to implementing this action step -- Local funds and Title I pay for the position). * Specifies the amount (of money and/or time). * Specifies the source (e.g., Title I, district). |
| TI - PI & CA | * Clearly identifies how Title I Program Improvement set-aside funds will be used. |
| **Implementation Benchmarks**  *A measure (with associated metric) used to assess the degree to which action steps have been implemented. (Note: Not performance measures.)* | * Specifies what will be measured (with associated metrics) and when data will be collected. *Note: Implementation benchmarks may be quantitative or qualitative.* * Describes when implementation benchmarks will be analyzed and interpreted and who will be involved. *Note: Analyzing and interpreting implementation benchmarks and making adjustments to action steps should be included in the action steps.* |
| **Status**  *Progress toward action step completion* | * Optional, unless directed by a competitive grant program. * Indicates the status of the action step. * May include specific information, such as date completed. |
| **Additional Documentation**  SGCP | * Narrative describing the supports the district will provide to students who leave school prior to graduation and educational alternatives available to students (e.g., adult basic education, general education development, workforce or job training). * Description of implementation of recommendations from Practices Assessment. |
| TI - PI & CA | * District-level Parent Involvement Policy may be attached to the Unified Improvement Plan, rather than woven into the UIP. |
| 2141c | * Entire projected Title IIA allocation for 2012-13 is included in the form. * Activities are described or a cross-walk of where the activity is described in the UIP is provided. |

1. In addition to criteria listed here, the Commissioner shall assign the state review panel to critically evaluate a school district’s turnaround plan in accordance with 22-11-208 (3), C.R.S. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)