



Colorado Public School Accountability

**Legislative Council Staff
State Capitol Building, Room 029
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: (303) 866-3521**

February 2008

Table of Contents

Frequently Asked Questions 23

Glossary 27

Colorado Public School Accountability 1

State Accountability System 1

 State Model Content Standards 1

 Local Accountability Programs 2

 School district accountability committees 2

 School advisory councils 2

 Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) 3

 Historical progression of statewide
 assessment program 3

 CSAP and students with special needs 5

 CSAP administration 5

 Colorado Basic Literary Act 6

 Colorado English Language Assessment Program . . . 7

 National Assessment of Educational
 Progress (NAEP) 8

 Background 8

 2007 and 2008 NAEP assessments 8

 Reporting and Results 9

 School accountability reports 10

 School improvement plans and
 corrective action 12

 Voluntary restructuring 14

 Student academic growth calculation 14

 School District Accreditation 14

 Accreditation contract 14

 Accreditation indicators 15

 Accreditation review process 16

 Corrective action cycle 16

Federal Accountability Requirements 17

 Adequate Yearly Process 17

 Single statewide accountability system and
 adequate yearly progress 17

 Colorado implementation of AYP requirements . . . 18

 Title I sanctions 20

Colorado Public School Accountability

Significant changes to federal and state law in recent years have shaped the scope and focus of reform efforts and accountability for Colorado's public schools. At the state level, education reform begun in the early 1990s has evolved into a system of standards and assessments that retains the state's commitment to local control of its public schools. In this context, the reauthorization of federal law at the beginning of the decade, through the "No Child Left Behind Act," posed new requirements for states and established a stronger nexus between the federal government and the states. The results may be seen in Colorado's state accountability system, aligned and reviewed in light of federal law, and encompassing specific measurements of student achievement, requirements for reporting of results, and benchmarks and consequences for schools and school districts.

State Accountability System

State Model Content Standards (Section 22-7-406, C.R.S.)

Requirements for the adoption and implementation of model content standards signified an early phase in education reform undertaken in Colorado during the 1990s and remain an important part of the state's accountability system. Adopted by the State Board of Education, state model content standards, along with suggested grade expectations, specify guidelines and goals for student achievement in the areas of: art (including dance, theater, and visual arts), civics, economics, foreign language, geography, history, math, music, physical education, science, reading, and writing. Local school districts are required to adopt content standards that meet or exceed the state model content standards and to align their curricula accordingly.

Local Accountability Programs (Part 1 of Article 7 of Title 22, C.R.S.)

School district accountability committees. Colorado's state accountability system is implemented through its 178 school districts. State law requires school district boards of education to adopt a local accountability plan and to establish a school district accountability committee. The committee must include: at least three parents of students in the district who are not district employees or related to district employees; one teacher; one school administrator; and one business person from the school community. The committee's responsibilities include developing recommendations on the district's accountability plan, with specific areas of study determined jointly by the board of education and the committee. State law further specifies a role for the committee in budget prioritization by requiring it to provide recommendations on school district expenditures to the board of education.

School advisory councils. Local accountability measures include not only school district accountability committees, but committees at the school level as well. State law provides for the establishment of a seven-member school advisory council comprised of:

- the school principal;
- one teacher elected by the licensed professionals at the school;
- three parents or legal guardians of students enrolled at the school elected by the parents and guardians of students at the school;
- an adult member of the school organization representing parents, teachers, and students; and
- a business person from the school community appointed by the school principal.

School advisory council responsibilities include making recommendations to the school principal on school expenditures and holding meetings, at least quarterly, concerning:

- ways to determine whether or not the educational process at the school is advancing student achievement;
- responsibilities to report publicly on the educational performance of the school, including data for appraisal of performance;
- recommendations to the principal on the expenditure of grants received by the school; and
- safety issues at the school.

Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)
(Section 22-7-409, C.R.S.)

Historical progression of statewide assessment program.

The Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), implemented through statute in 1993, serves as a cornerstone of the state's accountability system. As its legislative declaration of education reform suggests, the General Assembly has seen the administration of statewide assessments as an anchor in the implementation of standards-based reform, "with the focus of education including not just what teachers teach, but what students learn." Since the first reading and writing assessments given to fourth graders in 1997, the program has expanded to include assessments in grades 3 through 10, as well as Spanish reading and writing assessments in grades 3 and 4. Since 2001, eleventh grade students have been required to take the ACT assessment. Table 1 shows the historical progression of the CSAP by indicating the years in which assessments were added pursuant to state law.

Table 1
Colorado Assessment Schedule

Grade	Subject Area	Spring 1997	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006
3	Reading (Spanish) Writing (Spanish) Math		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
4	Reading (Spanish) Writing (Spanish) Math	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
5	Reading Writing Math Science			✓*	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
6	Reading Writing Math					✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
7	Reading Writing Math			✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
8	Reading Writing Math Science				✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
9	Reading Writing Math					✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
10	Reading Writing Math Science					✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
11	ACT Assessment					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Because this assessment was given in the fall of 1999, the results were not included in summary reporting for that year.

CSAP and students with special needs. The CSAP provides for the participation of almost all special education students by allowing accommodations for the test administration. According to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the process under federal law requiring state policymakers and local educators to assess the individual needs of special education students through an individualized education program (IEP) results in determinations about whether a student requires testing accommodations. Accommodations are meant to give special education students an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, while retaining the integrity of the assessment. Accommodations could include "presentation accommodations," such as a qualified person reading questions aloud to a student or providing large print editions of tests and instructional materials to students with visual impairments. "Response accommodations" might allow the use of a dictionary or of a scribe to record a student's response in written form.

Students who are unable to participate in the general assessments may be assessed on literacy, math, and science skills through the CSAP alternate, or CSAP-A. As a performance-based assessment, the CSAP-A allows students to demonstrate their skills, which are observed by the test administrator. For example, a student participating in the CSAP-A may listen to a story and be asked to respond to reading comprehension questions. According to the CDE, performance indicators for the CSAP-A are intended to measure how independently a student is able to perform each activity.

CSAP administration. State law prescribes a spring administration window for CSAP testing. Table 2 provides the CSAP testing schedule for 2008.

Table 2
2008 CSAP Administration Schedule

Content Area	Grade Level	Testing Period
CSAP-A	Grades 3-10	February 6 - March 28
Reading (English and Spanish)	Grade 3	February 18 - February 29
Reading (including Spanish for grade 4)	Grades 4 - 10	March 10 - April 11
Writing (including Spanish for grades 3 and 4)	Grades 3 - 10	
Math Science	Grades 3 - 10 Grades 5, 8, 10	
ACT assessment	Grade 11	April 23

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Colorado Basic Literacy Act (Part 5 of Article 7 of Title 22, C.R.S.)

One component of Colorado's accountability system promotes student literacy and specifically targets the development of reading skills during students' first school years. The Colorado Basic Literacy Act requires school districts annually to assess the reading skills of students in kindergarten and grades one through three. The State Board of Education has approved three assessments for school districts to measure student literacy levels. Upon administration of assessments, school districts must develop an individual literacy plan (ILP) for any student who is reading below grade level.

The CDE tracks student results on assessments administered under the basic literacy act. Pursuant to state law, school districts must report student results, specifically the number and percentage of:

- third grade students who read at or above grade level;
- students who have an individual literacy plan or are enrolled in an intensive literacy program; and
- students who have increased their literacy and reading comprehension levels by two or more grade levels during one year of instruction.

Colorado English Language Assessment Program (Article 24 of Title 22, C.R.S.)

Both federal and state law require the assessment of English language learners in order to determine their level of English proficiency and to inform their appropriate placement in language instruction programs. Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, the Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA) program implemented new state requirements to standardize school district assessment of English language learners. The program actually utilizes two tests. The **CELA placement test** is given to any enrolling K-12 student who has been identified through the state's Home Language Survey as having a primary home language other than English. This assessment allows school districts to determine a student's level of English language proficiency and to decide appropriate instructional options.

The **CELA proficiency test** must be administered to any student who is receiving language support services and has been identified through the placement test as Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Based on content standards, the proficiency test evaluates students' listening, speaking, writing, oral language, and comprehension skills and is used to compare and track student progress, assess instructional options, and evaluate language support services at the school and district level.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Background. The National Assessment of Educational Progress is a longstanding national assessment program that allows comparison of student performance among states, as well as evaluation of student performance nationally over time. National and state-level results are reported based on representative samples of student populations selected to take the assessments. While different academic subjects have been tested over the program's 30-plus year history, beginning in 2003 fourth and eighth graders are assessed biennially in math and reading. Additional testing may vary by testing cycle. While other portions of the program are considered optional, federal law requires states receiving federal Title I funds to participate in the reading and math assessment for fourth and eighth grade students, with the NAEP program selecting the sample of schools to take part.

The NAEP program also includes "long-term trend" math and reading assessments, which are administered only once every four years to students ages 9, 13, and 17. While the testing instruments used in the main NAEP assessment change periodically to reflect an evolution in curriculum and instruction, the content and testing frameworks for the math and reading long-term trend assessments have stayed largely the same since the 1970s. This portion of the program allows for evaluation of national student performance over time.

2007 and 2008 NAEP assessments. Selected Colorado schools participated in the NAEP program during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years. In the spring of 2007, approximately 12,000 Colorado fourth and eighth grade students representing 234 public schools participated in the federally required reading and math assessments. According to CDE, the percentage of Colorado students performing at or above the NAEP basic level on these assessments was 70 percent and higher, which equaled or exceeded the national average on each of the four assessments. Table 3 indicates the subject areas, grade levels, and schedule for the 2007-08 assessment cycle. The CDE indicates that 31 Colorado public schools are participating in this component of the program.

Table 3
2007-08 NAEP Administration Schedule

Content Area	Students Assessed	Testing Period
Math* Reading* Science*	Grades 4,8,12	January 28, 2008 - March 7, 2008
Music and Visual Arts	Grade 8	January 28, 2008 - March 7, 2008
Math (long-term trend) Reading (long-term trend)	Age 9	January 7 - February 8, 2008
Math (long-term trend) Reading (long-term trend)	Age 13	October 8 - December 14, 2007
Math (long-term trend) Reading (long-term trend)	Age 17	March 17 - May 23, 2008

* Pilot assessment for 2009 assessments
Source: Colorado Department of Education

Reporting and Results (Part 6 of Article 7 of Title 22, C.R.S.)

Recognizing that the wide variety of practices and curriculum among school districts and schools throughout the state made it difficult to monitor the progress of schools and to measure whether schools were providing a thorough and uniform system of education, the General Assembly directed the CDE to develop a state reporting system to compile objective indicators of every public school's academic performance. The reports are intended to provide information to parents and the community-at-large about the performance and improvement of schools, allowing parents to make informed choices about their children's education.

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act also contains reporting requirements, requiring states to report assessment data (CSAP scores), accountability data (adequate yearly progress results), graduation rate data, school improvement status of Title I schools, information about teacher qualifications, and the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers.

School accountability reports. Pursuant to state law, school accountability reports (SARs) are prepared annually by the CDE for each public school in the state. In addition to information about academic performance, SARs also contain information about: school staff; school safety; non-CSAP course offerings such as art, drama, music, and physical education; and school financial data.

Schools receive one of five overall academic performance ratings on the SAR:

- excellent;
- high;
- average;
- low; or
- unsatisfactory.

To arrive at a school's rating, the CDE averages the individual scores for CSAP assessments in reading, mathematics, writing, and science—assigning the school an overall standardized weighted total score. For high schools, the ACT results for 11th grade students are added to the CSAP results. A weighted total is calculated by applying weights to the percentage of students performing at each proficiency level. Schools are ranked by their weighted total score within each level (elementary school—grades 1 through 5 or 1 through 6; middle school—grades 6 through 8 or 7 through 9; and high school—grades 9 through 12 or 10 through 12). Performance ratings are then assigned according to a distribution index.

It should be noted that the following students have their scores excluded from school academic performance rating computations:

- students who took alternative assessments (CSAP-A);
- students who were expelled, although their scores are included in the district-level calculations that appear on the SAR;
- students who entered the school after October 1 of that year; and
- English learners who took the English version of the CSAP and who have been in a Colorado public school for fewer than three years.

Table 4 provides information on the number of schools statewide that received each overall academic performance rating within each school level in 2005, 2006, and 2007. In each of these years, average was the most common rating at each school level. In the 2006-07 school year, 1,472 schools — 79 percent — achieved a rating of average, high, or excellent.

Table 4
School Academic Performance Ratings by School Level
2005-2007 School Years

Academic Performance Rating	2005		2006		2007	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Elementary Schools						
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Excellent	101	10.3%	106	10.7%	112	11.1%
High	303	31.0%	321	32.4%	304	30.0%
Average	375	38.3%	370	37.4%	388	38.3%
Low	193	19.7%	183	18.5%	205	20.2%
Unsatisfactory	6	0.6%	10	1.0%	4	0.4%
Total	978	100%	990	100%	1,013	100%
Middle Schools						
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Excellent	65	14.5%	58	12.7%	71	14.8%
High	147	32.8%	142	31.2%	157	32.6%
Average	150	33.5%	160	35.2%	159	33.1%
Low	80	17.9%	91	20.0%	93	19.3%
Unsatisfactory	6	1.3%	4	0.9%	1	0.2%
Total	448	100%	455	100%	481	100%

Table 4
School Academic Performance Ratings by School Level
2005-2007 School Years (Cont.)

Academic Performance Rating	2005		2006		2007	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
High Schools						
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Excellent	37	10.5%	35	9.8%	36	9.9%
High	110	31.1%	114	32.0%	119	32.8%
Average	127	35.9%	122	34.3%	126	34.7%
Low	75	21.2%	78	21.9%	76	20.9%
Unsatisfactory	5	1.4%	7	2.0%	6	1.7%
Total	354	100%	356	100%	363	100%

Note: Percentage totals may not sum due to rounding.
Source: Colorado Department of Education

The SAR also includes an academic growth of students rating, which replaced the school improvement rating in the 2004-05 school year. This rating is based on the proportion of students who make CSAP scale score gains. There are five ratings as follows:

- significant improvement;
- improvement;
- stable;
- decline; and
- significant decline.

School improvement plans and corrective action. If a Colorado school receives an academic performance rating of "unsatisfactory," the local board of education develops a school improvement plan, holds a public hearing, then submits the plan to the State Board of Education within 90 days after receiving the rating.

When reviewing the plan, the State Board of Education must consider, at a minimum:

- the scope of change implemented under the improvement plan and the amount of time needed to fully implement the change;
- whether the school has improved its academic performance, based on the school's overall standardized weighted total score and the degree of the improvement;
- the number of years the school has received an academic performance rating of "unsatisfactory" prior to and after implementing the improvement plan, and the total number of years in the preceding six-year period that the school received an "unsatisfactory" rating;
- whether the school is achieving its targets for adequate yearly progress; and
- any other considerations by which to measure whether implementation of the improvement plan will raise the academic performance rating within a reasonable amount of time and stabilize the rating at a level above "unsatisfactory."

The State Board of Education annually reviews the operations of a school that operates under a school improvement plan as long as the school is rated "unsatisfactory." A school operating under a school improvement plan has two years to improve its academic performance rating. If, after completion of the second year, the school receives an "unsatisfactory" rating, the State Board of Education reviews the operations of the school and determines whether:

- the school should continue to operate under the improvement plan;
- the improvement plan should be modified; or
- the school should be converted to an independent charter school.

If a school receives an "unsatisfactory" rating after operating under an improvement plan for three years, and the school's CSAP scores have not improved significantly over the scores received in the first year of the improvement plan, the State Board of Education may remove the school district's accreditation.

Voluntary restructuring. A local board of education may voluntarily restructure a school that receives an "unsatisfactory" rating and apply to the State Board of Education for a determination regarding whether the restructuring constitutes a major restructuring of the governance of the school. If the State Board of Education finds that it is a major restructuring, the school is allowed to continue operating under the restructuring plan unless it receives an "unsatisfactory" rating for two years in any three-year period. If the school receives such ratings, the State Board of Education reviews the operations of the school as it does the operations of an unsatisfactory school operating under a school improvement plan.

Student academic growth calculation. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, the CDE is required to calculate adequate academic growth, based on CSAP assessment results for the preceding school years, for each student and each school, and to provide that information to school districts. The information provided must include information on whether each student made at least one year's academic growth in one year's time and whether the amount of academic growth is adequate for the student to reach a performance level of "proficient" within three years or by the tenth grade, whichever is sooner. For students who are already at the "proficient" level, the academic growth information is required to specify whether the student is on pace to remain proficient or to move to the "advanced" performance level.

School District Accreditation (Article 11 of Title 22, C.R.S.)

The purpose of the standards-based accreditation process is to foster greater accountability and academic improvement for school districts through benchmarks and improvement measures. Accreditation is based on a number of accreditation indicators established by rule of the State Board of Education.

Accreditation contract. The State Board of Education enters into six-year accreditation contracts with the local board of education of each school district, which may include a subcontract with a board of cooperative educational services (BOCES). The accreditation contract defines the standards, goals, and requirements to be met by the district over the term of the contract.

If the district fails to meet the requirements of the contract, the state board may impose sanctions and corrective actions. Contracts may be renegotiated at any time based on significant changes in circumstances.

The accreditation contract must include a number of items, including systems for measuring student achievement and methods for improving the scores of students who score below proficient on the CSAP assessments. The contract also requires a school district to administer policy and management functions such as: community involvement; public disclosure of nonidentifying student achievement results for each school in the district; recognition for schools that meet or exceed the accreditation indicators and assistance for schools that fail to meet them; and identification and assistance of school principals who require further training or development. Accreditation contracts also require school boards to improve each school's student performance.

Accreditation indicators. There are 11 indicator areas that are used to determine the accreditation category of a school district as follows:

- district completion and implementation of an educational improvement plan;
- progression toward achieving CSAP goals;
- closing achievement gaps;
- demonstrating value-added growth by using CSAP and other district assessment data;
- having standards in place and assessing performance in curriculum areas not assessed by CSAP;
- complying with school accountability report requirements;
- complying with requirements to report annually to the public;
- complying with the "Safe Schools Act;"
- complying with the "Colorado Basic Literacy Act;"
- district completion and implementation of plans for educational technology and information literacy, retention and recruitment of teachers, and contextual learning; and
- compliance with budgeting, accounting, and reporting requirements.

Accreditation review process. In evaluating a district's progress, the State Board of Education applies the concept of "reasonable progress over reasonable time," as follows:

- a district must show evidence of progress/compliance in each of the 11 areas covered by the accreditation indicators;
- progress is measured using 2001-02 as the baseline year;
- progress is based on growth in student achievement from year to year, and in terms of the district's goals; and
- district goals must be specific, measurable, attainable, research-based, and time phased for all students.

Corrective action cycle. A three-level corrective action cycle exists for use by the State Board of Education if a school district fails to comply with its accreditation contract. If at any time during the term of an accreditation contract a district fails to comply, the CDE notifies the district of the nature of the lack of compliance. This initial notification constitutes **level one** in the corrective action cycle. Upon receipt of this notice, the school district must submit a plan to remedy its lack of compliance to the CDE. The CDE must approve or deny the plan and provide technical assistance to the district at the district's request.

If the district fails to implement the approved plan, the State Board of Education places the district on probation, which constitutes **level two** of the corrective action cycle. The district may request a hearing before the state board to determine if the district had implemented the plan. As is the case with level one, the district may request, and the CDE must provide, technical assistance.

Revocation of accreditation represents **level three** of the corrective action cycle. The state board may remove a school district's accreditation if the district fails to remedy its lack of compliance after being placed on probation. Again, the district has the right to a hearing before the state board. Removal of accreditation may result in reorganization of the district. To date, no district's accreditation has been revoked.

Federal Accountability Requirements

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The law sets deadlines for states to expand the scope and frequency of student testing, to revamp their accountability systems, and to guarantee that every teacher is highly qualified in his or her subject area. NCLB requires states to make demonstrable progress from year to year in raising the percentage of students proficient in reading and math, and in narrowing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Schools and districts that fail to make progress are subject to corrective action under the law. In fiscal year 2007-08, \$161.2 million in federal NCLB funds were allocated by the Colorado Department of Education to school districts in the state.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Single statewide accountability system and adequate yearly progress. Under NCLB, states are required to establish a single statewide accountability system that includes baseline data and a time line for demonstrating AYP. States, school districts, schools, and student subgroups all must meet AYP performance targets. All students in every school must meet state proficiency levels in reading and math by the 2013-14 school year. NCLB allows states, as part of their statewide accountability system, to:

- determine their own curriculum standards;
- develop or choose their own tests to measure progress toward the standards;
- set the cutoff scores on state tests to define "proficient" performance for AYP purposes; and
- set their own targets for the percentage of students who must score at the proficient level each year to reach the goal of 100 percent proficient by the 2013-14 school year.

While individual states are authorized to define AYP, NCLB mandates that the definition must be: based primarily on academic indicators such as assessments for all students in grades three through eight, plus one assessment in high school; technically rigorous; and applied to school, district, and state levels of progress.

The federal provisions on AYP require that its measurement be disaggregated for certain categories of students. Specifically, separate achievement objectives must be met not only at the school, district, and state levels, but also by each of the following subgroups:

- economically disadvantaged students;
- students from major ethnic and racial group backgrounds;
- students with disabilities; and
- English language learners.

Colorado implementation of AYP requirements. Colorado meets federal testing and accountability requirements through the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) and uses these results to measure AYP. In accordance with federal law, for a school or district to meet AYP, **all** of the following requirements must be met:

- **participation:** 95 percent of students in all measurable subgroups must take the CSAP assessments;
- **performance:** students in the school, district, and state as a whole, and students in all measurable subgroups, must meet specified performance targets by scoring partially proficient, proficient, or advanced on the CSAP. Table 5 shows the proficiency performance targets, expressed as percentages. If a school, district, or subgroup does not meet the state target, it can still make AYP if the percentage of students scoring non-proficient decreases by at least 10 percent over the prior year — the so-called "safe harbor" provision of the law; and
- **other indicator:** overall, and within each subgroup, a target number of students in elementary and middle schools — 1.21 percent in 2008 — must score "advanced" in reading and math. In high schools, overall and within each subgroup, a graduation target must be met. In 2008, 59.5 percent of students must graduate.

Table 5
AYP Proficiency Performance Targets
by Grade Level, Content Area, and Year

Year	Elementary School		Middle School		High School	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
*2002	76.92%	75.86%	73.61%	59.51%	79.65%	47.00%
2003 2004	76.92%	75.86%	73.61%	59.51%	79.65%	47.00%
2005 2006 2007	82.69%	81.90%	80.21%	69.63%	84.74%	60.25%
2008 2009 2010	88.46%	89.09%	86.81%	79.75%	89.83%	73.50%
2011 2012 2013	94.23%	94.54%	93.41%	89.88%	94.92%	86.75%
2014	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Colorado Department of Education
 * Baseline year

Tables 6 and 7 indicate the number and percentages of Colorado school districts and schools that achieved AYP in the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years.

Table 6
Colorado School Districts and Boards of Cooperative
Educational Services (BOCES)
Achieving Adequate Yearly Progress
2005-06 and 2006-07 School Years

School Year	Total Districts and BOCES	Number of Districts and BOCES Achieving AYP	Percentage of Districts and BOCES Achieving AYP
2005-06	183	112	61%
2006-07	184	104	57%

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Table 7
Colorado Schools Achieving Adequate
Yearly Progress
2005-06 and 2006-07 School Years

School Year	Total Schools	Number of Schools Achieving AYP	Percentage of Schools Achieving AYP
2005-06	1,889	1,422	75%
2006-07	1,950	1,469	75%

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Title I sanctions. The Title I provisions contained in NCLB establish consequences for Title I schools and school districts that fail to meet targets for AYP. Title I is a federal program that provides school districts with extra resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools and to ensure that poor and minority children have the same opportunity as other children to meet state academic standards.

A Title I school that fails to make AYP for two consecutive years is required to develop a two-year plan for improvement. At this point, the school district must provide the students at the school the option of attending another public school not identified for improvement, as well as the transportation to exercise that option. If a Title I school fails to make AYP for a third consecutive year, students and parents at that school have the opportunity to seek supplemental services such as tutoring, which is paid out of the district's Title I moneys. After four and five years without meeting AYP goals, a Title I school is subject to specific corrective actions and restructuring. Colorado law also establishes state processes for school improvement, which are discussed in the "Reporting and Results" section of this booklet.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why might a school fail to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress?

There are several reasons a school district might fail to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress, including:

- **Disaggregated targets.** Under NCLB, all major racial and ethnic subgroups of students, as well as students from low-income families, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students, must meet the state achievement targets for every grade and subject tested before the school or district is considered to have reached AYP. This means that even if the overall test scores for a school exceed state targets, the school may fail to meet AYP if too many students in any one subgroup score below the proficient level.
- **Participation targets.** NCLB requires that 95 percent of all students *and* 95 percent of students in each subgroup be tested. Although a school's test scores may meet state targets, the school could fail to meet AYP because the school did not meet the test participation requirement.
- **Other required indicators.** Schools that meet test score targets may fail to achieve AYP if they fail to meet state benchmarks for graduation or other indicators. Colorado requires that overall, and within each subgroup, a specified percentage of elementary and middle school students must score at the advanced level on reading and math assessments. At the high school level, the school must meet a graduation rate target overall and within each subgroup. Failure to achieve these indicators, even if the school meets test score targets, cause the school to fail to meet AYP.
- **Standardized indicators.** Annual targets for AYP are the same for all students, schools, and districts, so subgroups and schools that are far below the test score targets have more ground to make up. Schools and subgroups receive no credit for coming close or making improvements if they fail to reach the test score target, unless they qualify for NCLB's "safe harbor" provision.

- **State policies.** The factors that states are allowed to define under NCLB — the rigor of the standards, the difficulty of the tests, the cutoff scores, and the achievement targets — affect how difficult it is for schools to meet AYP. In addition, the minimum number of students required for a subgroup to count in AYP calculations, which is set by the state, may have an impact on whether a school achieves AYP. In Colorado, if a school has 30 or more students in a subgroup for two consecutive years, that subgroup's test scores count in AYP calculations.

How does AYP, the federal accountability measure, compare with the state academic performance rating?

Table 8 illustrates how AYP compares with the state academic performance rating.

Table 8
Federal AYP versus State Academic Performance Rating

	Adequate Yearly Progress	School Accountability Report Academic Performance Rating
State or federal measure?	federal accountability measure	state accountability measure
What is measured?	reading and math scores	all CSAP-tested subject area scores
How are scores calculated?	scores of subgroups are calculated in addition to scores of all pupils	scores of all pupils are aggregated for performance rating
What are the performance levels?	statewide targets are set for all schools — a school either makes AYP or does not make AYP	excellent; high; average; low; and unsatisfactory
Are alternate assessment scores counted?	yes, CSAP-A scores are counted	no, CSAP-A scores are excluded

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Are Colorado schools making progress toward AYP goals?

The CDE calculates AYP for all schools and school districts in the state. In all, 75 percent of Colorado schools made their AYP targets in the 2006-07 school year. That overall percentage was unchanged from 2005-06. In the 2006-07 school year, 57 percent of districts in the state made AYP, compared to 61 percent in 2005-06. Further, in 2006-07, 90 percent of districts made at least 90 percent of their AYP targets.

How is "proficiency" determined in Colorado?

For AYP purposes, "proficiency" includes students scoring "partially proficient," "proficient," or "advanced" on the CSAP, and students scoring "emerging" or above on the CSAP-A.

Are all students required to take the CSAP?

Yes. Every student enrolled in a grade for which there is a CSAP assessment is expected to take it. Accommodations are allowed to assist students with special needs in taking the CSAP assessment. In addition, each school district determines when it is not appropriate to administer the CSAP to certain students and will administer the CSAP-A instead.

What happens if a student does not participate in the CSAP?

If a student does not participate in the CSAP and does not take the test during the makeup test window in their district, the student is placed in the "No Score Reported" category. Assessment results are used in calculating the academic performance ratings that are assigned to schools on the School Accountability Report (SAR). The percentage of students in the "No Score Reported" category are weighted for purposes of determining the academic growth rating by a factor of -0.5.

What does it cost to administer the CSAP?

Based on estimates from the Joint Budget Committee staff, the FY 2006-07 per pupil cost for the CSAP is approximately \$11 per assessment. There were nearly 1.6 million CSAP tests administered to public school students in the 2006-07 school year. At approximately \$11 per assessment, the total estimated cost is nearly \$17.6 million. A mix of state General Fund and federal funds are used to fund the CSAP. This estimate does not include CSAP-A assessments for children with disabilities. Those assessments are funded with federal special education moneys.

Is the 11th grade ACT exam required by federal law?

No. Federal law requires that students be assessed once in high school. Under state law, 10th grade students participate in the CSAP and all 11th grade students take the ACT. Only Colorado and Illinois require all students to take the ACT.

What happens if a student does not participate in the ACT exam?

If a student does not participate in the ACT exam, the student has no score to report or show on his or her transcript. High schools' average ACT reading, math, and English subtest scores are used in calculating the academic performance ratings that are assigned to schools on the School Accountability Report. If a student does not participate in the ACT, the student's score in each subtest is included as a zero in determining the average ACT subtest score.

What does it cost to administer the ACT?

According to JBC staff estimates, it costs approximately \$29 per student to administer the ACT. In the 2006-07 school year, 50,436 students took the ACT. At approximately \$29 per student, the total estimated cost is \$554,796.

Glossary of Terms

Academic Growth of Students: A state measurement that rates Colorado schools based on the proportion of students who make gains in their CSAP assessment scores in one year's time. One of five "academic growth of students" ratings is assigned to each school or each school level (elementary, middle, high school) and included on its school accountability report: "significant improvement"; "improvement"; "stable"; "decline"; or "significant decline."

Academic Performance Rating: A state measurement rating a school's overall academic performance based on averaging student performance on individual CSAP assessments and the ACT. One of five ratings is assigned: "excellent"; "high"; "average"; "low"; or "unsatisfactory."

Accreditation Contract: A six-year contract between the State Board of Education and a local school board of education delineating the goals and requirements for the school district over the course of the contract. Mandatory inclusions in the contract are set forth in statute and state board rule.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): A federally mandated measurement of student progress at the state, school district, and school level, and for subgroups of students, toward meeting 100 percent state proficiency levels in reading and math by the 2013-14 school year. The federal standard also includes requirements for participation in assessments and for additional indicators of student progress, including the high school graduation rate.

Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA): A state law that requires annual assessment of reading readiness skills of students in kindergarten and reading skills of students in grades one through three. It sets procedures and benchmarks for literacy and delineates interventions for students who are not reading at grade level.

Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA) Program: A state program to assess the English language skills of English language learners and to inform appropriate instructional placement

in compliance with federal and state law. The program includes both a placement test for enrolling students with a primary language other than English and a proficiency test for those receiving English language support services.

Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP): The state testing program for students in grades three through ten in reading, writing, and math, as well as science for students in grades five, eight, and ten. The program meets federal assessment and accountability requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Colorado Student Assessment Program-Alternate (CSAP-A): The alternate, performance- and demonstration-based assessments for students with special needs who are unable to participate in the general CSAP assessments.

English Language Learner (ELL): A student whose dominant language is not English. For purposes of receiving language services, the student may be determined to be limited-English proficient (LEP) or non-English proficient (NEP).

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A federally and state-required written plan for a student with a disability that is developed and reviewed in accordance with statutory and regulatory guidelines.

Individual Literacy Plan (ILP): An individualized plan for a student in kindergarten or in grades one through three whose reading readiness or literacy and reading comprehension skills are assessed at below grade level. The plan specifies strategies for improving a student's literacy skills and remains in place until the student is reading at or above grade level.

Model Content Standards: State academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education for 13 content areas (civics, dance, economics, foreign language, geography, history, math, music, physical education, science, reading and writing, theater, and visual arts). The standards provide benchmarks for what students should know in the content area at different grade levels. Under state law, each school district must adopt content standards in these academic areas that meet or exceed state standards.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): A national assessment program, the results of which are often referred to as the "Nation's Report Card." Not meant to provide district-level, school-level, or student-level data, the program provides biennial math and reading results for the nation and for each participating state based on the performance of fourth and eighth grade students in schools selected to participate. Other subject-area testing varies by testing cycle and includes long-term trend assessments in math and reading for students ages 9, 13, and 17.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act: The federal law that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2001 and set new accountability provisions for states and school districts. Each state seeks federal approval of its state accountability plan in order to receive federal funding for NCLB programs.

Student Academic Growth Calculation: State-required calculation of each student's individual academic growth over one year's time based on performance on CSAP assessments, and which includes an evaluation of whether the growth is adequate for the student to reach the performance level of "proficient" within three years or by grade ten, whichever is sooner.

Title I Program: A federal program that provides funding through four types of grants that flow through the state to school districts and schools with high percentages of students from low-income families.

School Improvement Plan (SIP): An improvement plan that must be adopted and submitted to the State Board of Education by the local board of education for any school that receives an academic performance rating of "unsatisfactory" or by the charter school institute for any institute charter school that receives an academic performance rating of "unsatisfactory."

School Accountability Report (SAR): A report card issued annually for each school that includes general information about the school, descriptors of students and staff, and academic performance ratings and indicators.