

ALP: Advanced Learning Plan

What is the history of Advanced Learning Plans?

Since the early 1990's, the Rules have required individual record keeping for gifted students *a record of gifted and talented education programming services, options, and strategies utilized with individual students shall be made part of the student's record and shall be considered in educational planning and decision-making concerning subsequent programming for that student.*

In 2006, a change in statute provided the term "Advanced Learning Plan" for individual record keeping as in the definition. 22-20-103 (1.2) C.R.S.

In what way does the ALP impact the Administrative Unit's comprehensive Program Plan?

In July 2007, statute changed to declare that administrative units shall adopt and implement a program plan to identify and serve the characteristics and profiles of the gifted children within the AU. *A program plan adopted by an administrative unit pursuant to this section shall be consistent with the advanced learning plans of the gifted children who are identified by the administrative unit, and the program plan shall be implemented to the extent that funds are provided for such implementation.* 22-20-104.5(1) C.R.S.

How does the ALP affect a district's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)?

CDE procedures require that districts submit a UIP gifted education addendum to target improved academic achievement of gifted students. Targets on the UIP addendum should reflect the ALP goals of students in need of improvement.

What does "to the extent that funds are provided" mean?

The program plan that each administrative unit develops, submits and implements should utilize the local, state and community resources that are available. The plan should be feasible, given the size, location and resources of each local unit.

Definition

An Advanced Learning Plan or ALP is

"a written record of a gifted student's strengths and academic and affective learning goals and the resulting programming utilized with individual students" 22-20-103 (12.01(2)), C.R.S.

- Content and procedures for ALPs are detailed in the Rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.
- ALPs must be similar to the state ALP model.
- ALPs are part of a student's cumulative record and follow the student, K-12.
- ALPs provide evidence of programming matched to a student's strengths, interests, and/or needs.
- ALP reviews involve teachers, parents and students during typical progress reporting times in the district/school.



Why are ALPs important?

The ALP is a direct link between the student profile developed during the identification process and the implementation of programming guided by achievement and affective goals matched to the student's strengths and interests. ALPs are planning guides for making instructional decisions about materials, programming options and assessments for gifted students based upon strengths, interests, and social-emotional needs. They are critical in the transition of gifted students from one level of schooling to the next and from school to school.

Is the ALP an annual or long-term planning tool?

The ALP serves both purposes, as well as being a record of progress monitoring. While an ALP certainly contains information pertaining to the methods for programming that will be utilized in a specific year, it should also be a living and fluid document that serves as both a record and a road map for a student's educational experience, combined and/or aligned with ICAP (22-2-R-2.00 (2), C.R.S.). Particularly for students who require radical acceleration, long-term planning will be essential to ensure the student is able to meet ultimate educational goals through the grades.

What are the critical components of an ALP?

The ALP should include information about the student's areas of strength and

- curriculum and programming options to be provided that match identified student strengths
- options aligned with appropriate tiers of support (universal, targeted, and intensive)
- differentiation methods to be used for acceleration, depth and complexity, higher order thinking skills, and content extension
- S.M.A.R.T. goals for student academic achievement and affective growth

ALP procedures must include a system to show evidence of parent involvement in ALP development and in the review of progress. Evidence may include a signature, electronic signature or check box, and/or a parental involvement goal for supporting the student's growth. 12.02 (1) (d)

Who writes the ALP and for whom are they written?

The State Performance Plan indicates that 100% of identified gifted students in the district will have advanced learning plans by December 2009. All identified gifted students grades pre-K (if applicable) through 12 require an ALP. Districts determine a process, but it is usually the student's teachers who write the ALP in collaboration with the GT teacher or consultant, parent and student, when appropriate. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the administrative unit Gifted Director or Coordinator and District Superintendents/BOCES Executive Directors to ensure that each gifted student has an ALP.

How are Advanced Learning Plans managed?

"ALPs are maintained, retained and destroyed consistent with the ongoing system of student record keeping established in the administrative unit, including its member districts." 12.05(5)

Must Charter Schools write ALPs?

Yes. Charter Schools are not exempt from the statute in regard to implementation of the program plan, as stated in 22-20-106 "...each administrative unit shall ensure that its constituent schools and school districts make available



appropriate special provisions for gifted children to the extent that funds are provided for such implementation.” (see also answer to question #4 above with regard to funds)

What methods of accountability will be used to ensure that Administrative Units have ALPs?

The Colorado Gifted Education Review Process (C-GER) is an established process for monitoring gifted programming. This process includes collection and review of AU and district data, site visits, focus group meetings, and information from district UIP addendums and UIP assurances. Upon conclusion of the C-GER in an Administrative Unit, a report is sent to the AU director and superintendent/s that details strengths, recommendations for improvement, and citations for non-compliance. The AU has one year to correct any citations. If not completed, funds may be withheld.

How do parents/guardians participate in the ALP process?

Parents have a great deal to add to a body of evidence about a student due to insights into students' strengths, interests and social-emotional characteristics. Educators have an obligation to seek their perspective. Thus, parents/guardians contribute to the collaborative effort of ALP development by offering information about the student and that student's advancement along the learning continuum.

The ALP process provides an avenue for parents to demonstrate leadership and involvement in the student's achievement and growth.

What assistance is available for writing the ALP?

The Colorado Department of Education provides examples of goal statements in a selection of strength areas in the Gifted Education *Guidelines* found in the Laws and Regulations section of the website <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs>. A sample Advanced Learning Plan and guide are available on the website, as well. Further assistance is available through the gifted education networks in education regions or through the Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC), accessible in each region.

Where can I learn more?

- Gifted Education Guidelines may be downloaded from <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs>. (See Chapter 4: Advanced Learning Plans.)
- To view all CDE fact sheets, visit: www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/factsheetsandfaqs