

Improvement Planning During the Accountability Pause: Overview

2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR



COLORADO
Department of Education

Overview

This document provides high level considerations for districts and schools in navigating the 2020-2021 Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) amidst recent disruptions due to COVID-19. With an eye toward supporting schools and districts to make continued progress towards identified goals, the department has identified a series of special flexibilities and guidance during these unusual times. More detailed guidance will be provided in September.

Timelines

In anticipation of the potential UIP timeline shifts (i.e., October due data for public posting beginning in 2021-22), **the department is offering flexibility on the annual 2020-2021 UIP to plan for one school year, rather than two years.** This is also an acknowledgement of the challenge of long-term planning under current circumstances. *Note: if a school or district plans to exercise biennial flexibility in the 2021-2022 school year, the 2020-2021 UIP must still encompass two years.*

The remainder of this document is organized according to the Online UIP System, beginning with Section III: Data Narrative. Any mention of Online UIP System components will be italicized.

Section III: Data Narrative

Brief Description

- Use this section to acknowledge the current realities, including any adaptations or changes due to the pandemic.
- Consider linking to existing resources (e.g., remote learning plans, schedules, notices to families).

Prior Year Targets

- Reflect on prior year strategies and targets as possible without existing data (e.g. local assessment, non-assessment student data).

Current Performance

- School and district's 2019 performance framework plan types and federal identifications will be rolled over to the 2020-2021 school year. Plans should acknowledge the 2019 identification and meet relevant requirements (e.g., additional requirements for schools on Priority Improvement, Turnaround or On Watch, ESSA Comprehensive Support).

Key Areas of Flexibility for 2020-21 UIP

- Annual UIP may span one school year (2020-2021) rather than two school years (2020-2021 and 2021-2022).
- UIP may identify as few as one priority performance challenge (PPC), including non-academic areas. However, at least one PPC must focus on student academic performance.
- Action Steps and Implementation Benchmarks may be more general to allow flexibility of implementation in remote, hybrid and/or in-person learning.

Trend Analysis

- If three years of consecutive data is not available, describe trends with as much historical data as possible (e.g., trends using 2017-18 and 2018-19 data).
- Consider including more recent local data (if available) that provides a description of current performance to guide modifications from the previous plan. If recent performance data is not available, provide a statement to explain the situation. If it makes sense, it is acceptable to leave in the previous year's data analysis for reference.

Priority Performance Challenges

- 2020-21 UIPs may identify as few as one priority performance challenge, including non-academic challenges (e.g., student engagement). However, at least one PPC must focus on student academic performance.

Root Causes

- While COVID has imposed disruptions, remember that root causes (1) are adult actions, (2) are under the control of the school, and (3) address the priority performance challenge(s).
 - Non-example: "Coaching stopped because of COVID."
 - Example: "Coaching in Spring 2020 was deprioritized in order to increase staff capacity to focus on student engagement in a remote learning setting and to meet the needs of families."

Section IV: Action Plans

Major Improvement Strategies

- Consider major improvement strategies that address the root cause(s) identified and are feasible for the current context. Schools and districts may decide to scale back to just a couple of major improvement strategies to focus limited resources.
- Review the newly released strategy guides to ensure a research base and a comprehensive approach to implementation.

Planning Form (includes Implementation Benchmarks and Action Steps)

- Because the method of instruction may change over the course of the year, consider planning for actions and benchmarks that would be possible during remote learning, hybrid learning and in-person learning. These UIP elements may be more general than in a normal year to be adaptable to those different circumstances.

Target Setting

- Consider using local data to set interim measures. Data that includes leading indicators (e.g., attendance, measure of engagement) may give better indications if efforts are having the intended impact.
- Target setting on summative measures (e.g., CMAS) may be difficult because of the suspension of the state assessment in spring 2020. While schools and districts are still expected to provide targets in the plan, they may need to remain unchanged from the previous year.

Upcoming Resources

- Look for new resources on the UIP General Resources webpage: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/resources>, including a companion to this resource that will provide more in-depth guidance on planning in 2020-21.

UIP Timeline for 2020-2021 and beyond

- Flexibility for public posting in spring 2020 was offered in spring 2020. If a 2019-2020 UIP was not submitted for public posting, the 2020-2021 UIP is due by October 15th, 2020. Updated submission deadlines will be available in Section I of the UIP.
- Proposed permanent submission deadline shift starting in 2021-2022: public posting and review for all plans on October 15, beginning in 2021. Additional information here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/timeline-shift>