

Walsh, Sharon

From: Medler, Lisa
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2021 9:38 AM
To: Medler, Lisa
Cc: Haniford, Rhonda; Huchton, Marie; Perdue, Josh; Sanders, B; Callinan, Amanda; Loften, Erin; Barrett, Susan; Steffen, Lisa; Jorgensen, Dan; Watson, Jessica; Stein, Kirby; Walsh, Sharon; Jaeckel, Lindsey; Woods, Julie; Kirkemier, Mark; Mohajeri-Nelson, Nazanin
Subject: Accountability Update (April 14, 2021)

Hello Accountability Contacts:

After being quiet for most of this year, you are getting another update from me in a month. We know everyone is very busy around time, but wanted to make sure you are getting the latest accountability information. Following up on my communication from March 11, this email covers the 2021-22 accountability pause, request to reconsider process, UIP template rollover, and accreditation contracts.

Year 2 Accountability Pause. With the passage of [H.B. 21-1161](#) (signed by the Governor on March 16), Colorado is pausing state accountability for a second year. This means that performance frameworks will not be calculated or published in fall 2021. Instead district and school plan types will be rolled over from 2020 (which were rolled over from 2019). Unlike the Year 1 accountability pause, however, a request to reconsider process may be offered for schools and districts on the accountability clock (i.e., Priority Improvement, Turnaround). There is an update on the department's approach to amending the request process in the next section.

On April 5th, the department submitted an accountability waiver request to the US Department of Education to pause identifying any new schools under ESSA for support and improvement (e.g., Comprehensive Support, Targeted Support).

More details on the accountability pause will be updated on the CDE website as they become available.

Adjusted Request to Reconsider Process. Based upon the recommendation of the [COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder group](#), H.B. 21-1161 enables the state to offer a request to reconsider process to schools and districts on the accountability clock during the second year of the accountability pause (2021-22). This is different from previous years when the process was open to all districts regardless of plan type. While eligible schools and districts may request a new plan type, the accountability clock is not adjusted. For example, a school with a Priority Improvement - Y3 plan type could move to Improvement - Y3. Two consecutive frameworks at Improvement or higher would still need to be earned to fully exit performance watch.

The department is currently working with stakeholders (including the [Accountability Working Group](#)) to design an amended request process. This includes examining available state and local data, as well as qualitative measures like UIP reviews and State Review Panel visits. The State Board of Education is expected to consider rules to outline this process by early summer. We will keep you posted as this process develops and welcome feedback.

Unified Improvement Plan Template Roll Over. Templates for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 planning cycle will be available on April 30th within the UIP online system. Some minor template modifications will be released at this time, including bug fixes, simplification of submission requirements, and a shortened executive summary.

As a reminder for the 2021-22 school year, *all* school and district UIPs will be due for public posting on October 15, 2021 (unless eligible for biennial flexibility). This is the launch of the new permanent [timeline shift](#). The

School Improvement and Planning team will offer resources and training opportunities to support districts and schools with planning work during the continued accountability pause (e.g., using local data and non-assessment data to identify needs, research-based improvement strategies).

District Accreditation Contracts. The department is preparing to have all districts sign accreditation contracts over this next calendar year. Typically the focus has been on districts with Improvement, Priority Improvement and Turnaround plan types since those contracts are required to be renewed annually. Given adjustments to accreditation through the accountability pause, H.B. 18-1355 and some other technical fixes, however, it is time to update contracts for *all* districts. The department is currently updating contracts and will share language ahead of time. We have also been working on a new streamlined process to track contracts through a web-based accreditation form, including capturing signatures through DocuSign.

Districts Accredited with Improvement, Priority Improvement and Turnaround. Because your contracts expire June 2021, we anticipate starting this process with you at the beginning of May. Our target is to ensure you have at least a month to review the language and collect your superintendent and board president signatures.

Districts Accredited with Performance or Distinction. We are aiming to have your contracts available by fall, so that the process may be completed by December 2021. You will have at least a month to review the language and collect your superintendent and board president signatures.

Additional Questions. If you have any questions about any of these topics, do not hesitate to reach out to me or anyone on the Accountability Analytics or School Improvement and Planning teams. Just like the last communication, we will be sharing the information in this communication with superintendents through the next edition of the Update. Please feel free to share this information with your superintendent sooner or other staff as you need.

Thanks again for all of your important work.

Sincerely,

Lisa Medler
