



Colorado Gifted Education Review Handbook

Office of Gifted Education

2016 - 2017

Office of Gifted Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100
Denver, Colorado
303-866-6694
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt>



Table of Contents

Click each link to navigate to the corresponding page. Click the home button at the bottom of each section to return to the Table of Contents.

Introduction to C-GER	3
Self-assessment & AU Self-evaluation Process	5
Review Process	9
Exit Summary & Final Report	15
Improvement Timeline	17
Appendix A – AU Gifted Lead Responsibilities	19
Appendix B – DMS Directions	20
Appendix C – Preparing for Focus Groups	22

Colorado-Gifted Education Review (C-GER)

Guidance Handbook for Administrative Unit Gifted Education Lead

This Colorado-Gifted Education Review (C-GER) Guidance Handbook was created by the Colorado Department of Education, Office of Gifted Education to support the gifted education lead in an Administrative Unit (AU) when preparing for the C-GER Review. This includes working cooperatively with the C-GER Review Team Lead to ensure:

- Positive communication that builds understanding of the collaborative steps toward a successful determination of program strengths and improvement focus,
- All state reporting is up-to-date and housed in Exceptional Student Services Unit's (ESSU) Data Management System (DSM) for Gifted and Special Education,
- Disaggregated gifted student demographic and achievement/growth data are available in an easily readable format,
- Evidence as recorded on the AU Gifted Program Evaluation is easily accessible to the team for the desk review,
- Schools and stakeholders are notified and present for verification of program elements through focus groups and interviews at school sites on the day of the review, and
- Team members are provided with a schedule and directions to school sites.



The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is committed to customer service that supports Administrative Units (AUs) in improving outcomes for identified gifted students through technical assistance efforts and data-based decision-making. The Colorado Gifted Education Review (C-GER) is a collaborative monitoring process that is the shared responsibility of Administrative Units and CDE. The purpose of this partnership is to increase the capacity of educators and educational systems to identify, program and be accountable for gifted learner achievement and growth.

The C-GER process relies on using meaningful data, such as parent/staff survey data, the performance of identified gifted students on state and local assessments, enrollment data and indicators outlined in state regulations and reflected in the AU's comprehensive program plan.

Based on the final C-GER report, Administrative Units may be required to develop timelines and strategies for prioritized areas of improvement. The Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC) supports the AU's efforts as requested based on levels of need. The strengths of gifted programming elements, uplifted through C-GER, are often shared, with permission, among regional network systems to foster collegial support and cultivate models for shared interests and growth in gifted student education.

In accordance with state statute, C-GER aligns with the Rules for the Administration of Gifted Education under the Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA), Rule Section 12.07. The intent of C-GER is to be a support system in fulfilling the monitoring requirements. To accomplish this goal -



- Every three-five years
 - AUs submit to the Office of Gifted Education a comprehensive program plan that describes the elements of the AUs program plan as outlined in ECEA. This plan is informed by the AU's self-evaluation, stakeholder input, gifted student data and state laws and regulations.
 - The Colorado Department of Education conducts a desk review and site review to verify the implementation of program plan elements, accountability requirements and progress toward the AU's comprehensive program goals.
- Annually or Bi-Annually
 - Districts submit the gifted education annual plan called the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Gifted Education Addendum. This annual plan provides the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal and reports on gifted student performance blended with district performance reporting and improvement efforts.
 - Gifted Education Regional Consultants (GERCs) meet with AU Gifted Education Lead to provide support in the implementation of the AU's
 - Comprehensive program plan,
 - Targeted student achievement goals for gifted students as outlined in the UIP Addendum, and
 - C-GER program improvement timeline.

This C-GER handbook provides basic information to participants in the shared monitoring process, which is tailored for the individual AU in collaboration with the C-GER review team.

Self-Assessment

As required by law, scheduled, periodic gifted program evaluations are to occur in each AU.

12.02 (1) (e) (iv) Methods for self-evaluation of the gifted program including a schedule for periodic feedback and review (e.g., review of gifted policy, goals, identification process, programming components, personnel, budget and reporting practices, and the impact of gifted programming on student achievement and progress).

AU Gifted Program Self-Evaluation

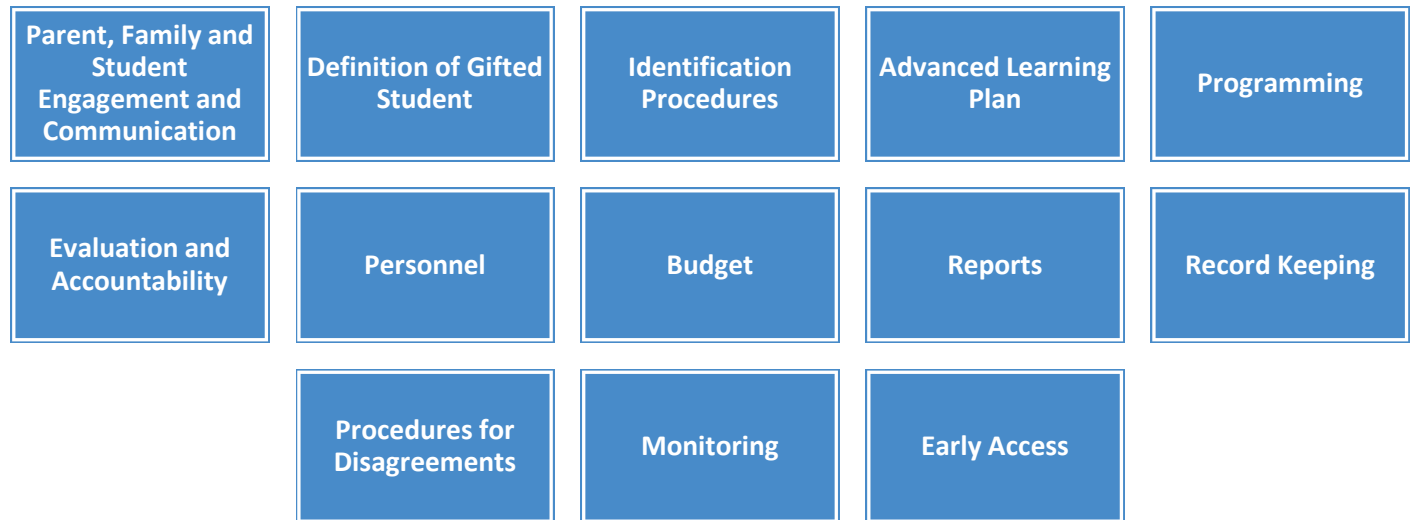
A gifted program self-evaluation or program review is an essential component for continuous growth and improvement. The AU Self-Evaluation is located in the Data Management System (DMS). It has been designed as tool to guide the appraisal of gifted program implementation based upon minimum provisions of Colorado's Exceptional Children Education Act (ECEA). The tool guides discussion about program strengths, progress, and areas for improvement or action toward distinction. The tool has proven to be effective when the AU collaborates among gifted education staff and other stakeholders important to the gifted program. This tool may be used at any time when the AU is considering program and gifted student performance improvements. This self-evaluation tool was created to

- Guide the self-evaluation of gifted program implementation based on minimum provisions of Colorado's Exceptional Children's Educational Act,
- Assist AUs in progress monitoring of the Comprehensive Program Plan goals, and
- Prepare for the Colorado-Gifted Education Review.

Self-evaluation has proven to be effective when the AU collaborates with gifted education staff and other stakeholders important to the gifted program. This tool may be used at any time when the AU is considering program improvements and further development.



Elements of Self-evaluation



The AU Self-Evaluation is completed in DMS by the gifted education director or designated person assigned by the director. DMS houses required reports and documentation provided by CDE and uploaded by the AU. It provides a collaborative and secure electronic environment where AUs can upload documents that support their gifted program. The DMS is where the review team accesses additional evidence to support compliance in all program elements. Evidence may include:

- Links to district/school websites,
- Documents such as handbooks, letters, flyers and brochures, and
- Additional achievement and/or growth data for gifted students based on alternative district assessments, especially important during state assessment transition.

The Self-Evaluation template can be found by logging into DMS and accessing the Monitoring Tab. For directions on completing the Self-evaluation, see **Appendix B**.

The DMS template will provide guiding questions for each element required in ECEA Rules. You may visit the CDE Gifted Education website and click on the Laws and Regulations tab to access the ECEA Rules for Gifted Education. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs>

The following steps are used to complete each of the programming elements when completing the Self-Evaluation template:

1. Read the question under the programming element.
2. Use the drop down box to indicate the response that best answers the question for your AU. If you select “No,” there is no additional information that will need to be entered. If you mark, “Yes,” two text boxes will open.
3. In the first box, provide a narrative explanation that describes the **evidence** of the AU implementing the requirement.

4. In the second box, provide where specific evidence for each indicator can be located within the items submitted for the Desk Review. This may include the name of a specific document, page number and/or link to a particular site where the precise evidence can be found.

Example:

Question	<i>Are identification procedures easily accessible to parents and other stakeholders?</i>
Meets Requirements of Rule?	• Yes (If you indicate “no,” move on to the next question)
Describe indicators that show evidence of AU implementing the requirement	Identification procedures are clearly outlined and described on our district website, in the District Gifted Brochure available at all school front offices, in the parent handbook that is located on the website, and in our district gifted programming guide provided to all gifted resource teachers and building administrators as well as being available on our district intranet site. At the time of identification, students participate in a workshop where they are informed of how and why they were identified as gifted. Students also participate in ALP development annually. The website, brochure and handbooks were developed since our last C-GER. The identification workshop is in its second year of implementation and survey results from parents and students identify this as a strong strength of our program. This year we are implementing an <i>Introduction to Gifted</i> parent night to provide parents important information pertaining to their newly identified child.
Location where evidence can be found	• www.sampledistrict.com/identification • District Gifted Education Brochure • Gifted Parent Handbook (pages 17 – 24) • District Gifted Education Programming Guide (pages 12 – 19) • “Understanding My Gifted Identification” packet used with all newly identified students • District Gifted Program Evaluation Survey data

Program Evaluation

A program evaluation is conducted every three to four years with input from parents, teachers, administrators, students and community members. To that end, the Office of Gifted Education has developed a set of questions AUs can use to create a survey to solicit data about gifted programming from students, parents, teachers and administrators. These questions are on the Data Management System for use by the AU in a questionnaire or survey.

Once data are collected from surveys and other sources a data analysis is done in collaboration with local gifted advisory groups, gifted coordinators and administrators from districts or schools. Goals for development are written in the Comprehensive Program Plan and then implemented over the next four years with periodic, local review to determine if actions are moving toward goals or if adjustments need to be made. The AU Gifted Program Self-evaluation can be used annually to assist with this progress monitoring. The bi-annual submission of the UIP Addendum serves as a monitoring mechanism for student growth and achievement targets.

Surveys are a classic method for data collection. They are flexible, easy to implement, and offer a nearly limitless range of data with reliable results. The data gathered during an effective survey provides a unique opportunity to obtain detailed insight into a program. Because you can gather large amounts of feedback directly from individuals who are affected by the program, surveys act as the finger on the pulse of your project and can measure its strength. Institute for Dynamic Educational Advancement (IDEA 2015)

The AU Gifted Program Self-Evaluation, the most current AU program evaluation and goals set by the AU as a result of those evaluations are reviewed by the C-GER team during the desk review. Goals and strategies outlined by the AU are taken into consideration during the review and often incorporated into the final C-GER report to support the AU's self-identified improvement efforts. This is most beneficial when the gifted program evaluation is completed prior to the AU's scheduled C-GER.

Program evaluation is a process by which Districts/AUs determine how well they are meeting their state goals in the Comprehensive Program Plan and UIP Gifted Addendum. The self-evaluation process is used to introduce change in a deliberate way and to improve overall effectiveness.



Review Process

The CDE Office of Gifted Education assembles a team of four to six internal and external experts to conduct a desk review and site review with each AU every four years or as needed.



After the AU has submitted the required documents for the Desk Review via DMS, the review team will thoroughly study the information provided and make a determination on the type of Site Visit that will take place. The C-GER team will have access to the AU's DMS site for the length of the C-GER process. At the conclusion of the C-GER these members will no longer be able to view the AU's DMS site. C-GER members are full- or part-time employees of CDE or Gifted Education Resource Consultants (GERCs).

At the conclusion of the Site Visit, the team will share with the AU **brief** highlights of their initial observations. The team works together after the visit to write a draft report that is submitted to the Office of Gifted Education for a final review.

The final C-GER report will be signed by the Director of Gifted Education and the Executive Director of the Exceptional Student Services Unit and mailed to the AU's superintendent/executive director six to eight weeks after the C-GER. Additionally, the report will also be located in the AU's DMS secure site. Those with access to the AU's DMS site will be able to view the final report. It is important to note that the final report will include additional comments and data that may not have been outlined during the C-GER team's Exit Summary. The report includes identified strengths and areas for future growth and improvement. Based on the findings of the C-GER, the AU may be required to submit an Improvement Timeline to CDE within **six weeks** of receipt of the final C-GER report. An Improvement Timeline must be submitted for the primary improvement targets.

Monitoring

12.07 (1) Each administrative unit shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the program plan, identification and special educational services for gifted students.

12.07 (2) Each administrative unit shall be subject to ongoing monitoring by the Department concerning implementation of the program plan.



Desk Review

A Desk Review is conducted by the review team **eight weeks** prior to the scheduled site visit. The AU Gifted Director/Coordinator is responsible for having the Desk Review completed eight weeks prior to the Site Visit date. There are four components that make up a completed Desk Review:

1. Evidence stored or uploaded in DMS by CDE or the AU;
2. Completed AU Self-Evaluation;
3. Evidence uploaded by the AU Gifted Lead; and
4. ALP Self-Evaluation Reviews conducted through the ALP Interchange by staff with the designated ALP Review Team role in DMS.

The AU is responsible for providing tangible evidence of compliance in all program elements for the team to review. The AU Gifted Program Self-evaluation (located under the “monitoring” tab in DMS) provides guidance in what type of evidence is required. Uploaded documents will be helpful in providing evidence for meeting conditions of Rules; however, there may be follow up evidence required to determine implementation of specific programming elements.

CDE will provide a record set of randomly selected ALPs for the AU to self-review. The AU completes the review of each ALP in the record set using the ALP review template in the DMS ALP Interchange. AUs with Enrich ALPs will upload in that format as a part of the DMS platform. AUs using another ALP vendor will upload the ALPs in a PDF format. DMS provides a secure and confidential reporting system protecting individual student information.

Desk Review
Evidence Stored or Uploaded in DMS by CDE
• Previous C-GER Report • Previous C-GER Improvement Timeline • Gifted demographics • State assessment data • Comprehensive Program Plan • Gifted budgets • UIP Gifted Education Addendum
AU Self-Evaluation
• Completed by the AU Gifted Lead
Evidence Uploaded by AU Gifted Lead
• Identification procedures for all areas of giftedness • Acceleration procedures, options and strategies • Gifted programming service options • Professional development evidence • Procedures for disagreements • Evidence of stakeholder communication and engagement • Additional student achievement/growth data • Program evaluation and survey data • Early Access procedures (if early access is a programming component of the AU) • Other documents of programming evidence
ALP Interchange
• A random selection of ALPs will be uploaded into the secure ALP Interchange by the AU Gifted Lead based on a random sample of state student identification numbers selected by CDE • AU Gifted Lead will complete the AU ALP Review for each of the selected ALPs

Directions for the completion of the AU Self-evaluation and evidence upload process are located in **Appendix B**.



AU Advanced Learning Plan Self-review

All identified gifted students must have an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The ALP process, responsibilities and content are defined in ECEA Rule. A complete ALP Guidebook can be found on the Office of Gifted Education website. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/alp>

Annually, the AU Gifted Lead, as well as building administrators and teachers, review ALPs to ensure they are purposeful and meaningful and support individual student growth and achievement. The ALP Self-review document found in DMS is helpful to the AU's internal examination and monitoring of their ALPs.

As part of the C-GER process, the AU Gifted Lead will be requested by CDE to upload a sample of ALPs. CDE will indicate the ALPs to upload into DMS using the student's state identification number. The AU Gifted Lead will review these specific ALPs and complete the **ALP Self-review document** found under the Monitoring tab in DMS. As part of the Desk Review, the C-GER team will also view the ALPs along with the ALP self-review reports.

Administrative Unit Site Visits

There are **two** types of site visits that occur during a C-GER based on information presented in the Desk Review. The C-GER Lead will contact the AU Gifted Lead **four weeks** prior to the visit to inform the AU of the type of visit that will occur.

Level I – ½-Day Visit

If the Desk Review provides the C-GER team with sufficient information to determine that program elements are addressed and implemented consistently across the AU, a Level I site visit will be scheduled. If the comprehensive and thorough evidence included in the Desk Review provides the C-GER team with sufficient information to determine that school site visits and focus group interviews are not necessary, a Level I site visit will be scheduled. Two members of the C-GER team and/or Office of Gifted Education will visit the AU for a half-day, providing the AU an opportunity to share exemplary programming practices.

A Level I visit does **not** necessarily mean the AU meets all the conditions of law; however, ample evidence was supplied in the Desk Review for the team to determine it is not necessary to conduct a comprehensive site-visit to schools or meet with focus groups.

Two representative members of the C-GER team will arrive for a **half-day** visit at a predetermined time on either Day One or Day Two of your scheduled C-GER site visit dates.

The AU Gifted Lead will be given the opportunity to provide a gifted program overview and provide any additional information as requested by the C-GER team (see Overview Presentation guidelines on following pages). This is a time to celebrate the successes of the AU programming plan. The AU is encouraged to invite other administrators to this session. The C-GER team will share identified strengths of the program and provide recommendations for next steps to ensure future growth. The AU will not need to submit an Improvement Timeline if all elements of the program plan meet condition of

Site Visits:

12.07 (4) Monitoring activities shall include:

12.07 (4) (c) A planned comprehensive on-site process integrated with the continuous improvement and monitoring process in the Department of Education

Sample Schedule

½ Day C-GER Visit	
9:00 – 10:00	AU Gifted Program Overview
10:00 – 10:30	Questions from the C-GER Team
10:30 – 11:00	Exit Summary presented to the AU

Level II – 2-Day Visit

A Level II site visit will be scheduled if the information provided in the Desk Review does not provide sufficient evidence that the AU meets requirements of the law and/or additional information needs to be collected by the C-GER team to determine implementation of program elements.

The team will arrive the evening before the Day One C-GER date. The team uses this time to collaborate and compile focus group interview questions. The AU **may** choose to have a parent focus group interview scheduled for an hour the evening before Day One. The AU Gifted Lead should inform the C-GER Lead it intends to hold this focus group the night before the C-GER.

On Day One of the C-GER, the day will begin at an AU central location where the AU Gifted Lead will provide a programming overview presentation. The C-GER team will then conduct site visits and focus group interviews. The team requests that site visits and focus group meetings conclude by **4:00 p.m. on Day One**.

The evening of Day One and the morning of Day Two, the C-GER team debriefs and reaches consensus on information that will be presented in the Exit Summary. If time allows, the team begins to write the final C-GER report. On Day Two, the C-GER team will present a 20-30 minute Exit Summary to the AU Gifted Lead and other district administrators.

Sample Schedule

Evening Prior to Day One	
5:00 – 6:00	Parent Focus Group
Day One	
8:00 – 9:30	AU Gifted Program Overview
9:30 – 10:00	Questions from the C-GER Team
10:30 – 11:30	Team 1 visits School 1 Team 2 visits School 2
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch Break
12:45 – 1:45	Team 1 visits School 3 Team 2 visits School 4
2:15 – 3:15	Team 1 visits School 5 Team 2 visits with Parent Focus Group (if not done the night before or at school sites) Team 2 visits School 6 if no Parent Focus Group



Day Two	
8:00 – 11:00	C-GER Team debriefs privately
11:30 – 12:00	Exit Summary presented to the AU

Overview Presentation

The team gathers at the AU's site to meet with the Gifted Education Lead and other personnel as deemed necessary. The AU Gifted Lead provides a 60 - 75 minute presentation that highlights the following:

- Overview of district/AU (history, demographics, celebrations, concerns, schools)
- Overview of history of gifted education in the AU
- Progress since previous C-GER
- Current status of gifted education:
 - ◇ Definition/mission/vision/philosophy
 - ◇ Gifted education personnel serving gifted students
 - ◇ Identification process and procedures
 - ◇ Assessments utilized in the district for gifted identification/education
 - ◇ Analysis of gifted growth and achievement data
 - ◇ Analysis of demographics of identified students
 - ◇ Gifted services/programs
 - ◇ Identified performance challenges/current improvement and growth targets
 - ◇ Professional development opportunities for teachers
 - ◇ Parent and family engagement opportunities
 - ◇ Program evaluation/survey results summary
 - ◇ Other pertinent information you would like the team to know
 - ◇ Schedule for the day
- Turn-around and priority improvement district AUs and multi-district AUs with such districts under their umbrella will also discuss with the C-GER Team and any other personnel present about how gifted students integrate into improvement plans for the district.

It is not necessary to provide each team member with printed documentation that the AU wishes to showcase. Having one table set-up to include any documents the AU wishes to share that were not part of the desk review is satisfactory. It is helpful for each team member to be provided a folder of information that includes: C-GER schedule, site visit addresses and maps, suggestions for lunch and dinner locations and any other information necessary for the day.

Upon the conclusion of the presentation, the schedule should include **30 minutes** for the team to ask any additional clarifying questions of the AU Gifted Lead. It is **not** necessary for AU Gifted Lead to attend the school site visits and the AU is not responsible for providing meals to the team.

School Site Visits

School site visits provide the team with evidence of program elements and verification of the Desk Review and program self-evaluations. Schools are chosen by the C-GER team **4 weeks** prior to the site visit. All interviews are confidential. No names or groups are identified within the C-GER report.

Ensure all participants at the site know the time of the visit and are familiar with the purpose of the visit. Reserve a location at each site where our team can privately visit with the participants. Communicate with a contact person at each site who can meet team members and direct them to where they will be meeting with focus groups. It is helpful to ask participants to wear name tags. School visits should be an hour in length with time allocated for the team to travel to the next site location. **The team will not directly observe classes or gifted programs.** To ensure anonymity and provide a safe environment for candid feedback, school employees are asked not to sit in on focus groups unless they are actual members of that group.

The team will meet in a private conference room to conduct focus group interviews with

- Gifted Students,
- General Education and Gifted Education Teachers,
- Administrators, and
- Parents (if a separate parent focus group time is not scheduled).

Parent Focus Group

AUs are encouraged to conduct a stakeholder survey prior to the C-GER and report survey data as part of the Desk Review. Stakeholders may include parents, students, teacher and administrators. If the response rate to the parent survey was 60% or higher, it is not necessary for the C-GER team to conduct a Parent Focus Group. However, if a survey was not conducted or the response rate was not statistically relevant, the team will want to visit with a representative group of parents. This can occur during a separate meeting time at a centralized AU location either the night before the C-GER or during Day One. Another options is to interview parents at each school site visit. Parents selected to participate in this interview should represent the AU's gifted population in terms of grades, school levels and demographics. School or district personnel should not attend the parent focus group session(s) so parents feel comfortable to speak openly.

See Appendix C for information on Focus Group Interviews



[Click to return to Table of Contents](#)





Exit Summary & Final C-GER Report

During the C-GER Desk Review and visit, thirteen elements of the program plan are examined— identification, programming, engagement and communication, personnel, record keeping, procedures for disagreements, definition, ALPs, evaluation and accountability, budget, reports, monitoring, and early access (where applicable).

At the conclusion of the C-GER, the review team determines any elements in which the AU does not meet the conditions of law and recommends the **two-three** primary priorities for improvement. Results of the review determine the tiered level of support that will be offered to the AU by the Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC) and the Colorado Department of Education Office of Gifted Education, and whether a timeline is required for program improvements

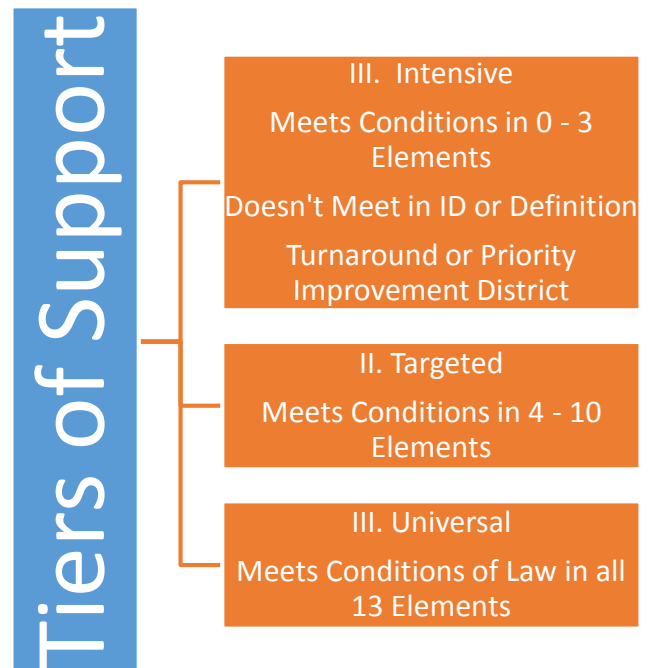
The C-GER team will synthesize evidence collected during the visit and Desk Review and craft a preliminary **Exit Summary** of the team's findings.

The focus of the Exit Summary is on **primary** improvements areas that will have the most impact on gifted student learning and growth. The Exit Summary does not represent all components, information and data that will be included in the Final Report. The AU Gifted Lead should plan to attend this presentation. Other district personnel are encourage to attend the summary presentation. A complete C-GER Final Report will be mailed to the superintendent/executive director 6 – 8 weeks following the team's visit.

Tiers of Support

Gifted education is supported in the state through eleven (11) regional support systems. Gifted Education Regional Consultants (GERCs) serve as leaders and facilitators of technical assistance and professional development for successful implementation of the AU's program plan and districts' Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Gifted Education Addendums.

Throughout the year, GERCs provide a multi-tiered level of support to AUs that includes facilitation of network meetings and professional development opportunities for all AUs and targeted or intensive technical assistance. Additionally, GERCs are available upon request for site visits that support AU program plans and UIP Addendums. GERCs collaborate on the planning and delivery of state gifted director meetings, conduct online workshops and participate in Colorado-Gifted Education Review reviews throughout Colorado.



Tier I

An AU at Tier I meets conditions of law for all elements of the program plan. At the conclusion of the C-GER, the review team will identify two areas the AU may choose to focus on during the next C-GER cycle for continuous improvement of gifted programming. The AU does **not** have to submit an **Improvement Timeline** to CDE upon receipt of the final C-GER report. The GERC is available to provide any level of support or guidance the AU might request. The CDE Office of Gifted Education includes commendation to the AU Superintendent, lead district Superintendent or BOCES Executive Director for the AU's compliance status in the cover letter that accompanies the C-GER report.

Tier II

An AU at Tier II meets conditions of law for 4-10 areas of the thirteen program elements reviewed during the C-GER. The AU meets conditions of law for identification, except the gifted population does not mirror the demographics of the district. However, the AU has evidence that a method is in place to ensure equal and equitable access for all student groups.

Tier III

Tier III offers a more in-depth level of support for those AUs not meeting the conditions law for identification and definition. AUs must meet these conditions for the rule of portability to apply. Therefore, an AU will automatically be placed at a Tier III level of support. An AU will also receive Tier III level of support if the AU meets conditions of law for only 3 or fewer elements of the program plan as determined by the C-GER.

Turnaround or Priority Improvement Status

Districts on Turnaround or Priority Improvement status will receive tiered support for the level determined by the C-GER. In addition the GERC will communicate monthly with the district to determine how gifted education is being addressed within the district's UIP Addendum targets, improvement strategies and action timeline. This information will be shared with CDE for Fall, Winter and Spring UIP reviews. Turnaround or Priority Improvement status districts may also request technical assistance and coaching meetings with the GERC.

Network and State Meetings

Gifted Education Regional Consultants hold regional network meetings at least three times a year. Length, location and venue are dependent on topics being covered. Some meetings are face to face, while others might be virtual briefs. Meetings are designed to align with state education goals, communicate important updates and provide professional development to expand and enhance capacity of educators to meet the instructional and affective needs of gifted students. *Gifted directors/coordinators* are strongly encouraged to attend all regional network meetings and state director meetings independent of their AU's designated level of tiered support following a C-GER.

[Click to return to
Table of Contents](#)





Improvement Timeline

Those AUs that are found out of compliance in any of the thirteen program elements **must** complete an Improvement Timeline in DMS within six weeks of receiving the finalized C-GER report. The report will indicate the two-three **primary** areas for improvement. Any other elements not meeting conditions of law will be considered **secondary** areas of focus.

The Timeline can be found on the Improvement Tab in DMS. For each programming element, the AU Gifted Lead will indicate if it is an area of primary focus, secondary focus or not applicable. For areas of **primary** focus, the Gifted Lead will identify the following:

Measureable Objective:	What is/are the objective(s) to accomplish in one year or less
Actions:	What are the steps that will be put into place as a means of improvement
Resources:	What data, materials, research, funds, people, etc. will be needed
Personnel Responsible:	Who will facilitate or is responsible for change
Evidence of Change:	How will change be measured

Upon completion of the timeline, the GERC will collaborate with the AU to review the report and discuss the AU's requests for support to successfully attain the improvement areas identified by the C-GER team.

- Improvements shall be attained within one year of submission of the timeline to CDE.
- The GERC will connect with the AU three times from the date of the timeline submission to review progress toward and attainment of the specified improvement targets. The Data Management System will provide an alert for these periodic discussions that may be face to face, by phone or by webinar.
- At the end of the improvement period, the AU submits evidence of completion directly onto the Improvement Timeline template provided in the Data Management System.

Tiers of Support Delineate the Responsibilities of the AU and GERC

Program Improvements Attained

If the improvement areas are successfully attained within the first year, it is suggested the AU sets targets and creates a timeline to bring any other secondary program element(s) into compliance. The plan may be shared with the GERC but does not need to be submitted to the Office of Gifted Education at CDE. The AU may choose to request individual meetings with the GERC for additional support in subsequent years.

Program Improvements Partially Attained Within One Year

If the targets are partially attained and the AU has made noticeable progress on the targets, the GERC will collaborate with the AU gifted education lead to write and submit to CDE a new timeline and determine the new level of support the AU requests to successfully meet the new timeline targets. Once again, the AU has one year to meet the new improvement targets; the GERC and AU lead will meet mid-year and a year from the date of the timeline submission, minimally, to review progress toward and attainment of the new targets.

Program Improvements Not Attained

Failure to meet targets within one year with no evidence of “good faith” effort to reach targets may result in one or more of the following:

- A letter from the CDE Office of Gifted Education sent to the AU Superintendent, lead district Superintendent or BOCES Executive Director and constituent superintendents informing him/her that program improvements were not completed within the year and suggesting additional levels of support that might be provided by the GERC and/or CDE for year two
- Personalized conference calls to the gifted coordinator/director to discuss support or guidance the AU may need to ensure work toward improvements continues in year two
- Technical assistance

Additionally, at a minimum, the GERC will set up quarterly meetings with the AU in year two to provide an additional level of support. These meetings can be face to face, by phone or by webinar.

Improvement Target Not Met Within Two Years

Failure to successfully attain improvement targets during a two-year period places the AU in jeopardy of losing state funding.



Appendix A

Timing	Administrative Unit Responsibilities
Annually	Reports & Professional Learning Opportunities • Attach bi-annual plan (UIP Gifted Addendum) to District's UIP and submit to CDE at same time as district's scheduled submission date • DMS Submission: ○ Annual Budget Proposed by April 15 ○ Annual Profile Review by April 15 ○ Annual Budget Expended by September 30 ○ Universal Screening and Qualified Personnel Grant Report by September 30 • Submit student enrollment information to CDE through ongoing regular district reporting procedures • Participate in regional network opportunities provided by the Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC) • Participate in state-level meetings and professional development opportunities
Every 3-4 Years	Program Self-evaluation • Use the AU Program Self Evaluation on DMS to begin the process. • Solicit input from all stakeholders on all program elements using surveys or other means. (The Data Management System contains stakeholder questionnaires.) • Analyze data to determine next steps for program development. Prepare for the C-GER Team • Conference with the review team chair and coordinate logistics for the review: • Arrange for focus group participants • Establish the review schedule • Notify schools to be visited during the School Visits • Coordinate logistics for the team during review • Address any questions and/or concerns related to visit preparation • Ensure the Administrative Unit is ready for the review • Prepare presentation of self-assessment findings: priority improvement timeline and student achievement summary; questions and elements for confirmation by the review team • Upload to the Data Management System documents and artifacts for the desk review at least six weeks prior to the onsite visit
Review Follow-up	Follow-up to the C-GER • Celebrate accomplishments and recognize personnel impacting the success of their gifted education program • Prioritize recommendations from the review process that the AU will incorporate into its gifted education program • Share findings through a copy of the report, website, meetings etc. of review with AU/district stakeholders: Parents, Teachers/Counselors, Administrators, Students, School Board, Community • Prepare and begin implementation of an improvement action plan, if required, with assistance of district personnel • Share progress on a regular basis with AU stakeholders

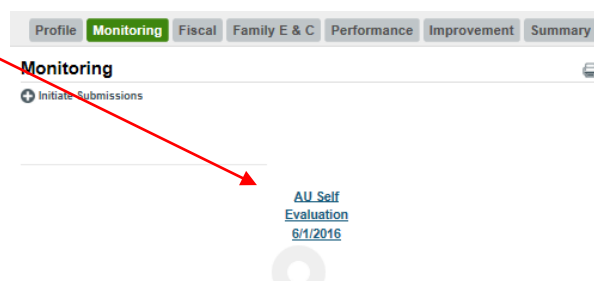
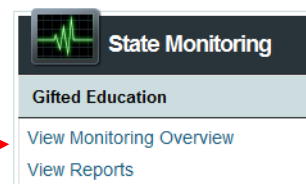
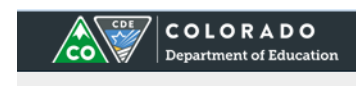


Appendix B

Data Management System & C-GER Process

To complete the AU Self-evaluation and upload the required C-GER documents and evidence, follow these steps.

- The AU Gifted Lead logs on to DMS (Person must have “director-level” access for DMS)
- Click View Monitoring Overview
- Click the Monitoring Tab
- Click the link, [AU Self-Evaluation](#)
- Click **Edit Record** and **Assign to Me**



- Read the first question under the programming element title:
- Select the appropriate response representative of your AU - “Yes” or “No”
- If you select “No” continue to the next question
- If you select “Yes,” two boxes will open
- In the first box, describe in **detail** the indicators that show evidence of the AU meeting this requirement
- In the second box, include the evidence of this requirement (see example on page 5 of this document)
- Move on to the next question
- Answer **all** questions for each of the 13 programming elements
- **Don't forget to SAVE periodically**
- When you have COMPLETED the entire report, click **Close Submissions**

• [Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act](#) (Gifted Education rules begin on page 98)

Components of Requirement

Are identification procedures easily accessible to parents and other stakeholders?

☒ Yes

Describe the indicators that show evidence of the AU implementing the requirement

B I U [Text formatting icons]

Provide the specific location where evidence can be found

[Edit Record](#) [Close Submissions](#)

Uploading Attachments

- On the Monitoring tab, you will find the location for uploading all the documents you cite as evidence of meeting conditions of the requirement. Follow these directions and naming protocol for uploading documents.
- Click **Upload**
- Click **Choose File**
- **Note regarding naming protocols for uploading attachments.** The naming protocol for attachments is as follows:
 - ◇ CGER documents should be labeled: Year_CGER_ [name of document]. e.g., 2016_CGER_ParentHandbook.
 - ◇ For all other attachments, the naming protocol is Year_Month_[Name of document]. e.g., 2016_September_File Q
- Click **Save**

Communication Log

[+ Add](#) [✉ Email](#) [🔍 View All](#)

 No entries yet

Attachments

[+ Upload](#) [🔍 View All](#)

 No attachments yet

Improvement Timeline

- The Improvement Timeline is found under the Improvement Tab on DMS.
- If the programming element is a primary area of improvement, pull down to “primary.”
- If the programming element does not meet condition of law, but is not a primary focus, pull down to “secondary.”
- If the element meets condition of law, pull down to N/A
- Complete each of the required boxes for a primary area of focus (see page 17 of handbook)

[Family E & C](#)
[Performance](#)
[Improvement](#)

[Improvement Timeline Results 6/30/2017](#)
[Improvement Timeline 6/30/2016](#)

For detailed directions on the use of DMS, visit the Gifted Website and access the *DMS Guidance Document*





Appendix C

Preparing for Focus Groups and Interviews

A **focus group** could be defined as a group (7-10 people) of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics, brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue.

Interviews are usually more personal with questions being asked of a few participants (2-4) or an individual.

Purpose and coordination

A critical component of the Gifted Education Review is to gather information from district and school stakeholders through the use of focus groups and/or personal interviews. Such discussions provide an opportunity for the team to verify evidence of gifted program elements from a variety of stakeholders as seen through a specific lens. The Gifted Education Lead, in conjunction with district and school leadership, and with guidance and support from the review Team Lead, invites and schedules stakeholders for their participation in this information-gathering process.

Selecting Participants

Two weeks prior to the C-GER site visit the review team chair will contact the AU Gifted Education Lead about what type of focus groups and interviews the team will be conducting during the site visit. While it might be tempting to identify only those stakeholders who are active and strong supporters of the Administrative Unit (AU)/district, it does not maximize the insights and richness of the findings that can emerge from these discussions that ultimately benefit the AU's improvement efforts. The following guidelines are designed to help the AU Gifted Education Lead in identifying random groups of stakeholders to be interviewed.

- Participants of a focus group represent only the intended stakeholders
- Focus groups should be random in selection and comprised of a cross section of districts/schools
- To maximize participation, focus groups can be conducted through distance learning systems that connect participants remotely.

Inviting Participants

The AU Gifted Education Lead should begin inviting stakeholders to be interviewed as soon as the visit schedule has been finalized (approximately two weeks prior to the visit). A sample focus group invitation letter is provided on the next page.

Guidelines for Identifying Stakeholders for Focus Groups and Interviews

Stakeholders should collectively:

- Reflect the AU's broader community; *socio-economic levels, ethnicity, regions served by the district, etc.*
- Provide a range of AU/District viewpoints and perspectives; *strong, active supporters, critics, those who are less involved, etc.*
- Represent all schooling levels in the Administrative Unit; *pre-K to career/technical, if applicable*
- Represent all major positions in the AU; *leadership, administrative, teaching, guidance, and support*
- Include individuals who are knowledgeable of the Administrative Unit's efforts in Gifted Education
- Include individuals who can discuss the strengths and challenges the Administrative Unit wishes the team to understand

Preparing Participants

After stakeholders accept the invitation to participate in a focus group/interview, the Administrative Unit sends a brief note to confirm the date, time, and location of the meeting. The note should emphasize the importance of being on time. The note should repeat some of the information from the invitation letter that highlights the purpose and activities of the team. Focus groups typically last 30-45 minutes. Interviews range from 15-30 minutes.

Sample Invitation to Potential Focus Group/Interview Participants

Dear *<insert name>*,

You are cordially invited to participate in *<insert name of Administrative Unit>*'s upcoming Gifted Education Peer Review by participating in a stakeholder focus group/interview.

<insert name of Administrative Unit >'s Gifted Education Peer Review will take place *<insert dates>*. The review is led by a team of professionals from around the state. During the review, the Review Team interviews a wide range of district and school level stakeholders, examines Evidence/ Artifacts, conducts school visits, and engages in professional deliberations to determine the Administrative Unit's compliance with state statutes as well as offering collaborative support and commendations for what is working. The team shares its findings via a report. The Administrative Unit uses the findings from the team to further its continuous improvement efforts.

On *<insert day>*, the Gifted Education Peer Review Team will be conducting focus groups/interviews with stakeholder groups. We would like the team to interview you as part of the *<insert interview group>* at *<insert time>* in *<insert location>*. The focus group/interview will last approximately *<insert allotted time for interview>* minutes. We believe that you have experience, knowledge, and insights that would enhance the team's understanding of our Administrative Unit.

Please reply to this invitation by *<insert date>*. I hope you can participate in this exciting and valuable process.

Sincerely,

<Gifted Education Director and/or Superintendent>

