



## Strategic Policy Initiatives

The Department of Education has identified several strategic policy initiatives for FY 2015-16 and beyond. For this performance evaluation, the Department has updated progress on the initiatives identified in the FY2016 Performance Plan that capture the Department's strategic and operational priorities, and reflect the overall direction as identified by Department leadership. The updates reflect data as of October 1, 2015.

Additional detail for these, and other, strategic policy initiatives is available in the Department's Performance Plan, which may be accessed [here](#).

### **Goal 1: Start Strong. Every student starts strong with a solid foundation in grades preschool-3.**

Increase the school readiness of our youngest learners by increasing the percentage of four-year-olds served by the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) meeting age expectations in literacy and math by 3% in 2016 and by 5% in 2018. Primary strategies to reach this goal are:

- Incentivize and support state-funded preschool sites to pursue a higher quality rating
- Support family engagement by providing professional development to state-funded preschool programs
- Provide professional development resources to early childhood educators to support high quality instruction

### **Goal 2: Read at grade level by the end of third grade. Every student reads at grade level by the end of third grade.**

Ensure every student attains proficiency in reading by third grade by increasing proficiency on the state assessment to 80% in 2016, with the goal of 85% by 2018 (Note that the state will be administering new assessments in reading and mathematics in the spring of 2015. New baseline data and targets will need to be established upon receipt of the new data). Primary strategies to reach this goal are:

- Provide resources and professional development to improve universal instruction by those who serve K-3 students
- Provide resources focused on students with disabilities

### **Goal 3: Meet or exceed standards. Every student meets or exceeds standards.**

Ensure that all students are proficient or advanced in state summative assessments by increasing the percentage of students scoring at proficient or above in reading, writing, mathematics and science by one percent overall from 2014 to 2016 and five percent by 2018 (Note that the state will be administering new assessments in reading and mathematics in the spring of 2015. New baseline data and targets will need to be established upon receipt of the new data).

Primary strategies to reach this goal are:

- Ensure all technical assistance, outreach and other support offered through CDE includes a focus on the importance of demonstrating high expectations for all students, and provide examples and resources of how this expectation would manifest in schools and classrooms;
- Provide resources and technical assistance to advance teacher knowledge and skills in standards-based instruction;
- Provide resources and technical assistance to advance teacher knowledge and skills in using student data;



- Provide resources and technical assistance to advance principal knowledge and skills in advancing quality instructional practice; and
- Provide targeted technical assistance to Priority Improvement and Turnaround Schools

**Goal 4: Graduate Ready. Every student graduates ready for college and careers.**

Ensure every student graduates college and career ready by increasing the graduation rate to 86.6% in 2016 with the goal of 90.7% by 2018. Primary strategies to reach this goal are:

- Graduate
  - Create a framework that defines characteristics of effective AEC systems
  - Increase use of effective Early Warning Systems (EWS) in secondary schools (9-12)
  - Increase use of effective interventions in non-AEC secondary (9-12) schools
- Graduate Ready
  - Increase number of districts that have diploma policies relevant in terms of 21st century skills, postsecondary and workforce readiness
  - Ensure ICAPs are being used effectively
  - Gather and share examples of local district practices for high school graduation, reflecting postsecondary and workforce readiness.

**Operational Measures**

**School Finance** – The School Finance Program area is responsible for allocating funds and monitoring costs of providing public education. The units in this program area provide coordinated, quality and efficient supports for funding and infrastructure to districts and schools.

**Process – Federal grant fund distributions**

Measure	FY12 Actual	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	Q1 FY16	1-Year Goal	3-Year Goal
Percentage of error-free distribution, by line item, per cycle	N/A	N/A	99.8%	99.9%	99.8%	99.9%	100%

Colorado districts receive money from multiple sources including federal grants. It is essential that these grant funds are distributed in an accurate and timely manner to districts so they may use them to achieve their goals. The Q1 FY16 data reflects the accuracy level of 2,543 payments between July 1, 2015 and September 30, 2015.



**Standards, Assessments, and Learning Supports** – This major program area refers to instructional supports for students from preschool through twelfth grade, including design and implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards and Colorado English Language Proficiency Standards and the assessments aligned to those standards.

**Process – Implementation of Early Literacy Assessment Tool program to reduce students identified as having a significant reading deficiency**

Measure	FY12 Actual	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	Q1 FY16	1-Year Goal	3-Year Goal
Reduce the percentage of students scoring at the well below benchmark level (significant reading deficiency) by 15 percent from beginning of the year to end of the year	N/A	N/A	12.0%	44.0%	Data unavailable	TBD	TBD

This measure reflects the implementation of the Assessment Literacy Tool in select schools. As part of this program, CDE has set a goal of reducing the number of student identified as having significant reading deficiencies at the start of the school year by 15 percent when assessed at the end of the school year.

**Educator Effectiveness** – This major program area comprises all sub-programs and projects connected to the licensure, support, evaluation and development of educators.

**Process – Licensure approval**

Measure	FY12 Actual	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	Q1 FY16	1-Year Goal	3-Year Goal
Average cycle time, in days, from receipt of application and cleared fingerprint report to PDF license is sent via email	97	42	21	14		14	14

Colorado needs to have a pool of qualified, licenses professionals to work in our schools and support student achievement. It is essential that the process by which potential educators are licensed and available for hire into Colorado schools be efficient in order to make sure these educators are available to schools.

**Accountability, Improvement, Innovation, and Choice** – The purpose of this program area is to: establish standards, expectations, and criteria for school and district performance; assess school and district performance against those standards; and utilize that information to identify and support schools districts that are struggling to meet the state’s student performance goals. The goal is to foster and implement the conditions and policies which will allow for quick and dramatic improvements in student learning and services.



**Process – Creation and dissemination of District and School Performance Frameworks**

Measure	FY12 Actual	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	Q1 FY16	1-Year Goal	3-Year Goal
Percent of error-free District and School Performance Frameworks produced per annual cycle	N/A	100%	100%	Unavailable	Data gathered annually	100%	100%

The data in District and School Performance Frameworks are used by the state for district accreditation and by the districts and schools to evaluate their own performance and target areas for improvement. For this reason, it is essential these reports be error-free.

Data for 2015 are unavailable due to a change in assessment systems used during the 2014-15 school year. Data for 2015 are expected to be released in early 2016. Data for this performance measure are gathered annually and not reported on a quarterly basis.

**Information and Communication – This program area comprises all work related to collecting and providing data and information on the Colorado education system.**

**Process – Creation and dissemination of student growth reports**

Measure	FY12 Actual	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	Q1 FY16	1-Year Goal	3-Year Goal
Percentage of error-free student growth reports produced per cycle	N/A	100%	100%	Unavailable	Data gathered annually	100%	100%

As with the data in the District and School Performance Frameworks, student growth data are used by districts and schools to evaluate their own performance and target areas for improvement. For this reason, it is essential these reports be error-free.

Data for 2015 are unavailable due to a change in assessment systems used during the 2014-15 school year. Data for 2015 are expected to be released in early 2016. Data for this performance measure are gathered annually and not reported on a quarterly basis.