

Accreditation

The Board of Education believes its primary responsibility is to provide leadership in the area of student achievement. To foster greater accountability and enhance improvement in student achievement, the Board shall enter into an accreditation contract with the State Board of Education regarding district accreditation and shall accredit the schools within the district.

District accreditation

The accreditation contract shall bind the Board to manage the district and its schools to meet certain standards, goals and requirements over the term of the contract, in accordance with the Education Accountability Act of 2009 and applicable State Board of Education rules.

In conjunction with accreditation, the Board is committed to adopting academic standards for student learning, achievement performance levels, systems for measuring student achievement and methods for improving student achievement.

School accreditation

While the state accredits the district, the Board accredits the schools within the district, including district charter schools. The Board directs the superintendent to develop a school accreditation process for the Board's input and approval. Such process shall be developed in accordance with the Education Accountability Act of 2009.

Pursuant to the Board's constitutional and statutory authority to control instruction in its schools and determine the allocation of district resources, the Board shall review and approve all school plans, regardless of whether the plan is a performance, improvement, priority improvement or turnaround plan. Each school plan shall be submitted to the Colorado Department of Education in accordance with the timelines prescribed by applicable State Board of Education rules.

Adopted: 10/09/03

Revised: 10/13/05, 09/14/06, 10/06/09, 10/14/10, 07/19/12, 01/16/14, 02/12/15

LEGAL REFS.: Colo. Const. Art. IX, Sect. 15 (*board has control of instruction within the district*)
 C.R.S. 22-7-1013(1) (*adoption of academic standards*)
 C.R.S. 22-11-101 *et seq.* (*Education Accountability Act of 2009*)
 C.R.S. 22-11-307 (*board accreditation of district schools*)
 C.R.S. 22-30-105 (*school district organization planning process*)
 C.R.S. 22-30.5-104 (2)(b) (*district charter schools subject to accreditation by local board*)
 C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(t) (*board duty to determine educational program and prescribe textbooks*)
 C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(mm) (*Board duty to adopt policy for accreditation of district schools*)
 C.R.S. 22-32-142 (2) (*parent notice, public meeting and public hearing requirements for schools on priority improvement or turnaround status*)

1 CCR 301-1 (*State Board of Education rules for the Administration of the Accreditation of School Districts*)

1 CCR 301-71 (*State Board of Education rules for the Administration, Certification and Oversight of Colorado Online Programs*)

CROSS REFS.: AE, Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment
AE-R, Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment-Regulation
AEA, Standards Based Education
IHBK*, Preparation for Postsecondary and Workforce Success
IK, Academic Achievement
IKA, Grading/Assessment Systems
KB, Parental Engagement in Education

NOTE 1: State law requires the local board of education to adopt "policies" for the accreditation of the district's schools, including the use of school accreditation contracts and the use of accreditation categories comparable to those used for the district's accreditation. C.R.S. 22-11-307. Even though the law requires specific provisions to be included in "school accreditation policies," CASB believes the intent of the law can be met by addressing these requirements in each district school's performance, improvement, priority improvement or turnaround plan. Importantly, this sample policy requires the school accreditation process to be developed in accordance with the Education Accountability Act of 2009, C.R.S. 22-11-101 et seq. (the Accreditation Act) but also provides that the Board shall approve all school plans, regardless of type.

NOTE 2: A school district with 1000 students or fewer may submit a single plan to satisfy the school district and school plan requirements. School districts with between 1000 and 1200 students may request the Colorado Department of Education's permission to submit one plan. C.R.S. 22-11-210 (2)(b). Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, small, rural districts with less than 1200 students may choose to submit their district and school accreditation performance plans every other year rather than annually, as long as the district/school maintains the status of accredited or accredited with distinction. C.R.S. 22-11-303, -304. For more information on this flexibility, visit the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE's) webpage concerning unified improvement planning.

NOTE 3: State law requires that a public meeting and public hearing be held prior to the Board's adoption of a priority improvement or turnaround plan for a school. C.R.S. 22-32-142 (2). Among other issues, a school's priority improvement or turnaround plan must "incorporate strategies to increase parent engagement" in the school. C.R.S. 22-11-405(4)(e.5), - 406(3)(e.5).

NOTE 4: In 2014 and 2015, the state legislature amended the Accreditation Act to address the state's transition from the use of the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) assessments to the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments. As amended by HB 15-1323, the Accreditation Act provides that CDE shall not assign accreditation ratings or recommend school plans for the 2015-16 school year. CDE shall exclude the 2015-16 school year from the accreditation "clock" and shall count the 2016-17 school year as if it were consecutive to the 2014-15 school year. C.R.S. 22-11-207 (4)(b), -210 (1)(d)(II). For the 2015-16 school year, districts and schools shall continue to implement the plan type assigned for the 2014-15 school year. C.R.S. 22-11-208 (1.5), -210 (2.5). For more information about school and district accreditation during this transition period, visit CDE's webpage concerning state accountability.