Alternative Education Campuses in Colorado
Background on Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) in Colorado
• In Colorado, schools that serve primarily high-risk students are called “Alternative Education Campuses” or AECs for short.

• As of the 2015-16SY, Colorado had 87 AECs which serve just over 17,000 students.

• AECs are outlined in C.R.S. 22-7-604.5 as schools:
  • (I) “Having a specialized mission and serving a special needs or at-risk population”,
  • (V) “Having nontraditional methods of instruction delivery”,
  • (VI) (A) “Serving students who have severe limitations...”, and
  • (VI)(B) “Serving a student population in which more than 90% of the students have an individualized education program...or meet the definition of a high-risk student”.
“High-Risk Student” is a student who has one or more of the following conditions

- juvenile delinquent
- dropped out of school
- expelled from school
- history of personal drug or alcohol use
- history of personal street gang involvement
- history of child abuse or neglect
- has a parent or guardian in prison
- has an IEP

- family history of domestic violence
- repeated school suspensions
- parent or pregnant woman
- migrant child*
- homeless child
- history of a serious psychiatric or behavioral disorder*
- is over traditional school age for his or her grade level and lacks adequate credit hours for his or her grade level**

*Added in 2010
**Added in 2011
History of AECs in Colorado

2002
- C.R.S. 22-7-604.5
- Established definition of AECs

2008
- CO Coalition of Alt Ed Campuses commissioned to establish basic framework for alt. ed.

2009
- SB 09-163, CO Education Accountability Act
- Determined AECs no longer exempt from accountability

2010
- School Performance Framework (SPF) for AECs includes Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, Student Engagement, and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

2011
- AECs allowed to include optional measures in School Performance Framework

2015
- HB15-1350
- Created AEC accountability work group to refine and update the current AEC accountability system

2016
- HB16-1429 (based on work group recs)
- Modifies minimum % of high-risk students and certain “high-risk indicators”
Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) in Colorado currently make up 2% of the total student enrollment. These schools enroll higher populations of highly at risk students.
Nearly two-thirds of AECs in Colorado are charter schools.

A small number of AECs in Colorado are online schools; these are evenly split between charters and district-run schools.
Alternative Accountability in Colorado
School and District Performance Frameworks & AEC School Performance Framework

Elementary and Middle Schools

- Academic Achievement, 40%
- Academic Growth, 60%

High Schools and Districts

- Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness, 30%
- Academic Achievement, 30%
- Academic Growth, 40%

Alternative Education Campuses

- Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness, 30%
- Academic Achievement, 15%
- Academic Growth, 35%
- Student Engagement, 20%
Alternative Education Campuses receive a School Performance Framework annually, similar to traditional schools. The main exception is AECs are measured on Student Engagement measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>State-Required Measures and Metrics</th>
<th>Optional Measures and Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Achievement</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>PARCC Mean scale score of students for English Language Arts, Math, Science</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NWEA MAP, Scantron, Acuity, Galileo, Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), STAR, and/or Accuplacer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Growth</strong></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>CMAS/PARCC median growth percentiles in English Language Arts and Math</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NWEA MAP, Scantron, Acuity, Galileo, Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), ACCESS, STAR, and/or Accuplacer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Engagement</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1. Attendance rate</td>
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<td>2. Truancy rate</td>
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<td>1. Student Re-engagement,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2. Returning students,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>3. Socio-Emotional or Psychological Adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postsecondary &amp; Workforce Readiness</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1. Completion rate (best of 4, 5, 6, or 7 year rate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Dropout rate</td>
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<td>3. Colorado ACT score (average)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Credit/course completion,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Workforce Readiness,</td>
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<td>3. Post-Completion Success,</td>
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<td>4. Successful transition (for non-degree granting schools only),</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Graduation rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Measure Types by Indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>State-Required and Optional</th>
<th>State-Required Only</th>
<th>Optional Only</th>
<th>Total Optional</th>
<th>No Measures for this Indicator*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Achievement</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Growth</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary &amp; workforce Readiness</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N Schools on AEC SPF in 2016 = 90

*Due to assessment transitions, an atypical number of schools had missing measures in indicators on the 2016 AEC SPF.
Schools receive a rating on each of the performance indicators:
  - Exceeds (4 pts), Meets (3), Approaching (2), Does Not Meet (1)

The ratings roll up to an overall evaluation of the school’s performance, which determines the school plan type rating:
  - Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, Turnaround

Under SB 09-163, the “Colorado Education Accountability Act”, if a public school is required to implement a priority improvement plan or turnaround plan for 5 consecutive school years, the state board must recommend that the public school's school district or the institute take one of several actions specified in statute with regard to the public school.
Performance of AECs in Colorado

- AEC: Performance Plan: 46%
- AEC: Improvement Plan: 37%
- AEC: Priority Improvement Plan: 13%
- AEC: Turnaround Plan: 4%
Adjusted AEC SPF Cut-Points: Impact for Accountability

- AECs in Colorado are measured similarly to traditional schools, but the weightings are lowered to take into account the high-risk population served.

- Without allowing additional measures and revised cut-points in the AEC SPF, 45% of AECs would be on priority improvement or turnaround plans, whereas 17% were on the AEC SPF.
  - An additional 49% of AECs did not have sufficient data to produce a traditional SPF.

- AECs in Colorado are gradually improving over time. In 2014, 24% of AECs were on priority improvement or turnaround plans, and in 2016, only 17% were.

- AECs only constitute 5% of total schools in Colorado. However, AECs are disproportionately represented in priority improvement or turnaround plans—21 of those 177 schools (11%) are AECs.
HB15-1350: The Alternative Education Campus Accountability Work Group
The Department of Education shall convene stakeholder meetings with the purpose to provide recommendations to the Commissioner, the education committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the State Board of Education regarding performance indicators for the next iteration of the Alternative Education Campus School Performance Framework (AEC SPF) for release in the fall of 2016.
The commissioner selected at least one workgroup member from each of the subcategories outlined in HB15-1350 to comprehensively represent the AEC community in Colorado.
Charge of the Work Group

Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

- Investigate a comparison group to compare high-risk students across schools
- Measure-specific cut points
- 95% high-risk threshold as Alt. Ed. Campus designation & student groups included
- Current weighting system

95% high-risk threshold as Alt. Ed. Campus designation & student groups included
Changes Needed for AEC Work Group Charge

Statute

95% threshold for Alt. Ed. Campus designation & student groups included

Rule

Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

Policy

Development of measure-specific cut points

Weighting System

Methods/costs associated with using cross-school student comparison groups

Documentation and verification methods for certifying that 95% threshold has been met
Recommendations of the AEC Accountability Work Group

| Qualitative and Quantitative Measures | • Opportunity Measures indicator unique to a school’s design and mission  
                                      • Pilot a school quality review process |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Measure-specific cut points          | • Proposed a process for determining AEC appropriate cut-points for AEC SPF measures  
                                      • Created a guidance for how all measures are developed for AECs |
| Current weighting system             | • Weigh achievement and growth results by the number of students included in each measure (as opposed to weighting each measure equally). |
| Investigate a comparison group to compare high-risk students across schools | • Identify a comparison group by using easily available data for identifying high risk conditions based on AEC student’s characteristics prior to enrolling in the AEC. |
| 95% high-risk threshold as Alt. Ed. Campus designation & student groups included | • Lower the high-risk threshold for designation of an alternative education campus from 95% to 90% high-risk  
                                      • Expand 5 criteria of student groups included in high-risk threshold |
Unified Improvement Planning
Unified Improvement Planning
## What is Unified Improvement Planning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment</th>
<th>A system to align improvement planning requirements for state and federal accountability into a “single” plan.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>A common format for schools and for districts to document improvement planning efforts. Schools/districts on accountability clock must demonstrate a coherent plan for dramatic change and adjustments over time. Reviews conducted by CDE and the State Review Panel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>A process for including multiple voices, including staff, families and community representatives. Plans are also posted publicly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Practice</td>
<td>A statewide strategy to promote improvement planning based on best-practice, including use of state and local data and engagement in a continuous improvement cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>A mechanism for triggering additional supports through CDE (especially for schools/districts on accountability clock).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Data for Improvement Planning

### Performance Data
- Local (district) summative and interim assessment results
- Student work samples
- Classroom assessment results
- K-3 reading assessment results (required by the READ Act)

### Demographic Data
- School locale and size of student population
- Student characteristics, including poverty, language proficiency, IEP, migrant, race/ethnicity
- Student mobility rates
- Staff characteristics (e.g., experience, attendance, turnover)

### Process Data
- External school/district reviews
- Curriculum documents
- Instructional materials
- Observations of Instructional Practice
- Academic interventions available to students
- Student attendance
- Discipline referrals and suspension rates
- Schedules and class sizes
- Family/community involvement policies/practices
- Professional development (structure, participation, focus)
- Services and/or programs (e.g., Title

### Perception Data
- Teaching and learning conditions surveys (e.g., TELL Colorado)
- Perception survey data (e.g., parents, students, teachers, community, school leaders)
- Self-assessment results
Unified Improvement Planning Processes

Prepare to Plan

Review Current Performance

Describe Notable Trends

Prioritize Performance Challenges

Set Student Centered Targets

Identify Interim Measures

Identify Root Causes

ID Major Strategies & Action Steps

Identify Implementation Benchmarks

Data Analysis

Progress Monitoring

Target Setting

Action Planning
Performance “Framework” For Improvement Planning
(2016 AEC framework)

**Big Idea**

**Ways to Measure “Big Idea”**
(Current Performance, Notable Trends, Priority Performance Challenges, Target Setting)

- Performance Indicator
- Academic Achievement
- Academic Growth
- Student Engagement
- Post-Secondary Workforce Readiness