



COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado Gifted Education Review

Morgan County School District

Submitted to:

Mr. Ron Echols, Superintendent
Dr. Rena Frasco, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

By:

Jacquelin Medina, Director of Gifted Education

Office of Gifted Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1175
Denver CO 80202
303-866-6645
baggs_j@cde.state.co.us



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Executive Summary	4
Indicators	6
Engagement and Communication	
Definition	
Identification	
Advanced Learning Plan	
Programming	
Evaluation and Accountability	
Personnel	
Budget	
Reports	
Record Keeping	
Procedures for Disagreements	
Monitoring	
Early Access (if applicable)	
Conclusion	27



Introduction

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is committed to customer service that assists Administrative Units (AUs) in improving outcomes for gifted students through a continuum of supports and data-based decision making. The Colorado Gifted Education Review (CGER) 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.

In accordance with state statute, CGER 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 CGER is to be a support system in fulfilling the monitoring requirements. The CGER process is a positive working relationship with the administrative unit’s leadership in gifted education. It begins by conversation with the CGER team lead followed by support from the Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC) throughout the CGER process. The CGER process relies on meaningful data including: parent/staff survey of focus group data, the performance of gifted students on state and local assessments, enrollment data and indicators outlined in state regulations reflected in the AU’s comprehensive program plan. The AU Self-evaluation summarizes evidence of program implementation for the review team’s consideration. A desk audit by the CGER review team informs the conversation, recommendations, and setting of priorities by the AU representative and review team. The CGER process also integrates the updating of the AU’s Comprehensive Program Plan (CPP) according to findings and necessary updates determined by the AU.

The Office of Gifted Education determines the review team comprised of four external peer experts. The review team conducts a desk audit, engages in conversation with the AU’s gifted personnel and plans a site visit to verify the implementation of program plan elements, accountability requirements and progress toward the AU’s comprehensive program goals.

The CGER process is designed to acknowledge the achievements of the AU and help prioritize future improvements and growth necessary for gifted student learning and high achievement. After onsite dialogue and visits, the review team assembles a preliminary report of the team’s findings. The report is reviewed and approved by the Colorado Department of Education Director of Gifted Education and sent to the AU superintendent or BOCES executive director and member district superintendents.

The intent of this report is to help promote the process of reflection, and to encourage AUs to engage in continuous improvement. Team members spend many hours reviewing evidence and artifacts, listening to AU representatives and sponsoring a site visit. Notation of program strengths and recommendations are the result of team consensus based on extensive deliberation about findings and evidence.

The Exceptional Children’s Education Act Rules for Gifted Education may be accessed at:
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs>



Executive Summary

The Colorado Gifted Education Review (CGER) team is grateful for the warm welcome and open dialogue of administrative unit personnel that supported their focused and meaningful work. These collaborative efforts spoke highly of the administrative unit's intent to serve gifted students and their families using local talent and resources. In particular, team members expressed their appreciation to Miranda Harper, Coordinator of Gifted Education, for sharing the responsibilities of monitoring and accountability.

The CGER report summarizes strengths, recommendations, and priorities in program improvement for each program element defined in ECEA regulations in accordance with the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA). This report serves as the detailed analysis of discrepancies and recommendations to correct discrepancies (C.R.S. 22-20-203(1)(c)). When notated, selected corrective actions are due within one year of receiving the report. Any remaining corrective actions are due the following year(s).

It is the intent of CGER to engage the district program review and collaborative agreement for next steps in program improvement or development. With customer service and continuous improvement as foundational principles in the CGER process, the following outline briefly describes the findings of the program review.

AU's progress since last CGER:

- Increased variety of programming options to meet student strength areas
- Easy to access information on the Administrative Unit (AU) website
- Developed a consistent system for identification and programming
- Improved family engagement and communication
- Increased professional development opportunities for teachers
- Conduct stakeholder surveys on a regular basis
- Created a procedures for disagreements process

Summary of AU gifted programming strengths:

- Parents and students involved in ALP development
- Extensive enrichment opportunities are offered for students
- Improved identification processes and procedures
- Developed a comprehensive Gifted Services Handbook that is accessible to all stakeholders
- Stakeholder survey conducted in spring of 2017 with a high return rate
- Educators have access to professional development in gifted education through many venues such as CDE ENET/Moodle Online Courses (Javits), other CDE offerings, Twice-Exceptional Online courses and book studies
- The Administrative Unit (AU) provides strong financial support for gifted education



Priority improvement targets to meet conditions of law:

Advanced Learning Plans:

- Develop annual, measurable achievement and affective goals for all students to include consistent monitoring of these goals for growth.
- Align progress reports with the AU's schedule for parent reporting and/or conferences about student growth and progress related to their ALP goals.
- Implement a system for instituting standards-based goals for ALPs across all schools in the AU to drive alignment of programming options to meet student needs.
- Establish a consistent transition process for all school levels.

Evaluation and Accountability:

- Establish a procedure to monitor and measure student affective growth and communicate this information to appropriate stakeholder groups.
- Conduct program evaluation on a scheduled basis to elicit feedback from stakeholders. Share this information with appropriate groups and utilize it to improve gifted education in the AU.



Procedures for Parent, Family and Student Engagement and Communication

12.02(2)(a) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- How parents are informed about access to identification procedures
- Ways to educate parents and families about giftedness or parenting gifted students
- Information about involvement and progress reporting
- What programming options are available to match student strengths and challenges
- Information about concurrent enrollment
- How to be involved in college and career planning
- Communication available in primary languages in the AU
- Ways parents and families may participate in the school community

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Communication is the key toward building a gifted program plan that engages the student and the family throughout the process of identification, development of programming services, progress monitoring achievement and growth and participation in systems of affective support. All stakeholders have access to information in a variety of formats to ensure equity and participation.

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit (AU) website contains a gifted education webpage including a calendar, resource links and a Gifted Services Handbook. The Gifted Services Handbook has information that includes student referral forms and the process for identification, resources and strategies for parents and families to support their child. The AU holds parent and family nights bi-annually in the fall and the spring of each school year. The focus for these meetings is to build the expertise of parents/families in advocating for and supporting their gifted children both at home and in the school community.

The AU conducts an annual universal screening process for giftedness at 2nd and 6th grades, as well as for any new 3rd and 4th grade students. Parents and families receive written information about this process. Regarding identification the AU provides the parents/families a referral letter that explains the process and clearly describes the body of evidence used in the determination of giftedness. A determination letter is provided regarding their child's identification along with information about the AU Gifted Services Handbook and where to access it. Appropriate documents are offered in English, Spanish and other languages as appropriate and translators are available as needed.

A stakeholder survey was conducted in the spring of 2017 and provided feedback from teachers, parents and students. These responses confirmed the following:

- Parents/families have access to information regarding their child's gifted program, know who to contact, have input into the ALP and understand the identification process. Parents reported a mixed response on available resource information, school communication, procedures for disagreements and the transition process from school to school.



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- Parents reported during the focus group that progress monitoring was not consistent throughout the school year. In addition they reported limited communication regarding their child's programming for gifted education.
 - Elementary students reported that they knew they were gifted, are learning new things and have Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) goals and projects that interest them. They had mixed responses on who to talk to about being gifted and doing more challenging work than their typical peers.
 - Secondary students indicated that they know their areas of strength, have an ALP and are in classes with other identified students. They like their teachers, Lunch Bunch and enrichment opportunities. They would like additional Advanced Placement (AP) options and to meet more often with the gifted education personnel.

Strengths:

- Gifted achievement information is shared via district news, local newspaper, district website, social media and local radio.
- A comprehensive Gifted Services Handbook is posted on the AU website and is available to all stakeholder groups.
- Strong stakeholder survey results were provided from students and teachers.
- The Administrative Unit (AU) provides strong financial support for gifted education.
- The AU has dedicated personnel to serve identified students.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Utilize the results of the parent survey to drive consistent and improved communication at all levels to include ease of access to online information and increased participation in trainings.
- Develop a system for regular and consistent parent communication in the progress monitoring of their child's ALP.



Definition

12.02(2)(b) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Written definition is the same as or substantially similar to the definition of “gifted student” specified in section 12.01(16) of Rules
- The definition serves as the basis for the implementation of all other program plan elements of ECEA Rules

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

Morgan County School District’s definition of giftedness is in alignment with the state definition, is posted on the AU’s website, and includes all categories of giftedness.

Colorado recognizes that potential for giftedness is in every student population, including twice exceptional students, low socio-economic groups, and culturally linguistically different student groups. This attribute drives differentiation in opportunities, identification tools/procedures, and programming to meet the needs of the local community.



Identification Procedures, Criteria for determining exceptional ability or Talent Pool, and Portability

12.02(2)(c-e) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Description of assessment process used for identifying students who meet definition and identifying educational needs of gifted students
- An assessment process that recognizes a student's exceptional abilities, potential, interests and needs in order to guide instruction and individualized programming
- Method(s) that describe the AU's efforts to identify students of all populations to ensure equal and equitable access
- Referrals from a variety of sources
- A screening procedure used for conducting identification assessment
- Timeline of no more than 30 school days after a referral to make a determination of formal identification, continue to collect assessment data, or move to talent pool designation
- Assessments that align with identification in all domains of giftedness and in underrepresented populations
- A body of evidence that includes qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources and multiple types
- A body of evidence that contains data to identify strength area(s) as defined in the definition of gifted children and used for developing the ALP
- A review team procedure with at least one member trained in gifted identification
- A determination letter for parents and school files describing decision of review team
- A communication procedure by which parents are made aware of the identification assessment process, the results of the determination and how to engage in the development of the ALP
- For each category of giftedness, 95th percentile or above on a standardized nationally normed test or observation tool, or a rating on a performance assessment that indicates exceptional or distinguished ability compared to age mates
- Not meeting criteria on a single assessment shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for identification
- Criteria for screening assessments is a score range less than 95th percentile, used to determine further observation, data collection and/or talent pool designation
- Implementation of statewide identification procedures to ensure portability
- Transfer of the body of evidence for identification and ALP to the new district
- If body of evidence is incomplete the receiving district will consultation with former district, parents and student and re-evaluate the identification determination
- Review of new student's ALP within 45 school days of start date and communication with parent within 60 days of how new district will meet the needs of the student

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law



In Colorado, the identification process recognizes a student's exceptional abilities or potential, interests, and needs in order to guide student instruction and individualized planning and programming. In traditionally under-represented student groups and visual/music/performing arts student groups or talent pools, identification may require the collection of student information over time. This may include using additional data points from a response to intervention approach, or additional assessment. Not meeting criteria on a single assessment tool shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for identification, if other indicators suggest exceptional potential as observed in a body of evidence.

Description of findings and observations:

Description

The Administrative Unit's (AU) overall identification percentage is approximately 134 students or 4% of their population identified which is below the state average of 7.6%. The AU has noted that their goal is to increase identification for their underrepresented and poverty populations. They have increased their identification in Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) population by 5% in the last year. The rate of identification for diverse populations has remained the same over the past 3 years. Universal screening is conducted using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) in the fall of 2nd, 6th and also for any new 3rd and 4th graders. Parents/Guardians receive a letter explaining the referral process, assessment and permission to test. The AU has developed a Body of Evidence (BOE) process to use for eligibility and indicates that a review team makes the final determination. The AU gifted education committee serves as the review team for identification determination. Once determination has been made, a letter in the family's primary language informs parents of the schools' decision, including Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) testing results. Students who score between the 85th-95th percentiles are given talent pool designation (Watch & Enrich status) and are monitored to determine if further data collection is necessary.

Strengths

- A BOE approach is used and all identification pathways are described in the Gifted Education Handbook that includes the Colorado Department of Education identification flow charts.
- Timelines for the identification process are clear with parent notification within 30 days of referral, new student ALP reviews in 45 days, and parents of new students notified in 60 days.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Refine identification of students in talent areas.
- Continue to develop identification processes for early grades.
- Develop identification processes that address disparities in current demographic representations, (e.g. FARM, ELL, 2e) to better match the overall AU demographics.



Advanced Learning Plan Content & ALP Procedures and Responsibilities

12.02(2)(f-g) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- ALP is developed for every gifted student according to the student's determined area(s) of giftedness, interests, and instructional and affective needs
- ALP is considered in planning for post-secondary readiness and decision-making of subsequent programming
- If ALP is blended into ICAP, gifted achievement and affective goals are included
- ALP articulates a transition process when students move to next schooling level
- ALP includes a student profile described in the body of evidence
- Annual, measurable and attainable achievement goal. Achievement goals are standards-based statements in a student's strength area(s).
- Annual, measurable and attainable affective goal. Affective goals reflect development of personal, social, communication, leadership, and/or cultural competency.
- Description or delineation of supplemental curriculum, activities, specific strategies and extended or expanded opportunities that support goals
- Progress reports that align with the AU's or member district's schedule for parent-reporting and/or conferences about student progress
- Personnel involved in ALP development, progress report meetings or conferences
- Parents, teachers and the student are notified about ALP development
- Personnel assigned with the responsibility for ALP development and monitoring
- Parents, students and classroom teachers should be familiar with the ALP goals
- Gifted resource personnel may assist with writing of goals, but are not sole custodian of ALP
- Goals are written and aligned with tiered classroom instruction and expanded learning opportunities for supplemental or intensive programming
- A method to develop student awareness and active participation in the ALP process
- A process of management of the ALPs in the school cumulative file system, including transferring between grades and school levels
- An ALP progress reporting timeline
- Evidence of parent engagement in the ALP

Colorado law requires every identified gifted student to have an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) developed according to the student's identified area(s) of giftedness, interests, and instructional and affective needs. The ALP process is a dynamic, annual process that is collaborative and engaging for the student, teachers and family members. The specific requirements for ALP content development are described in the ECEA Rules.



This element: **Meets conditions of law** **Does not meet conditions of law**

Description of findings and observations:

The Colorado Gifted Education Review (CGER) team reviewed a random sample of Administrative Unit (AU) Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) from both elementary and secondary levels. All identified students have an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) that is reviewed annually. The ALP document includes a summary of data including quantitative and qualitative assessment information. Students and parents reported that they are involved in the development of the ALP and the annual update. Parents reported in the focus group that they receive a survey annually with open-ended questions regarding the goals for their child's ALP. Some parents reported that they would welcome more in person engagement around the development and progress monitoring of the ALP (e.g. periodic progress on ALP goals). Parents commented that they would like to see ALPs contain more meaningful content and be connected to their child's strength area. Academic goals were included in all ALPs but not all were standards based or measurable. Some ALPs had affective goals, but these were not consistently linked to programming for measurable outcomes.

ALPs are available to teachers via an electronic database with hard copies and a summary sheet in the student cumulative file. Gifted records are maintained, retained and destroyed in a manner consistent with district policy.

Strengths:

- Parents and students reported active involvement in the ALP process.
- The Administrative Unit Gifted Services Handbook outlines the specific procedures for the development of the ALP.

The following key requirements for corrective action are needed to meet conditions of law:

- Develop annual, measurable achievement and affective goals for all students to include consistent monitoring of these goals.
- Provide parents with progress reports like, reports aligned with the AU's schedule for parent reporting and/or conferences about student growth and progress related to their ALP goals.
- Implement a system for instituting standards-based goals for ALPs across all schools in the AU to drive alignment of programming options to meet student needs.
- Establish a consistent transition process between all school levels.



Programming includes goals, student outcomes, strategies to accomplish them and procedures for assessing and evaluating these over time. Programming shall match the academic strengths and interests of the gifted student. Other educational or affective needs are addressed according to the individual student's profile.

Programming

12.02(2)(h) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Program plan describes the programming components, options and strategies that will be implemented to appropriately address the educational needs of gifted students
- Programming shall match the academic strength(s) and interests of the student
- Affective needs shall be addressed based on the student's profile
- Programming alignment to student's assessment data and ALP goals in area(s) of giftedness
- Structures or type of delivery by which students are served at different school levels
- Support in differentiated instruction and methods
- Affective and guidance support systems
- Diverse content options in strength area(s)
- Programming is articulated across grade levels
- Pre-collegiate and/or pre-advanced placement support
- Collaborative efforts for ALP development and reviews of the teacher, support staff, student and parents
- Post-secondary options to students
- Concurrent enrollment opportunities if indicated in ALP or ICAP
- Problem solving process when a gifted student is underachieving

This element: Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit (AU) offers a wide variety of programming including:

- Curriculum Compacting
- Differentiated Instruction
- Flexible Pacing
- Guided Independent Study
- Advanced Placement, Honors, Concurrent Enrollment (HS only)
- Pullout in elementary
- Ability and cluster grouping
- Content area and grade level acceleration
- Summer programming

The Administrative Unit (AU) offers extensive enrichment opportunities with Destination Imagination, Science Fair, Geography and Spelling Bee. Parents reported that even with the higher level/weighted



classes their children are not being sufficiently challenged. In addition parents would like more opportunities for creative thinkers with some projects they could do in class or when they complete their other classroom work.

Affective programming is provided through bibliotherapy, individual counseling, small group activities such as Lunch Bunch and Smart Girls/Cool Dudes.

The programming delivery structures and types of programming offered are clearly articulated in the AU Gifted Services Handbook. The AU uses an individual intervention system for identified students that are underachieving in their strength area.

Strengths:

- The AU offers a summer program that served over 78 students in 2017.
- The AU has developed increased programming options both for academic and affective support since the previous Colorado Gifted Education Review (CGER).

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Develop a system to document affective programming provided to gifted students.
- Explore and offer additional accelerated programming options to match the students' strength areas particularly at the secondary level considering resources of community
- Improve communication to parents and teachers as students' transition from one grade or school level to the next.



Evaluation and Accountability

12.02(2)(i) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Unified improvement plan addendum methods by which gifted student performance is monitored and measured for continual learning progress and how methods align with state accreditation process
- UIP to include performance target(s) and action plan
- Method by which a student’s affective growth is monitored and measured to ensure continual development
- Methods for ensuring that gifted student performance are consistent with state accreditation and accountability
- Self-evaluation includes periodic feedback and review from stakeholders
- Methods by which stakeholders are informed about program evaluation

This element:

- Meets conditions of law Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

As part of the desk review, the CGER team studied the documents provided on the Data Management System (DMS). A gifted Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) addendum was attached to the 2015-2016 district improvement plan. At the Administrative Unit (AU) level, state assessment gifted data is disaggregated for school levels, Free and Reduced Meals (FARM), minority, and content areas. A UIP was not submitted in the spring of 2017 as a result of the district reaching accredited status. Stakeholders have access to the Comprehensive Program Plan on the AU website. Regarding performance of identified students on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment they have shown some growth in the English/Language Arts and Math areas from 2015-16 to 2016-17. The meet/exceeds combined scores on PARCC are 91.5% in Math and 93.6% in English/Language Arts. The CGER team found no evidence of measurement or monitoring of affective growth. In addition, survey responses indicated that student growth was not consistently monitored or discussed with students or parents. As part of its program evaluation, the AU conducted a stakeholder survey. Survey responses included parents, elementary and secondary students, and teachers. The parent focus group reported that they were unaware of the results of this survey.

Gifted program evaluation is an essential component for continuous growth and improvement. Program evaluation may occur annually, bi-annually and during the CGER process. Program evaluation relies on using meaningful data, such as stakeholder survey or focus group data, the performance of identified gifted students on state and local assessments, identification demographic data and monitoring of students’ Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs).



Strengths

- The AU submitted a gifted addendum to the UIP in 2015-2016.
- The AU received survey feedback in the spring of 2017 from stakeholders including 81 teachers, 28 elementary students, 80 secondary students, and 52 parents.
- The AU utilized information from the survey to inform program decisions.

The following key requirements for corrective action are needed to meet conditions of law:

- Establish a procedure to monitor and measure student affective growth and communicate the procedure to educators, students, and parents.
- Conduct program evaluation on a scheduled basis to elicit periodic feedback from stakeholders. Share this information with appropriate groups and utilize it to improve gifted education in the administrative unit.

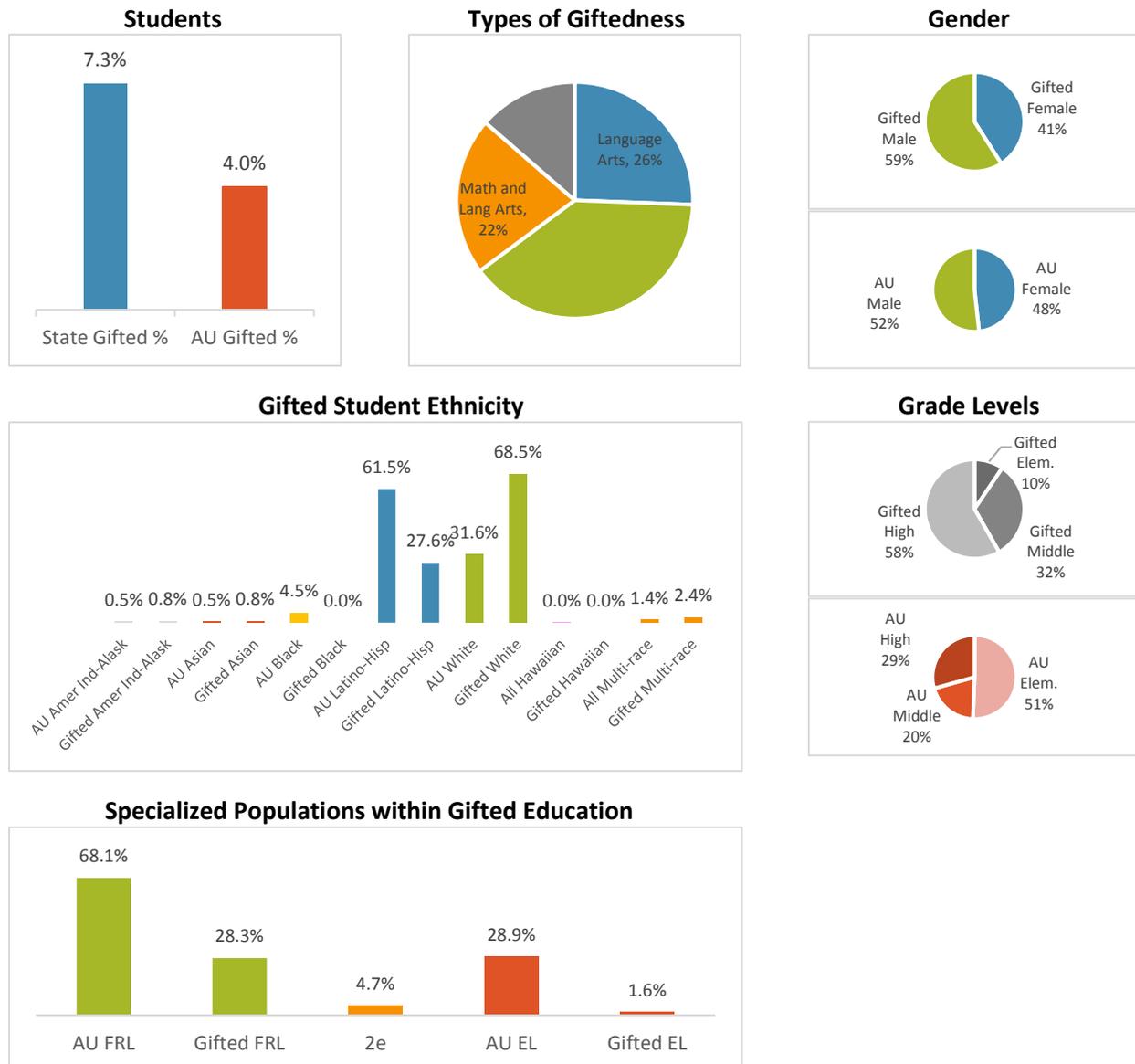


AU Student Profile

The following charts summarize:

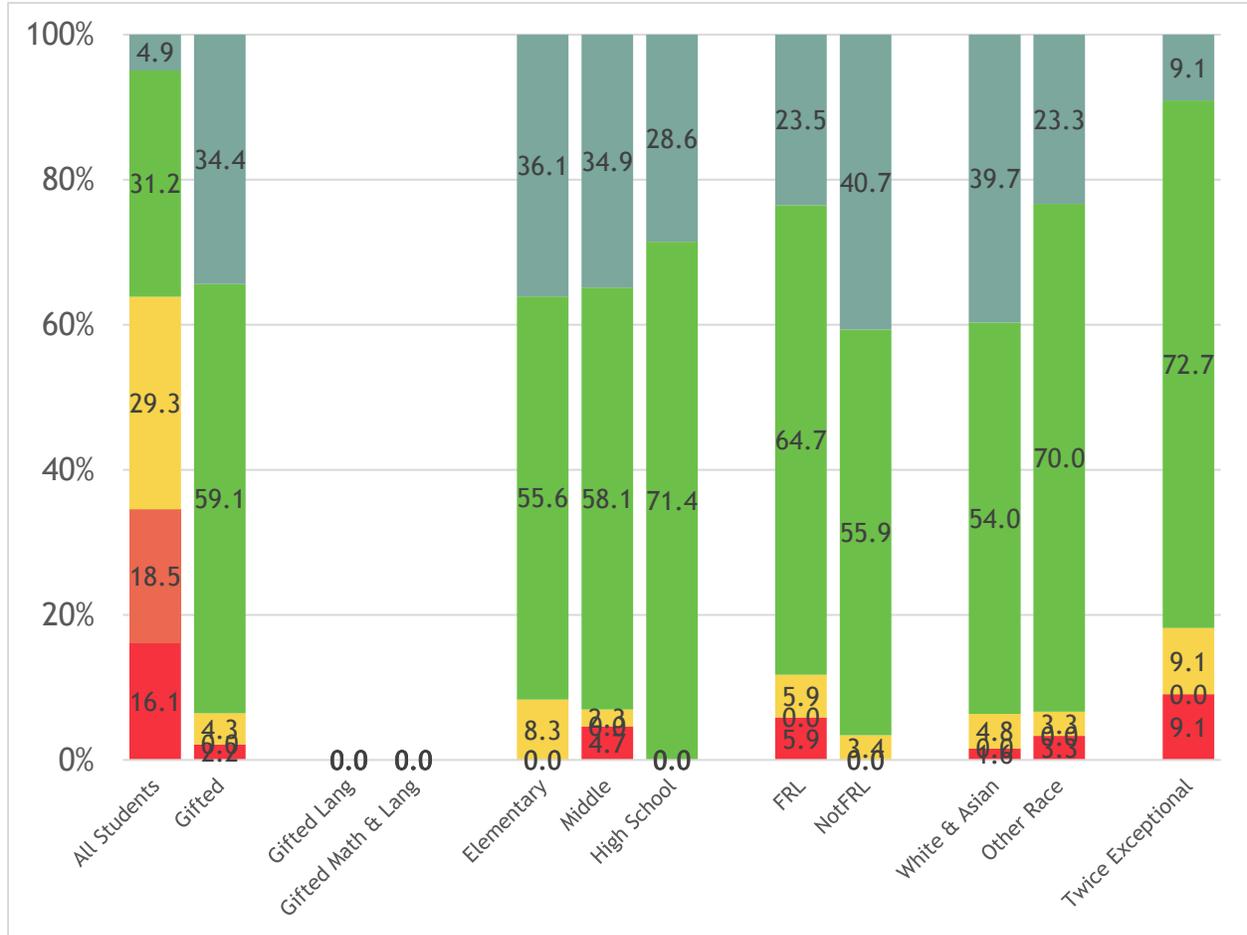
- The demographics of the gifted enrollment in the AU;
- Content areas of giftedness in the AU’s gifted enrollment; and
- Gifted student performance on state assessments.

Gifted Education coordinators/directors have access to additional data about AU gifted student performance and data that compares the AU with the state and other AUs. This information is helpful when exploring areas for continuous improvement, programming, and building on strengths of student outcomes.

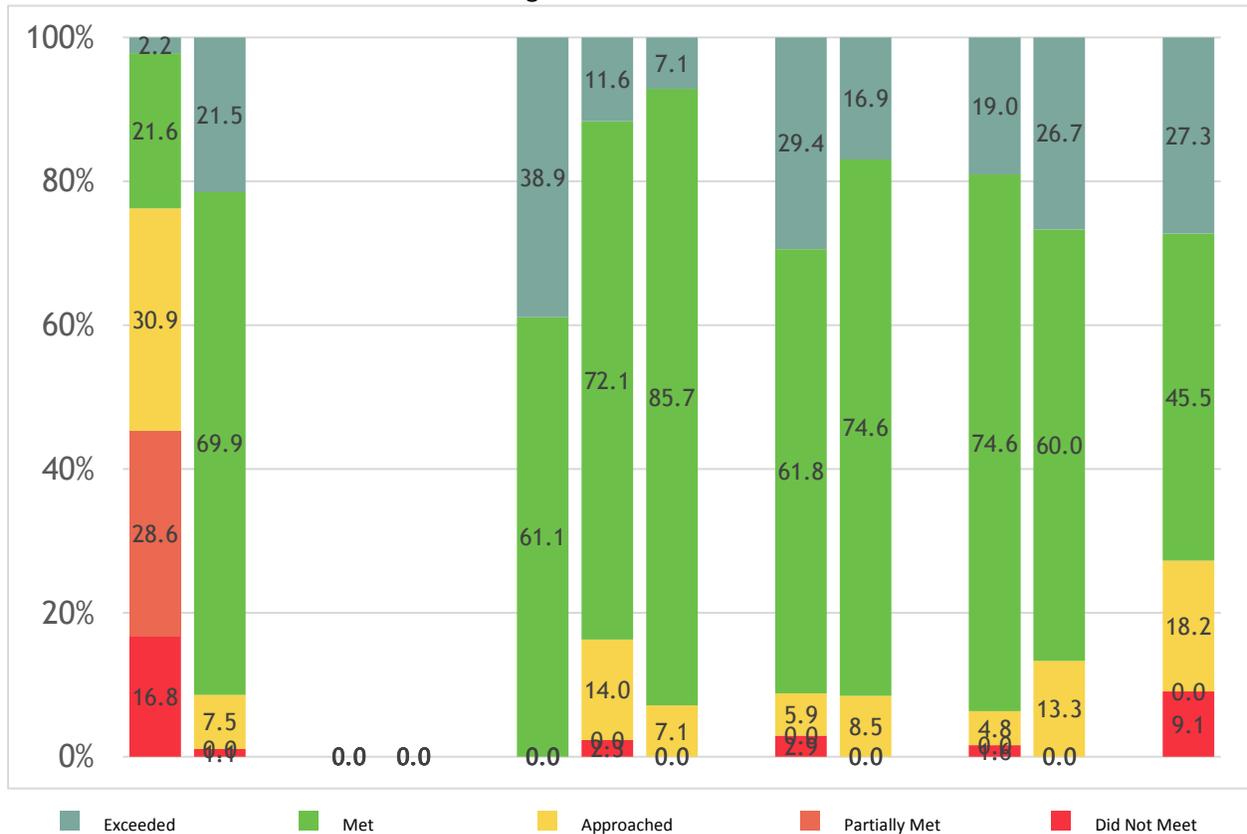


Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) 2017

English Language Arts Gifted Student Performance Percentage



Math Gifted Student Performance Percentage



■ Exceeded
 ■ Met
 ■ Approached
 ■ Partially Met
 ■ Did Not Meet



The ECEA statute:

- Requires that each administrative unit make a good faith effort to hire and retain qualified personnel to administer and implement the AU's gifted program; and
- Strongly encourages each administrative unit to establish and maintain a local advisory committee to assist in implementing its program plan and providing services to gifted students.

Personnel

12.02(2)(j) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Describe personnel who provide instruction, counseling, coordination and other programming for gifted students
- Personnel shall be knowledgeable in the characteristics, differentiated instructional methods and competencies in the special education of gifted students
- A designated person within the AU is responsible for:
 - Management of program plan
 - Gifted education professional development
- A good faith effort by the AU is made to have at least a half-time qualified person monitoring and administering the gifted program and employing sufficient personnel for supporting gifted programming
- Personnel instructing gifted students in the core academic areas meet federal requirements for highly qualified teachers
- Paraprofessionals are not funded with state gifted grant funds and are not sole instructional providers of gifted students
- Professional development relates to the improvement and acquisition of knowledge related to the needs of gifted students

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit (AU) employs a 1.0 FTE District Coordinator who is licensed and has a Masters Degree and endorsement in gifted education. In addition the AU has a .5 Elementary Enrichment Instructor. There are six individuals (either teachers or administrators) in the AU with a master's degree or endorsement in gifted education as well. The AU has established a gifted education committee of representatives from each building that meet on a monthly basis.

Professional Development is provided to staff during Professional Learning Community (PLC) time, on the AU professional development days, and through book studies, online courses, Induction for new teachers and individual support to teachers. Information is provided about graduate study opportunities in gifted education. Staff members are regularly encouraged to participate in CDE ENET/Moodle Online Courses (Javits) and other CDE offerings, most recently the Twice-Exceptional Level 1 Online course.

Strengths:



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- Educators have access to professional development in gifted education and twice exceptionality through many venues such as CDE ENET Moodle Online Courses (Javits), other CDE offerings, Twice-Exceptional Online courses, book studies and more.
 - Parents, teachers and students reported overwhelming support for the current Gifted Education Coordinator and her management of the program and its resources.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Survey and collaborate with stakeholders to establish preferred avenues for participation in professional development to increase teacher capacity to better serve gifted learners.
- Provide professional development to create awareness among educators to understand and support the social emotional needs of gifted learners.
- Expand the implementation of Depth and Complexity training to include staff members at all grade levels in order to build capacity to address the specific needs of the gifted population.



Budget

12.02(2)(k) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- An annual budget plan is submitted to the state which reflects collaborative efforts of the AU and cost of implementing the program elements
- The annual budget details the funding committed by the AU and funding requested from the Department of Education
- State funds are used to support one or more of the following:
 - Salaries for licensed or endorsed staff that primarily serve gifted students
 - Professional development for gifted education
 - Program options to support ALPs
 - Materials to support gifted programming
 - Administrative costs, technology and equipment not to exceed collectively 20% of state funds
- AUs may contract with other AUs to establish and maintain gifted programming

The annual budget for gifted education reflects the collaborative efforts of the AU and the cost of implementing the gifted program elements. Funds committed to gifted programming by the AU and from the Colorado Department of Education shall be described in the AU's Comprehensive Program Plan.

This element:

X Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

An itemized budget is included in all End-of-Year reports and program plans. Funds are primarily spent on the salary and benefits for the Gifted Education Coordinator, Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented (CAGT) registrations, instructor stipends, and various activities to enrich the students' educational experiences. All expenditures fall within allowable funding categories. The AU provides supplemental funds that exceed those provided by the state.

Strengths:

- The Administrative Unit (AU) provides strong financial support for gifted education.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Increase levels of collaboration and transparency with stakeholder groups when developing the K-12 gifted budget.



Reports

Colorado Department of Education rules require AU's to submit annual reports detailing information relative to gifted programming. Reporting is required in order to be compliant with state accreditation and ECEA Rules.

12.02(3) - Key Requirements of Rule:

- AU has an expended budget report submitted to the Department
- Number of identified students served by gifted programming by:
 - Grade level
 - Gender and ethnicity
 - Free and reduced lunch
 - Areas of giftedness
 - Twice exceptionality
 - Preschool served through early access if applicable
 - Percent of students in AU formally identified
- Qualified personnel by school level, district resource personnel and central administration
- Types of programming strategies utilized most commonly at each school level
- Methods and tools used in accountability to monitor gifted achievement and growth as defined in the UIP Gifted Addendum
- AU complies with the requirements of accreditation, pursuant to Article 11 of Title 22, C.R.S., with regard to gifted student achievement, identification of disparities in the data, instructional goals, growth and reporting

This element:

X Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit (AU) completes and submits reports to the Colorado Department of Education in a timely manner and is current with all reporting requirements. The Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and Gifted Education Addendum is integrated with the district's UIP, and filed as required by the Colorado Department of Education. The AU complies with the requirements of accreditation with regard to gifted student achievement, instructional goals, growth and reporting. Periodic reports are provided to the Board of Education regarding the state of gifted education in the Morgan County Administrative Unit.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Develop a reliable system for submission of Oct. 1 gifted education enrollment data.



Record Keeping

12.05 - Key Requirements of Rule:

- Financial records are kept in accordance with principles of governmental accounting
- An inventory is maintained of all equipment for which funds were received
- ALP documents are part of the student’s cumulative education record
- Individually identifiable records of students referred, assessed, evaluated, and/or served through programming for gifted and talented students in any AU shall be held to be confidential and protected in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations
- Gifted student education records and ALPs shall be maintained, retained and destroyed consistent with the ongoing system of student record keeping established in the AU

Colorado rules require the maintenance of financial records, equipment inventories, and student education records (ALP’s). In addition, these records are held to be confidential and comply with FERPA regulations.

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Gifted Services department maintains financial records in accordance with principles of governmental accounting. Inventory of technology and assessments equipment is maintained and inventoried yearly or as needed. Advance Learning Plans are stored electronically on the Administrative Unit (AU) data management system (Infinite Campus) as part of students' cumulative records and are accessible to all relevant personnel. Infinite Campus is password protected and FERPA compliant. All gifted records are maintained, retained, and destroyed consistent with Morgan County School District privacy policies.



Procedures for Disagreements

The AU's Comprehensive Program Plan describes procedures for resolving disagreements with parents/guardians, or students in regard to identification, programming, and ALPs. These procedures must be posted and available for ease of access by all stakeholders.

12.06 - Key Requirements of Rule:

Describe procedures for resolving disagreements with parents/guardians, or students in regard to identification, programming, and ALPs
Procedure shall include:

- Method to express issues and concerns
- Means to discuss disagreements in a timely manner
- Notice of the decision giving rise to the dispute
- Opportunity to be heard before decision is implemented
- Procedures are posted for access to all stakeholders

This element:

Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit has a detailed "Procedures for Disagreements" plan outlined in their Gifted Services Handbook. The timeline is noted in the last paragraph regarding the superintendents' role in any unresolved disagreements. The appeals process begins with the gifted coordinator and if the issue is not resolved it can move to the principal and then superintendent as needed. All parents of referred students receive Procedures for Disagreements information with their gifted education determination letter.

Recommendations for continuous program development:

- Clarify information about the disagreement process in written communications with parents including timelines for each step in the process.



Monitoring

12.07 - Key Requirements of Rule:

- AU complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the program plan, identification and special educational services for gifted students
- AU monitors annual and comprehensive plans
- AU monitors annual enrollment and performance reports
- AU is prepared to participate in the Colorado Gifted Education Review
- AU participates in follow-up activities to correct areas of non-compliance

This element:

X Meets conditions of law

Does not meet conditions of law

Description of findings and observations:

The Administrative Unit (AU) complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding monitoring by completing the Comprehensive Program Plan (CPP), Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Gifted Education Addendum and the provision of services for gifted students. The AU monitors annual enrollment and student performance data. The gifted coordinator participates in the district UIP process.

Each AU in Colorado is subject to ongoing monitoring by the Department of Education. A determination of compliance is based on all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and an assessment of program quality based on standards established by the Department of Education.



Early Access

The AU participates in Early Access The AU does not participate in Early Access X

12.08 - Key Requirements of Rule:

- AU has an approved Early Access submitted with the Department
- AU communicates information about the criteria and process for identifying highly advanced early access students
- Provides professional development to educators, or other means, to increase the understanding of highly advanced early access children and their educational needs
- Method for collaboration among preschool, general and gifted education personnel and parents
- Description of fee charged for early access assessment process and communication of the fee being waived for students eligible for a reduced-cost or free meal, and take into account the economic circumstances of the community
- An ALP developed by September 30 for any early access student in kindergarten and first grade, to include:
 - Transition goal for the first year of early access
 - Monitoring student performance every 5 weeks during first year of early access
- Methods of communication with the student about school success and parent-teacher communication
- Process shall include following timelines:
 - Applications for early access due by April 1 for the following year with the AU determining when to begin accepting applications
 - The AU may, at its discretion, decide to accept referrals after April 1, but a determination made no later than September 1 or the AU's start date, whichever is earlier
 - Determinations made within 60 calendar days of the AU receiving the portfolio submitted by the parent
 - An early access child shall be 4 by October 1 for kindergarten and 5 for first grade
- AU shall designate personnel to collect portfolios and data and to administer assessments
- The early access determination team shall include an AU level or school gifted resource person, a teacher in early childhood and other personnel designated by AU. Parents must accept or decline early access.
- Describe the evaluation steps to include:
 - Screening portfolio and the information parents must collect and submit
 - Applicant contact information
 - Screening tool that will be completed by the parent and child's teacher
 - Information about the performance of the child

House Bill 08-1021 created the opportunity for Colorado administrative units (AUs) to accelerate **highly advanced** gifted children under age 4 for kindergarten and/or under age 5 for first grade pursuant to CRS 22-20-204(2). The Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) is Colorado's primary law with requirements for the implementation of specific elements and procedures for gifted education programs. ECEA Rules provide AUs guidance for the implementation of **early access** as well as clarify provisions for AUs to receive state education funds for early access children.



Conclusion

Based on a thorough and comprehensive analysis of data presented by the AU’s Self-evaluation for the desk audit and remarks of the AU Site Visit, the CGER review team finds the following elements in compliance or non-compliance of the State Board rules for the implementation of the Exceptional Children’s Education Act.

Program Elements	In Compliance	Non-compliance
Procedures for Parent, Family and Student Engagement and Communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Definition of “Gifted Student”	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identification Procedures, Criteria for determining exceptional ability or Talent Pool, and Portability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) Content, Procedures and Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programming	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation and Accountability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Record Keeping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures for Disagreements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Priority Improvement Target Areas

A timeline to improve the indicators in the areas of:

Advanced Learning Plans
Evaluation and Accountability

is due to the Colorado Department of Education within six weeks of the receipt of the final CGER report. Timelines are completed in the Data Management System (DMS.)

Implementation of corrected actions are required within one year of submission of the Improvement Timeline to CDE. This timeframe will allow the AU to plan collaboratively with stakeholders during the next school year and prepare for systemic and responsive improvements. Technical assistance and peer collaboration are available through the gifted education regional network system with the aim to provide support toward the fulfillment of the administrative unit's improvement goals. After completion of improvement goals for the two-three primary improvement areas named above, the AU is required to determine the next priority areas, if noted for improvement in this report, and submit a timeline on DMS until all non-compliance issues are addressed.