



Writing SMART Goals for Colorado's Accountability System

As a key part of the contract between a charter and their authorizer, school leaders and developing groups set goals in order to mark a target for achievement of the desired outcomes in implementing a charter model. Four considerations around setting goals include:

1. Goals are written in the SMART format described below.
2. Goals represent a commitment on the part of the school to meet or exceed authorizer standards for performance areas of Colorado state accountability and align with the school mission and model.
3. The school leaders and founders set ambitious goals for student performance but shy away from setting lofty expectations that lack baseline performance data for the proposed student population to establish legitimate, meaningful goals.
4. School leaders and founders also set organizational and management goals for the school in order to address matters such as finances, facilities and other operational management; leadership, governance and personnel; attendance and retention rates; strength of community; parent satisfaction and market demand.

What are SMART goals?

SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable/achievable, relevant, and timely.

- *Specific:* Targeted subject area, grade level, and student population
- *Measurable:* Performance/target area must be measurable and include baseline and growth targets
- *Attainable/Achievable:* Percentage of expected change
- *Relevant:* Subject area; is the goal addressing an urgent need?
- *Timely:* Bound by a timeframe

(SMART goals information from The Leadership and Learning Center)

Goal Setting and Accountability

While it is important that charter schools have enough goals to measure progress relating to their mission, too many goals can become difficult to manage and measure. In addition, **not all goals that your school may develop for internal guidance and strategic planning are necessary for external accountability purposes.** Thus, for purposes of an external accountability plan, most schools would be wise to develop no more than ten to twelve broad goals, with the majority focusing on educational performance. Fewer goals are also acceptable. Each school, however, should use its own discretion to determine a suitable number of goals based on its individual situation and feel free to revisit and modify goals if that makes sense.

Pupil Performance Goals

Colorado State Accountability:

Colorado aims to prepare all students for postsecondary learning or to enter the workforce by the time they graduate from the K-12 system. Four performance indicators exist within the Colorado accountability system:

1. **Academic Achievement (status, i.e. levels of achievement on CSAP)**
2. **Academic Growth (Longitudinal growth measure)**
3. **Gaps in Academic Growth (subgroups of students lagging behind the general population)**
4. **Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (high school only).**



The state has defined specific measures used in characterizing school performance in each performance indicator area. These measures include CSAP, the Colorado Growth Model, dropout rates, graduation rates, and the Colorado ACT. For each measure, the specific metrics that summarize performance include the following (see chart for examples):

1. **Academic Achievement:** % of all students performing at the proficient or advanced level on CSAP in reading, mathematics, writing and science for each grade level (3-10) in which students are assessed
2. **Academic Growth:** Median Student Growth Percentile in reading, mathematics and writing
3. **Gaps in Academic Growth:** Median Student Growth Percentile in reading, mathematics and writing for the following groups of students: free/reduced lunch eligible, minority students, students with disabilities, English language learners, students with below proficient performance.
4. **Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness:** Dropout rate, graduation rate, and average Colorado ACT composite score.

Therefore, schools should write SMART goals that reflect the above categories. For an overview of how the Colorado Department of Education evaluates school and district performance in these areas, please visit [District and School Performance Frameworks](#) (these are what replaced the School Accountability Reports –SAR). For additional data on these performance indicators and other measures reported by the Colorado Department of Education, please visit [SchoolView Performance](#).

Sample Pupil Performance Goals

NOTE: *All goals are samples and may not reflect the thresholds or targets with respect to developing school group and the population they intend to serve. The intention here is to show a variety of examples with multiple ways to measure each goal in all categories.*

ANNUAL STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

Students meet or exceed state standards for mastery in reading, writing, and math.

- 75% of students who attend for two or more years will score Proficient/Advanced on annual CSAP Reading test in 3rd grade.
- Reduce the percent of students at the unsatisfactory level by 10% each year until less than 5% of students are in the unsatisfactory range by 2014 in order to meet AYP targets.
- ___ percentage of students, scoring “Proficient” or “Advanced” on the CSAP, will meet or exceed district averages for students in comparable schools.
- 100% of students who have attended for three or more years will read and write at grade level by the end of 8th grade/10th grade as measured by (CSAP and or interim assessment that is aligned to state standards).
- All student demographic subgroups will meet the AYP targets set across all targets according to the standards established by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act during the 2012-2013 school year.

The following achievement/status goals only apply if data exists for previous school year’s performance for student population:

- Pending baseline data, school will increase the number of students reaching proficiency by ___% by the end of the first school year.
- Increase the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in (SUBJECT) from 55% to 60% from 2009-10 as measured by CSAP.
- Increase minority/special education, etc students scoring proficient or advanced in (SUBJECT) from 36% in 2009 to 41% from 2010 as measured by CSAP.
- Based on CBLA Assessments (DRA 2/PALS/DIBELS) given in September and May, on average, K-2 students will demonstrate 1.5 years of growth in reading comprehension and decoding.



Reducing “Learning Gap Goals” (Achievement/status)

- Decrease the gap in the percent proficient and advanced among students eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch compared to those who are not FRL by 10% by the end of the ____ school year. The reduction in the gap is a result of increased proficiency for Reduced Priced Lunch students and not a decrease for those who are eligible.

The following goal only applies if data exists for previous school year’s performance for student population:

- Decrease the gap in the percent proficient among minority students compared to non minority students from 20 percentage points in 2009 to 10 percentage points in 2010. The reduction in the gap is a result of increased proficiency for minority students and not a decrease for those who aren’t minority.

LONGITUDINAL GROWTH GOALS

Students in all grade levels for reading, writing and math (no Growth Percentiles for science) will meet or exceed the growth percentiles of comparable schools (districts/state).

- _____ school will have growth percentiles comparable or higher to the state average (district/comparable schools) of 50th Percentile or typical growth. For students who are not proficient, they will grow more than one year’s growth in one year’s time (above 50th percentile) and students who are proficient will meet their growth percentiles to “keep up” or “move up” as measured by the Colorado Growth Model.
- Students in grades 3-5 that have been continuously enrolled for more than one academic year, will have growth percentiles between the 50th and 75th percentile, in math, reading and writing.
- Students will demonstrate at or above grade level proficiency or students will make annual growth that is sufficient for them to reach proficiency on state standards **by the time they exit our school**.
- All grades/100% of students will meet or exceed their individual growth targets as measured by NWEA’S MAP Assessment.

The following growth goals only apply if data exists for previous school year’s performance for student population:

- Increase the percentage of students making high growth (above 65th percentile) in reading/math from 25% in 2009 to 35% in 2010 as measured by the Colorado Growth Model.
- Decrease the percentage of students making low growth (below 35th percentile) in reading/math from 30% in 2009 to 15% in 2010 as measured by the Colorado Growth Model.
- Increase the percentage of minority students/special ed, etc. On Track to Catch Up to Proficient in reading/math from 33% in 2009 to 40% in 2010 as measured by the Colorado Growth Model.

Reducing “Learning Gap Goals” (Growth)

- Decrease the gap in the Median Student Growth Percentile (MGP) among students eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch compared to those who are not by 15 percentiles by the end of the school year, as measured by the Colorado Growth Model. The reduction as a result of larger Median Growth Percentiles for Reduced Priced Lunch students, and not a decrease MGP for those who are not eligible.

The following growth gap goal only applies if data exists for previous school year’s performance for student population:

- Decrease the gap in the Median Student Growth Percentile among minority students to non minority students by 15 percentiles in 2009 to 2010 as measured by the Colorado Growth Model. The reduction as a result of larger Median Growth Percentiles for minority students, and not a decrease MGP for non minorities.

POST SECONDARY READINESS GOALS

- 95% of continuously enrolled students (students who have been at the school XX years?) will graduate on time.



- 95% of seniors planning to attend college will apply and be accepted to 2- or 4-year colleges, or trade and technology schools by the end of 12th grade.

The following post secondary readiness goals only apply if data exists for previous school year's performance for student population:

- Increase ACT composite score from ___ in 2009 to ___ in 2010. (can wait for benchmark info to put in percents or use state/district scores)
- 50 percent of 11th grade students will score above 21

Reducing Post Secondary "Learning Gap Goals"

- Increase the graduation rate of minority students by 15% by the end of the _____ school year.
- Increase the graduation rate of minority students from 75% in 2009 to 85% in 2010.

NON ACADEMIC GOALS

- _____ school will meet or exceed districts attendance rates. Each year, the school will improve its prior year's average daily attendance rate until it reaches 95%. The average daily attendance rate of the first year of the school will serve as the baseline measure. Each year, the school's average daily student attendance rate will meet or exceed the state's average daily attendance rate for elementary schools.
- XX% of students will express a high level of satisfaction with the school. Each year, parents will express XX% satisfaction based on the district's/school's survey, which will be administered each Spring. On the measure of overall satisfaction, students will set a baseline score in its first Spring (in the percentage of parents rating their satisfaction as an A or B) and will increase this percentage each subsequent year or at least until the rating reaches 80%.
- 100% of teachers will possess the ESEA "Highly Qualified" designation. Additionally, principal and Board president will conduct regular analyses to determine school-specific educational, financial and operational goals designed to improve overall school performance.
- XX percent of students will participate in service learning and community service opportunities for a total XX hours each school year/each semester.



As developing school groups think through their pupil performance goals, it is often helpful to develop a chart of the critical pieces of each goal area. Below is an example of how one over-arching goal/part of the mission may be broken down into critical components in order to form SMART goals.

Goal (Overarching Mission)	Indicator represent general dimensions of academic quality or achievement	Measure general instruments or means to assess performance in each area defined by an indicator	Metric specify a quantification, calculation method or formula for a given measure	Target specific, quantifiable objectives that set expectations or define what will constitute success on particular measures within a certain period of time	Benchmark compare the performance of an organization to that of exemplars in its field or industry	Sample SMART Goal
Prepare all our students for college upon graduation from our school	Student Achievement (status)	State Assessment (CSAP)	% Proficient or Advanced in reading	Increase overall percent proficient or advanced by 10 percentage points annually in reading	Baseline taken in 2011-12; next taken in 2012-13.	Percentage of 9 th and 10 th grade students scoring proficient or advanced on the reading portion of the CSAP will increase by 10% points from the 2011-12 to the 2012-2013 school year.
	Student Progress (growth)	Colorado Growth Model, measured by CSAP	Median Student Growth Percentile	Median growth will meet or exceed the 50 th percentile in writing on an annual basis	Median growth of the state	Based on 2011-12 COGM results, students in grades 3-5 will show 50 th percentile or higher growth on the writing portion of CSAP.



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Student Progress (growth)	NWEA-MAP (taken 3 times per year)	Percent of students meeting their growth targets	75% of continuously enrolled students will meet or exceed their NWEA growth targets in math	Average percent of students meeting/exceeding NWEA's National Norms. Note: Alternative Education Campuses (AEC's) or schools serving high risk populations might consider using the AEC national norms .	During the 2011-12 school year, 100% of students in grades 6-8 will meet or exceed their NWEA growth targets in math.
Post Secondary Readiness	ACT	Percent of students to score above 21	50% of 11 th grade students will score above 21	Score predictive of admission into a Colorado State University	During the 2011-12 school year, 50% of 11 th grade students will score a 21 or better on the ACT, showing academic readiness for college.
Post Secondary Readiness	Graduation Rate	Percent of continuously enrolled students to graduate on time	Beginning in year four of operation, 95% of continuously enrolled students will graduate on time.	Comparison state and district averages for graduation rates	Over the next four years, the on-time graduation rate will increase from 80% or higher in year 1, 85% or higher in year 2, 90% or higher in year 3, up to 95% in year four.
College Admission	College Acceptance Rate	Percent of seniors planning to attend college will apply and be accepted to 2- or 4-year colleges, or trade and technology schools	95% of seniors planning to attend college will apply and be accepted to 2- or 4-year colleges, or trade and technology schools.	Baseline taken in 2011-12	Over the next four years, the number of students applying for and being accepted to post-secondary educational options will increase from 80% or higher in year 1, 85% or higher in year 2, 90% or higher in year 3, up to 95% in year four.



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Gaps	State Assessment-proficiency gaps (CSAP)	Increase percent of minority students scoring proficient or advanced in (SUBJECT)	Increase the proficiency of special needs students from 36% in 2009 to 41% from 2010 as measured by CSAP.	Baseline taken in 2011-12/ state median student proficiency among minority students compared non minority students http://www.cde.state.co.us/research/GrowthData.htm	school will work to close the achievement gap for minority students in grades 3-5 from 36% proficient or advanced in 2009 to 41% proficient or advanced in 2010 as measured by the CSAP.
Gaps	State Assessment-growth gaps (COGM)	Decrease the gap in the Median Student Growth Percentile among students eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch compared to those who are not	by 15 percentiles by the end of the school year	State median student growth among free and reduced lunch student compared to those that are not. Available here: http://www.cde.state.co.us/research/GrowthData.htm	school will reduce the growth gap for free and reduced lunch students compared to those that are not by 15 percentiles by the end of the 2012-2013 school year as measured by the COGM.



Organizational and Management Goals

In addition to goals and measures for pupil performance, your accountability plan will require a few goals and measures pertaining to **Organizational and Management Performance**. Many of the general principles and steps outlined above are useful to follow in developing these indicators, though the framing question to guide this task is:

In addition to educational measures, what evidence will show that our school is an effective, well-run institution?

This will be your opportunity to demonstrate success in areas of organizational and operational performance, and areas unique to your program design, such as (but not limited to):

- Financial management and performance;
- Strength and stability of leadership, governance and personnel;
- Facilities and other operational management;
- Enrollment, attendance and retention;
- Staffing and professional development;
- Parent and community involvement; and
- Parent and student satisfaction.

Sample Organizational and Management Performance Goals

Financial management and performance:

- The school will comply with all requirements of the Public School Financial Transparency Act HB10-1036 by posting budgetary and financial documents on or before July 1, 2011, and will continue to update financials throughout the year to ensure accuracy.
- School will have an annual external audit within three months of the close of each fiscal year. The audit will be clean with no significant financial concerns.
- By year five of operation, the school will maintain a reserve of 7-10% of the budget.

Strength and stability of leadership, governance and personnel:

- 100% of school leaders will be expected to participate in weekly professional learning activities during the 2012-2013 school year.
- 90% of board members will have completed the board training modules by the beginning of the Spring semester of the 2012-2013 school year.
- 100% of board members will have been trained in Performance Management for School Boards by the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

Facilities and Operational Management:

- The school will make 100% of all lease and/or debt service payments on time and incur no late payment charges in the 2012-2013 school year.
- The school will have a current Certificate of Occupancy on file and available at all times. (A temporary COO does not meet this standard.)



- The school facility will be in full compliance with all building, fire, safety, and health requirements before students arrive for classes in year one.
- By year five of operation, the school will expend 15% or less of total per pupil funding on occupancy costs.
- Each year, occupancy costs will not exceed 5% of the approved occupancy costs budget.

Enrollment, Attendance, and Retention:

- The school will reach 97% or higher enrollment, according to projected enrollment numbers of 350 students in the 2011-2012 school year.
- The school will maintain 95% attendance during the 2012-2013 school year.
- The school will retain 95% of the enrolled students from the 2011-2012 school year to the 2012-2013 school year.

Staffing and Community Involvement:

- 90% or more of teaching staff will be considered highly qualified and be licensed by the Colorado Department of Education by the end of the 2012-2013 school year. 100% of teachers will be highly qualified.
- Teachers will receive 3 formal evaluations and 6 informal evaluations throughout the 2013-2014 school year by school leaders and other teachers and will be offered a weekly coaching sessions from the Director of Curriculum and Instruction throughout the year.
- 100% of teachers will be expected to participate in weekly professional learning activities during the 2012-2013 school year.
- The school will retain 85% of teaching staff from the 2011-12 school year to the 2012-13 school year.
- 95% of parents will participate in parent-teacher conferences by the end of the 2011-2012 school year.
- 50% of parents will volunteer quarterly to support school programs and events during the 2012-13 school year.

Parent and Student Satisfaction:

- 90% of parents will report being satisfied according to a yearly satisfaction survey that will be administered in December and May of the 2011-2012 school year.
- 85% of students will report being satisfied according to a yearly satisfaction survey that will be administered in December and May of the 2011-2012 school year.