

Memo

To: BVSD Board of Education

From: BVSD District Accountability Committee (DAC)

Date: March 12, 2019

Re: 2019 DAC Recommendations on the District Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)

To fulfill the DAC responsibility:

C.R.S. 22-11-302(1)(b) – To advise its local school board concerning preparation of, and annually submit to the local school board recommendations regarding the contents of, a district performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround plan, whichever is required based on the school district's accreditation category. In advising and preparing the recommendations, the school district accountability committee shall make reasonable efforts to consult in a substantive manner with the school accountability committees of the school district and shall compile and submit to the local school board the school performance, improvement, priority improvement, and turnaround plans submitted by the school accountability committees pursuant to sections 22-11-403 to 22-11-406.

2019 DAC Recommendations on the BVSD Unified Improvement Plan

For the UIP to be used effectively as an improvement planning tool, the timeline and process for drafting, feedback and implementation need to be adjusted. Therefore, the DAC is making recommendations for both the overall district approach to improvement planning, in addition to specific recommendations for the district's most recent version of the Unified Improvement Plan.

Recommendations for the District's Overall Improvement Planning Process

To truly drive actionable improvements, the district UIP must be updated no later than September of each year. Therefore, we urge the district to follow best practices identified by the Colorado Department of Education¹ and begin planning in the spring, using local data, for the following academic year. The DAC proposes that the District Performance Frameworks and state level data (e.g., CMAS, PSAT/SAT) be treated as a validation of the district's analysis -- not the starting line. With this adjustment, the district (including the DAC) can more effectively monitor progress throughout the year and make mid-course corrections, as needed, to better support students, schools and the strategic plan. This may impact how the district works with schools to develop school-level improvement plans, but it will make the overall process more meaningful.

Recommendations for the 2018-20 District UIP

Based on the draft 2018-2020 UIP shared with the DAC on February 20, 2019, the DAC has the following observations and recommendations:

- Align UIP action plans and budgetary priorities to support implementation of the strategic plan.
- Establish growth expectations and benchmarks for special populations that are higher than the district's overall targets, to promote acceleration and close chronic gaps in achievement (i.e., gaps in meeting state expectations) for these populations.
- Emphasize differentiation of instructional strategies and resources, rather than universal instruction, to address the most pressing needs of students identified in the Priority Performance Challenge (PPC).
- Develop clear, concise and quantifiable progress monitoring measures. This includes implementation benchmarks to improve the district's ability to track implementation of the action plan, as well as interim measures to gauge impact on student learning.
- DAC strongly supports the districts desire "to refresh and re-establish district level root causes" as root causes were identified several years ago and student performance trends have been stable. DAC recommends BVSD clearly identifies and involves stakeholders in the process of root cause identification. The DAC would also like to be involved in the refresh process in a meaningful way.

¹ Colorado Department of Education. (Fall 2018). District Accountability Handbook. Retrieved from http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/district_accountability_handbook_2018_19

- Include detailed action plans earlier in the year to allow for quarterly checks on the plan and create a clearer picture of how the district proposes to accomplish its major improvement strategies.
- Include data trends and performance targets for gifted students in the areas of academic growth and achievement as part of the Gifted Addenda or integrated into the district's overall plan.