Student Performance Priorities: Evidence & Rationale for Prioritization – Examples

Purpose

The objective of the "Evidence & Rationale for Prioritization" element of the UIP is to describe how and why each Student Performance Priority was selected. Given that Data Analysis is an Assurance in the UIP, the content of this element should succinctly describe the evidence and rationale behind the selection of each selected Student Performance Priority. Two examples are provided on the following pages that "Meets Expectations" using CDE's UIP Quality Criteria for all[1] schools and districts.

Consideration Points

Keep notes during the data analysis process about the data and contextual factors that were considered as each Student Performance Priority (SPP) was selected.[2] Use these notes when developing content for this element of the UIP. Be sure to include:

- ✓ A summary of the site's data analysis findings, providing evidence that demonstrates the need to focus on each identified Student Performance Priority (e.g., data trends, site performance relative to state and local data).
- ✓ A rationale for each Student Performance Priority, including any contextual factors (e.g., enrollment shifts, local strategic plan priorities, previous improvement efforts, and consensus from stakeholders) that influenced the selection of the Student Performance Priorities.
- ✓ Incorporate the district or school performance rating into the evidence along with other additional program requirements (e.g, READ Act, Improving Math Outcomes)
- ✓ Any federally identified school must connect its federal identification associated with at least one Student Performance Priority.

[1] These examples do not cover every requirement in the Quality Criteria, such as those based on specific plan types, programs or ESSA.

[2] Ensure reported current performance does not reference data for a small number of students as it may be possible to identify individual students per district personally identifiable information policy.

Examples

Example 1 – Elementary School

Student Performance Priority Evidence & Rationale

After conducting a trend analysis of assessment and non-assessment data, and engaging multiple stakeholders (educators, families and community members) through the process, ABC Elementary School selected three Student Performance Priorities for the 2026-27 school year: English Language Arts (ELA) performance (CMAS achievement, grades 3-5), Early Literacy (K3 READ assessments), and student behavior in the classroom (Office Referrals).

Tracking our school's Performance Framework ratings over the past three years, academic achievement in ELA for all students has remained 'Does Not Meet', while Math achievement increased to 'Approaching' last year with 'Meets' in Math Growth, but only 'Approaching' in ELA growth. A Think-Pair-Share activity with teachers revealed that teachers feel confident using the recently adopted Illustrative Mathematics curriculum, anticipating continued growth in Math. Conversely, the Science of Reading training and supported implementation has been harder to manage. Additionally, READ data shows an increase in students at 'significantly below grade level' when entering our school, and yielded lower foundational skills in phonics and vocabulary. While the school also tracks our emerging bilingual students' English language development (ELD) using ACCESS and WIDA MODEL, our school does not have an ELD program, so that we focus on individual student English acquisition goals in conjunction with their larger English literacy goals.

Behavior is an important leading indicator for success in the classroom, and after analysis of office referrals over the past 3 years, there has been an uptick, particularly in the higher grades and more so in our classrooms with newer teachers. It's important that teachers are equipped with classroom management skills so that students feel safe, to reduce disruptions and to avoid pulling students out of the classroom where they can lose instructional time sitting in the office. Attendance rates were also analyzed as another student engagement measure, and have remained consistent hovering near 93% across grades. With this, behavior rose to a greater priority.

Student Performance Priorities

SPP #1: Lower ELA CMAS relative to Math | **Category:** English Language Arts performance

SPP #2: Prioritizing K-3 literacy | **Category:** Early Literacy

SPP #3: Office Referrals | **Category:** Behavior

Example 2 – Middle School

This example includes more data points and framework ratings in the narrative, making it longer. Note that included data sources are NOT necessary for a "Meets Expectations" using CDE's UIP Quality Criteria. Data was pulled from CDE's School Performance Framework and District Dashboard and School Dashboard.

Student Performance Priority Evidence & Rationale

Middlebury Middle School's UIP prioritizes **Equitable Practices** as measured by English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Growth Gaps, and ACCESS Growth) and **Student Engagement** (attendance rates and chronic absenteeism). In data analysis meetings during PLCs and with our School Accountability Committee, stakeholders share a consistent concern with academic growth gaps for students below grade level tied to poor attendance patterns.

Performance and Growth Trends – A 3-year analysis of CMAS achievement and growth on our School's Performance Frameworks (SPF), demonstrated a greater need to accelerate academic growth in ELA and Math for identified groups of students who persistently lag behind 'All Students' ratings. In the 2026 SPF, 'All Students' MEETS in Achievement & Growth (60.0 ELA, 55.0 Math), whereas Free/Reduced Lunch eligible (FRL), Minority Students, Multilingual Learners (MLL) & Students with an individual educational plan (IEP) DOES NOT MEET in Achievement and are APPROACHING in Growth. Student group median growth percentiles (MGP) are also below the Colorado MGP of 50.0. FRL: 47.0-ELA, 45.0-Math | Minority: 49.5-ELA, 46.0-Math | MLL: 41.0-ELA, 40.0-Math | IEP 48.0-ELA, 43.0-Math. Additionally, when comparing the achievement of our selected student groups to Colorado groups (e.g., Middlebury FRL vs Colorado FRL), most of our groups are underperforming relative to their Colorado peers [2026 in-group achievement percentiles – FRL: 20-ELA, 21-Math | Minority: 18-ELA, 24-Math | MLL: 1-ELA, 1-Math. The exception is our IEP group who are outperforming their state peer group: 65-ELA, 63-Math (a bright spot in our layered continuum of support). This deeper dive into a peer group analysis also revealed that our MLLs are struggling the most. Evidence from 2026 ACCESS shows our MLLs 'APPROACHING' in their English Language Proficiency Growth at 42.0 with only 23.2% being On Track to EL Proficiency. Finally, in review of last year's local i-Ready assessment data, some students below grade level did not meet their typical growth targets and most did not reach stretch growth targets.

Student Engagement Considerations – Monitoring student engagement data provide leading indicators for academic success. Data analysis included attendance and behavior. Attendance rates remain flat over time, hovering around 85% and chronic absentee rates that spiked during the Pandemic have only reduced marginally since then, particularly in targeted student groups. With the school's strong restorative justice practices, we have tracked a steady decline in suspension rates and office referrals. Additionally, student peer-led focus groups used to authentically capture student experiences related to engagement and agency in their learning confirmed barriers for some students to attend school.

Rationale for Priority Selection – These two priorities give our staff a clear focus for our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and layered continuum of supports within the MTSS framework. Our instructional model serves our on grade level students well, but it falls short in delivering rigorous instruction with necessary supports based on skill gaps for students below grade level. We must better connect leading indicators like attendance data, interim academic stretch growth, and MLL English acquisition data into our Student Supports team meetings. The additional lens on MLLs learning English is more urgent as the MLL population has consistently grown and lags behind their MLL Colorado peer group. Finally, selecting an ELA & Math Growth Gaps and ACCESS Growth (equitable practices) as a student performance priority also addresses the school's reason for ESSA identification – Targeted Support (Multilingual Learners, Hispanic or Latino, & Two or More Races).

Student Performance Priorities

SPP #1: ELA & Math Growth Gaps and ACCESS Growth | **Category:** Equitable Practices

SPP #2: Low Attendance and High Chronic Absenteeism | **Category:** Student Engagement