CDE
COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Schools for 2015-16 – Online UIP Report

Organization Code: 0190   District Name: BYERS 32J   School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY
Official 2014 SPF: -Year

Executive Summary
How are students performing? Where will school staff be focusing attention?
Priority Performance Challenges: *Specific statements about the school's performance challenges (not budgeting, staffing, curriculum, instruction, etc.), with at least one priority identified for each performance indicator (achievement, growth, growth gaps, PWR) where the school did not meet federal, state and/or local expectations.*
• **English achievement that is slightly below state average:**
• **Math achievement that is slightly below state average:**
Why is the school continuing to have these problems?
Root Causes: *Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of the performance challenges, that, if dissolved, would result in elimination, or substantial reduction of the performance challenges.*
• **The school lacks a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system:** The school lacks a comprehensive data management system that is adequately used to inform the process of data driven instructional support.
• **The school lacks a comrehensive, data driven professional development system:** The school does not have a robust, data driven professional development program
What action is the school taking to eliminate these challenges?
Major Improvement Strategies: *An overall approach that describes a series of related actions intended to result in improvements in performance.*
• **Develop and implement a Professional Development program.:** Develop and implement a Professional Development program that is fully aligned with Colorado's Educator Effectiveness process and builds specific capacity to maximize student achievement in a virtual school setting.
• **Create and implement a comprehensive school data management system.:** Create and implement a comprehensive data management system that collects, manages and reports data on student achievement and organizational implementation.

Access School Performance Frameworks here: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

CO | CDE | COLORADO
Department of Education

Section II: Improvement Plan Information

Improvement Plan Information

The school is submitting this improvement plan to satisfy requirements for (check all that apply):

☒ State Accreditation ☐ Title I Focus School ☐ Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG) ☐ Colorado Graduation Pathways Program ☐ School Improvement Support Grant ☐ Other:

School Contact Information

Name, Title	Chad Auer, Principal
Email	chad.auer@coloradoed.org
Phone	(303) 255-4650
Mailing Address	1526 Cole Blvd Lakewood, Colorado 80401

Name, Title	Julie Forland, Asst Principal
Email	julie.forland@coloradoed.org
Phone	(303) 255-4650
Mailing Address	1526 Cole Blvd Lakewood, Colorado 80401

Additional Information about the School

Comprehensive Review and Selected Grant History

|		
Related Grant Awards	Has the school received a grant that supports the school's improvement efforts? When was the grant awarded?	None
Diagnostic Review, School Support Team or Expedited Review	Has (or will) the school participated in a Diagnostic Review, SST or Expedited Review? If so, when?	None

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

External Evaluator	Has the school partnered with an external evaluator to provide comprehensive evaluation? Indicate the year and the name of the provider/tool used.	None

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

Section III: Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification

This section corresponds with the "Evaluate" portion of the continuous improvement cycle. The main outcome is to construct a narrative that describes the process and results of the analysis of the data for your school. The analysis should justify the performance targets and actions proposed in Section IV. Two worksheets have been provided to help organize your data analysis for your narrative. This analysis section includes: identifying where the school did not at least meet minimum state and federal accountability expectations; describing progress toward targets for the prior school year; describing what performance data were used in the analysis of trends; identifying trends and priority performance challenges (negative trends); describing how performance challenges were prioritized; identifying the root causes of performance challenges; describing how the root causes were identified and verified and what data were used; and describing stakeholder involvement in the analysis.
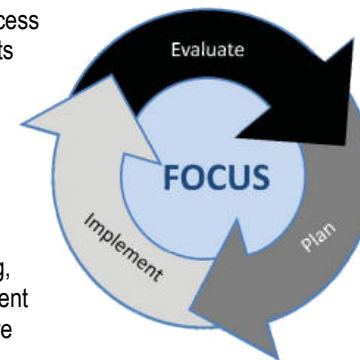
Implications of Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) on Data Analysis: During the 2014-15 school year, Colorado transitioned from reading, writing and math TCAP assessments to CMAS PARCC English language arts and math assessments. These assessments measure related, but different content standards and are expected to have different proficiency levels. As a result, updating the data analysis this year (particularly the trend statements) may be more challenging. While the school's data analysis is still expected to be updated, some modifications in typical practice may be needed.

1. Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis
Provide a very brief description of the school to set the context for readers (e.g., demographics). Include the general process for developing the UIP and participants (e.g., SAC).

Description: In 2013, there were 28 online schools and programs serving 16,215 students throughout Colorado. A majority of online schools have performed in the bottom quartile of all Colorado schools for the past three years. Students in online schools are graduating at a significantly lower rate and dropping out at a significantly higher rate than students enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools. More than 70% of students enrolled in Colorado online schools (excluding AECs) are under management by for-profit Education Management Providers. The new leaders of Colorado Digital Academy believe in the transformational power of online education and contend that there is a need for a better online school in Colorado. Specifically, Colorado Digital Academy believes:

- A truly independent, locally-controlled online school can and will perform better than the majority of the existing Colorado online schools.
- The negative impact of for-profit Education Management Providers on the history of online schools in Colorado cannot be underestimated.
- Investing in Academic Performance, Professional Development, Data Management systems, and Continuous Improvement & Strategic Growth are keys to turning the tide and changing the performance outcomes of online schools in Colorado.

Therefore, in 2014 Colorado Digital Academy broke away from K12 Inc. and became a separate Colorado elementary school. Colorado Digital Academy fired K12 Inc. as an Education Management Provider and assumed all leadership duties for the school locally. The charter is currently held by Byers school district. Colorado Digital Academy's vision is to provide an innovative education option that leverages technology for individualized student success. Our mission is to provide student opportunities and options through an adaptive, encouraging, and innovative high-quality online learning environment. We believe that all students have potential to learn and achieve, and education is a partnership with our students, parents, teachers, and other school staff. We all have responsibilities for each student's success. We are committed to collaborating with parents to fulfill the mission and vision of our school.

We fully accept the reality that there is, and will likely always be, skeptics and critics of online education. Similarly, we accept the fact that there are, and always will be, skeptics and critics of public education in general. Regardless, we are forging a new chapter in Colorado's online education environment because we know that thoughtful innovation can unleash

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

enormous potential. We are committed to learning from the past in order to more effectively leverage technology to deliver high quality education option to students. We value collegial, candid and constructive relationships with our colleagues across the K-12 education sector. We also value entrepreneurialism, creativity and progress. Together, we believe we have the ingredients for meeting the needs of many Colorado students.

As a public charter school, Colorado Digital Academy is open to any eligible student residing in Colorado. Our target student profile is not limited to any specific demographic. Instead, the school program is designed and organized to serve students and families who have chosen (and need) an online classroom setting. For example, our students include:

- Individuals who are self-directed and seek a wider range of academic options than those available locally.
- Students of all ability levels seeking additional academic and learning opportunities.
- Families seeking a setting that supports their family relationships and/or personal beliefs and values, and families who prefer to school at home.
- Individuals who are high-risk/at-risk for successfully achieving high school graduation or equivalency or those who need credit recovery for previously failed courses.
- Students with health reasons that prohibit them from attending typical classroom programs at brick-and-mortar schools.
- Families in the military or employed in industries requiring them to relocate frequently.
- Students who require alternative scheduling to accommodate their needs (e.g., sports, drama, extracurricular activities, rural students with family business obligations).
- Families who prefer a learning environment for their children that is free from bullying, violence, and domestic terrorism (a fast-growing segment of online school enrollees).

How We Uniquely Prepare Students for College and Career Success: While we believe that every student can achieve success, not every education model is conducive to unleashing every student's potential. That is, some students thrive in neighborhood schools, others in private parochial schools and yet others in alternative environments. We do not hold that our school is the only, best option. In fact, we argue that no such option exists. Instead, we uniquely weave the attributes of technology into a standards based curricular and instructional program to deliver a highly individualized academic experience. Some may disagree, but we believe that not every student "fits" the college mold. In fact, some may have entrepreneurial designs, vocational goals, desire to raise a family rather than work, or wish to serve in the military as their career choice. We provide educational options and opportunities for students to achieve their full potential based on who the student is, rather than whom we think they should be. We believe that our model honors a wide diversity of students, their dreams and their justifiably unique definitions of the American dream.

We believe that student learning should be differentiated, uniquely planned for each student, relevant, collaborative, and applicable to life. Everything we do is intended to prepare students for college and career success as well as overall success in life. As an online charter school, Colorado Digital Academy uses technology to bring education to the student rather than the child to the education. Our unique learning model includes a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum, the flexibility of learning anytime/anywhere, and the support of Highly Qualified professional educators. The curriculum is research-based, time-tested, content-rich, aligned to the Common Core, and designed to meet or exceed the Colorado Academic Standards. The curriculum and teaching strategies accommodate the needs of a diverse set of learners—those students eager to stretch their horizons on a challenging path of individual-based inquiry as well as those requiring more time-on-task and personalized courses that spark their interest. Innovative and effective instructional methods include cooperative learning, graphic organizers, role-playing, activating prior knowledge, scaffolding, personal connection journaling, and Socratic Method.

What We Want to Accomplish: We want to fulfill our vision and mission and play a critical role in preparing the next generation to be successful, productive citizens in society. Like all high-performing schools, Colorado Digital Academy is committed to data-driven instruction and decision-making, responsive governance, across-the-board accountability, and transparency. Our instructional model and educational philosophies are well suited for the diversity we anticipate will be represented in our student population. The educational program is personalized to each student's needs and abilities, and we employ a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate diverse learning styles. Our model allows us to demonstrate best practice, such as optimal use of technology in learning and teaching, high quality instruction and curriculum, data-driven decision making, and focused and well-structured instructional practices (e.g., parent engagement, personalized learning plans, mastery of standards, web-based and face-to-face professional development, and

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

successful intervention for students who are struggling). Colorado Digital Academy is supported in its efforts to ensure student success by the Rocky Mountain Charter Collaborative, established under the Colorado Charter School Collaborative Act. .

2. Prior Year Targets

Consider the previous year's progress toward the school's targets. Identify the overall magnitude of the school's performance challenges.

Academic Achievement (Status)

Prior Year Target: By the end of the 2014/15 SY the percentage of students scoring P+ in READING will be 72%
Performance on Target: Based on PARCC data of the students who participated in the PARCC assessment, the school Approached Expectations in English.

Prior Year Target: By the end of 2014/15 SY the percentage of students scoring P+ in MATH will be 71%
Performance on Target: Based on PARCC data of the students who participated in the PARCC assessment, the school Partially Met Expectations in Math.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

3. Current Performance

Review the SPF and local data. Document any areas where the school did not at least meet state/ federal expectations.

Reflection

PARCC Results for CODA:

PARCC	ENGLISH				MATH			
Grade	PARCC	State	District	CODA	PARCC	State	District	CODA
3	736	737	732	731	738	737	729	718
4	742	742	730	723	736	734	722	717
5	741	741	729	728	736	733	718	717
6	740	740	737	732	735	734	729	728
	739.75	740	732	728.5	736.25	734.5	724.5	720

English: Approaching Expectations
Math: Partially Met Expectations

4. Trend Analysis

Provide a description of the trend analysis that includes at least three years of data (state and local data). Trend statements should be provided in the four performance indicator areas and by disaggregated groups. Trend statements should include the direction of the trend and a comparison (e.g., state expectations, state average) to indicate why the trend is notable.

Academic Achievement (Status)

- CODA students appear to demonstrate a stable trend in ENGLISH, consistently scoring slightly below the state average (CODA = 728; State = 739)
- CODA students appear to demonstrate a stable trend in MATH, consistently scoring slightly below state average (CODA = 720; State = 736)

Priority Performance Challenges and Root Cause Analysis

Priority Performance Challenges: Identify notable trends (or a combination of trends) that are the highest priority to address (priority performance challenges). No more than 3-5 are recommended. Provide a rationale for why these challenges have been selected and address the magnitude of the school's overall performance challenges.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

Root Cause: Identify at least one root cause for every priority performance challenge. Root causes should address adult actions, be under the control of the school, and address the priority performance challenge(s). Provide evidence that the root cause was verified through the use of additional data. A description of the selection process for the corresponding major improvement strategies is encouraged.

Priority Performance Challenge	⟹	Root Cause
English achievement that is slightly below state average:	⟹	The school lacks a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system: The school lacks a comprehensive data management system that is adequately used to inform the process of data driven instructional support. The school lacks a comrehensive, data driven professional development system: The school does not have a robust, data driven professional development program
Math achievement that is slightly below state average:	⟹	The school lacks a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system: The school lacks a comprehensive data management system that is adequately used to inform the process of data driven instructional support. The school lacks a comrehensive, data driven professional development system: The school does not have a robust, data driven professional development program

Reflection on Priority Performance Challenges

Student achievement in the core content areas of English and Math are the are key indicators of school performance.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

Reflection on Root Cause

These root causes were selected based on a collaborative analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

By developing and implementing a comprehensive, data driven PD system as well as a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system the school will improve student outcomes and increase school performance.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

CO CDE COLORADO
Department of Education

Section IV: Action Plan(s)

This section addresses the "Plan" portion of the continuous improvement cycle. First, identify annual performance targets and the interim measures. This will be documented in the required *School Target Setting Form* on the next page. Then move into action planning, which should be captured in the *Action Planning Form*.

Schools are expected to set their own annual targets for the performance indicators (i.e. academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps, and postsecondary and workforce readiness). At a minimum, schools should set targets for each of the performance indicators where state expectations were not met; targets should also be connected to prioritized performance challenges identified in the data narrative (section III). For each annual performance target, identify interim measures that will be used to monitor progress toward the annual targets at least quarterly during the school year.
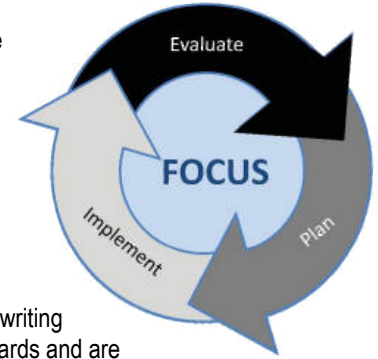
Implications of Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) on Target Setting: During the 2014-15 school year, Colorado transitioned from reading, writing and math TCAP assessments to CMAS PARCC English language arts and math assessments. These assessments measure related, but different content standards and are expected to have different proficiency levels. As a result, setting targets based on the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced on TCAP is not appropriate. Furthermore, CDE does not yet know if student growth percentiles and median student growth percentiles will be available for accountability, planning or reporting use. It is known that adequate growth percentiles will not be available this school year for 2014-15 results. Target setting is still expected to occur in the UIP process during this transition period. However, some modifications in typical practice may be needed.

School Target Setting Form

Academic Achievement (Status)

Subject		R
Priority Performance Challenge		English achievement that is slightly below state average
Annual Performance Targets	2015-2016	The average PARCC score of participating students in ENGLISH will be at least 735.
	2016-2017	The average PARCC score of participating students in ENGLISH will be at least 750.
Interim Measures		CBM's, I-Ready

Subject		M
Priority Performance Challenge		Math achievement that is slightly below state average
Annual Performance Targets	2015-2016	The average PARCC score of participating students in MATH will be at least 735.
	2016-2017	The average PARCC score of participating students in MATH will be at least 750.
Interim Measures		CBM's.

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

Action Planning Form for 2015-16 and 2016-17

Identify the major improvement strategy(s) for 2015-16 and 2016-17 that will address the root cause(s) determined in Section III. For each major improvement strategy, identify the root cause(s) that the major improvement strategy will help to dissolve. Then, indicate which accountability provision or grant opportunity it will address. Details should include the action steps that will be taken to implement the major improvement strategy, a general timeline, resources that will be used to implement the actions, and implementation benchmarks.

Major Improvement Strategy: Develop and implement a Professional Development program.
Develop and implement a Professional Development program that is fully aligned with Colorado's Educator Effectiveness process and builds specific capacity to maximize student achievement in a virtual school setting.

Root Cause(s) Addressed:
The school lacks a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system
The school lacks a comrehensive, data driven professional development system

Accountability Provisions or Grant Opportunities Addressed by this Major Improvement Strategy (check all that apply):

☒ State Accreditation ☐ Title I Focus School ☐ Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG) ☐ Colorado Graduation Pathways Program ☐ Other:

Action Steps	
Jan. 2016 - Jun. 2016	**Analyze current PD practices in peer organizations/schools** **Description:** Gather data on PD programs within the virtual school environment. **Implementation Benchmarks:** Spring 2016: Gather data and identify best practices **Resources:** Staff time to conduct research

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

	Key Personnel: Principal and Asst Principal **Status:** In Progress
May. 2016 - May. 2016	**Develop a PD needs assessment** **Description:** Develop a needs assessment tool that is aligned with school expectations, goals and job descriptions **Implementation Benchmarks:** Spring 2016: Create online survey tool Spring 2016: Administer survey to current staff **Resources:** Staff time **Key Personnel:** Principal & Assistant Principal **Status:** Not Started
Jun. 2016 - Jul. 2016	**2016/17 PD Plan** **Description:** Completed PD plan based on data and best practices **Implementation Benchmarks:**

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

COLORADO
Department of Education

	Summer 2016: Implement plan
	Resources:
	Staff time and financial resources to support need PD activities
	Key Personnel:
	Principal & Asst Principal
	Status:
	Not Started

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

Major Improvement Strategy: Create and implement a comprehensive school data management system.
Create and implement a comprehensive data management system that collects, manages and reports data on student achievement and organizational implementation.

Root Cause(s) Addressed:
The school lacks a reliable, comprehensive organizational data management system
The school lacks a comrehensive, data driven professional development system

Accountability Provisions or Grant Opportunities Addressed by this Major Improvement Strategy (check all that apply):

☒ State Accreditation   ☐ Title I Focus School   ☐ Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG)   ☐ Colorado Graduation Pathways Program   ☐ Other:

Action Steps	
Aug. 2015 - Feb. 2016	**Conduct a gap analysis of current system(s)** **Description:** Gather gap analysis data on Power School, Buzz, InfoSnap **Implementation Benchmarks:** Fall 2015: Gather data Spring 2016: Report on analysis Summer 2016: Integrate PD program with gaps (or acquire new system) **Resources:** Staff time and financial resources **Key Personnel:** Principal and Asst Principal **Status:**

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

	In Progress
Jul. 2016 - Aug. 2016	**Standardized reporting schedule** **Description:** Create a standardized reporting schedule for distributing achievement data that teachers can use in PLC's and/or instructional planning **Implementation Benchmarks:** Summer 2016: Full implementation **Resources:** Staff time and financial resources as possible **Key Personnel:** Principal & Asst Principal **Status:** Not Started

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

Section V: Appendices

Some schools will need to provide additional forms to document accountability or grant requirements:
- Additional Requirements for Turnaround Status Under State Accountability (Required)
- Tiered Intervention Grantee (TIG) (Required)
- Title I Schools Operating a Schoolwide Program (Optional)

School Code: 6241   School Name: COLORADO DIGITAL ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY