

COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT 11

A Guide to School Accountability Report (SAR) 2007

This is the seventh year that the State of Colorado has produced a School Accountability Report (SAR) for schools in Colorado. The first SAR was for the 2000-2001 school year and this report is for the 2006-2007 school year (last school year).

All decisions about "what data to collect" and about "how to display that data" in the School Accountability Report are made by the State of Colorado. Some of the decisions are required by state law and some are interpretations or rules and regulations adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education. Colorado Springs School District 11 has given its best effort in providing the most accurate data possible to the State.

Over the past years, District 11 has tried to replicate the calculations made by the State on the SAR. In doing so, we found that the State has developed their own definitions and interpretations of school related data that is different, in some cases, from what school staff and parents are familiar. In order to make the data and information presented on the SAR as meaningful as possible, we are providing below a brief explanation about each section of the SAR. Also, attached to this document is a three page list of Questions and Answers from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

- Overall Academic Performance on State Assessments – each school will be rated one of the following:
 - Excellent
 - High
 - Average
 - Low
 - Unsatisfactory

The Overall Academic Performance on State Assessments is based on student performance on CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) tests in elementary and middle schools, and the student performance on CSAP and ACT combined for high schools. A further explanation can be found in CDE's Questions and Answers document (questions 1-6).

- Academic Growth of Students – is a change from some of the past years where schools had an Academic Growth Rating. We believe the Academic Growth of Students will be more valuable. The new calculation identifies how much academic growth is required to meet each level of content standards and to measure whether students are achieving this growth. The actual Academic Growth of Students Rating is based on the portion of students who make CSAP scale score gains. Each school will receive one of the following ratings for Academic Growth:
 - Significant Improvement
 - Improvement
 - Stable
 - Decline
 - Significant Decline

Please refer to questions 7 through 9 of CDE's Question and Answer document.

- How the school compares to nearby schools – the nearby schools are at the same level (elementary school, middle school, or high school) and may or may not be from the same district. According to law, schools are compared to “like” schools within a 75 mile radius. “Like” schools would be elementary schools to elementary schools, middle schools to middle schools, and high schools to high schools – regardless of any other characteristics.
- Making AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) – a school either makes AYP by meeting the criteria for all reading and math indicators or doesn't make AYP if it misses one or more indicators. A school has one indicator for reading school-wide and there are indicators for each subgroup (White, Hispanic, Black, Native American, Asian, Economically Disadvantaged, Students With Disabilities, English Language Learners-ELL, in reading. It is the same for math. The Other Indicator (1.1% advanced for elementary/middle school and graduation rate for high school) is included in reading. The SAR uses the word targets for indicators. Each school has several indicators or targets depending on how many subgroups meet the criteria of having at least 30 students in the group. If a school makes all targets for reading *and* the “other” indicator, it makes AYP in reading. If the school makes all targets for math, it makes AYP for math. If a school misses one or more targets in reading or math (or the “other” indicator), it doesn't make AYP as a school.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

- CSAP 2007 Spring – The pie charts for CSAP scores represent the results of all students tested last spring and are the same as the CSAP scores released in August 2007.
- Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced – provides a comparison between the school, the district and the state.
- Student Test Scores Used for Calculating Overall Academic Performance – Even though the pie charts represent the scores of all students that took the test last spring, the SAR ratings are based on the remaining scores after removal of students' scores that fall in certain categories, such as Language, Alternate Assessment, and New Students. For additional information on “scores not used”, see the bottom of the Student Performance page of the SAR and question 15 of CDE's Questions and Answers document.

QUESTIONS PARENTS SHOULD ASK

- There are six questions that CDE suggests that parents ask the school about student achievement.
- In the bottom section, there are four possible programs in which students may be eligible to participate.

ABOUT OUR STAFF

- School Employment – a person is considered full time if they work 85% or more of the time. If they work less than 85% of the time, they are considered part time. Regardless, each person is considered a 1.0 for either Full Time or Part Time for

this chart. The information represents the fall semester (July 2006 to December 2006).

- Total Staff – is a head count of all active personnel as of December 2006 being counted as 1.0, regardless of how many hours a day or how many days a week is worked. The Total Staff for the District does not add correctly.
- Students per Teacher Ratio – as stated in question 17 of the CDE document, Questions and Answers, the “Student per Teacher Ratio” does not indicate specific class size averages. For example, an elementary classroom with 19 students and one teacher would normally represent a 19 to 1 student per teacher ratio. The SAR calculation included all types of teacher/professional personnel besides the classroom teacher and results in a much lower ratio. A more accurate label on the SAR would be Students per Professional Staff Ratio.
- Professional Experience of Teachers
 - Percent of teachers teaching the subject which they received their degree— does not apply to an elementary school defined as highest grade being 6th grade or lower. In secondary schools, a teacher is reported as teaching in the subject area of degree, if a teacher is teaching in one of the subject areas of degree for 50% or more of reported teaching hours.

It should be noted that a very high percentage of secondary teachers in District 11 are teaching in subject areas in which they are certified by the Colorado Department of Education to teach, even though their degree may be in a different subject area.

 - Tenure – Colorado does not have tenure. For this calculation, teachers with tenure are teachers with four or more years of teaching experience in the District. Teachers without tenure are those with three or fewer years of District teaching experience.
- Salaries
 - Salaries – As stated in question 18 of CDE’s document, Questions and Answers, salaries have been adjusted to a common scale giving the reader an equivalent way to compare schools. In general, the contract days and hours are adjusted to a modal (occurring most frequently) number for the District, which adjusts the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) in the average salary calculation. As a result, the “Average Administrator Salary” on the SAR for a school with one administrator, does not, in most cases, depict the actual salary of the administrator.

SAFETY AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Safe and Orderly School Features

- Answers should reflect the 2006-2007 school year. All campuses are “closed campuses” by Board Policy.

Safety and Discipline

- District 11 made a concerted effort to have each school report Safety and Discipline data in a more consistent and systematic manner. As a result, we believe that the Safety and Discipline data is a more accurate representation of the guidelines set by the State.

Student Attendance and School Calendar

- All District 11 schools had a school year of 171 days and had nine teacher days scheduled without student contact. Therefore, students went to school 171 days and teachers worked 182 days.
- Enrollment – as of Count Day on September 30, 2006.
- Bar Graphs
 - Elementary schools and middle schools have Attendance Rates from 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.
 - Middle Schools and High Schools have Dropout Rates for 2004-2005 and 2006-2007.

Student Information Over Time

- Student Dropout – only reported for middle and high schools
- Safety and Discipline Total Incidents Reported – As stated above, the District has made a concerted effort to comply with the State's program (definitions and categories).
- Student Enrollment Stability – compares a student list of a school from October 2006 to a student list in February 2007. The stability rate is the number of students on both lists divided by the number of students on the October 2006 list. It is an attempt to estimate the percentage of students that attended both semesters.
- Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch – this is the third year to report FRL (Free and Reduced Lunch).

TAXPAYERS' REPORT

- Taxpayers' Report data is for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006. You will notice that the financial data lags the academic data by one year due to the completion dates of the District's annual financial audit.
- Sources of School District Revenue – these sources reflect revenues collected for all district fund groups. Other discretionary income reflects receipt of voter approved mill levy override funds plus a wide variety of miscellaneous types of income.
- District Use of Funds – these uses reflect some of the District expenses. Since these categories of expenses are mandated by State rules, they will not necessarily equal total District expenditures.
- District Debt and Capital Construction and Equipment – this category reflects activity from the District's expenditure of its last bond issue, the 2005 General Obligation bonds and its Capital Reserve Fund.
- Accreditation – The state accredits districts, and districts, in turn, accredit individual schools

Questions on the about this document should be directed to the Assessment, Evaluation and Research Office (AERO) of Colorado Springs School District 11 (520-2080).