

Appendix I

State Laws on Accountability: A Synopsis

Updated as of December 2006

The following synopsis excerpts or paraphrases the sections of Colorado State Law that outline the responsibilities of the various building and district committees charged with implementing the program of Educational Accountability in the State of Colorado. The referenced sections of the Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) should be reviewed for the complete description of the specific responsibilities and their context. Each year, the Colorado Department of Education publishes a new edition of *Colorado School Laws*, which is a useful compendium of all statutes pertaining to education. It is available for purchase from CDE.

The Purpose of the Educational Accountability Program

- To define and measure academic and safety quality in education and thus to help the public schools of Colorado to achieve such quality and expand the life opportunities and options of the students in this state — CRS 22-7-102 (1)
- To provide to local school boards and local schools assistance in helping their school patrons to determine the relative value of their school program as compared to its cost — CRS 22-7-102 (1)
- To measure objectively the quality and efficiency of the educational programs offered by the public schools — CRS 22-7-102 (2)

The School Advisory Councils (School Building Accountability Committees)

- School advisory councils are required for every public school in Colorado, unless the school or school district had in place prior to January 1, 2000, a committee or council that performed at least the duties specified for school advisory councils in this section and section 22-7-107. — CRS 22-7-106 (4)
- School advisory councils consist of seven members designated, appointed, or elected as follows: the principal or principal's designee; one teacher; three parents; one adult designed by the PTA or PTO; a community member involved in business. — CRS 22-7-106 (1) (a)
- Membership requirements for grandfathered accountability committees: The advisory accountability committee shall consist of at least one parent, one teacher, one school administrator, and a taxpayer from the district. — old CRS 22-7-104 (1)

School Advisory Councils — Duties

- **School budget priorities:** the school advisory council of each public school shall make recommendations to the principal of the school regarding the prioritization of

expenditures of school moneys. . . . [including] any state, federal, local, or private grants and any other discretionary funds. — CRS 22-7-107 (1) and (2) (c)

- **Reporting on budget priorities:** a copy of the recommendations for the prioritization of school expenditures shall be sent to the accountability committee of the school district and to the board of education. The chief executive officer shall consider such recommendations in formulating budget requests to be presented to the board of education. — CRS 22-7-207
- **Student achievement:** the school advisory council shall meet at least quarterly to discuss means for determining whether decisions affecting the educational process are advancing or impeding student achievement. — CRS 22-7-107 (2) (a)
- **Reporting to the public:** the school advisory committee shall meet at least quarterly to discuss reporting to students, parents, boards of education, educators, and the school district board of education on the educational performance of the school and providing data for the appraisal of such performance. — CRS 22-7-107 (2) (b)
- **Safety:** the school advisory committee shall meet at least quarterly to discuss safety issues related to the school environment. — CRS 22-7-107 (2) (d)
- **School goals, objectives, and improvement planning, including the budget:** No later than September 1, the school advisory council for each school building shall adopt high, but achievable, goals and objectives for the improvement of education in its building and shall adopt a plan to improve educational achievement in the school, to implement methods of maximizing graduation rates from the secondary schools of the district, and to increase the ratings for the school's accreditation category established pursuant to section 22-11-202. Procedures for the implementation of the plan shall be included in the budget submitted to the board of education. — CRS 22-7-205 (1)

School District Accountability Committees

- The board of education of each school district shall adopt a plan for a local accountability program designed to measure the adequacy and efficiency of educational programs offered by the district. — CRS 22-7-104 (1)
- The board of education shall appoint or create a process for the election of a school district accountability committee. — CRS 22-7-104 (1)
- The school district accountability committee shall consist of at least three parents of students enrolled in a public school in the school district who are not employees or related to employees of the district, one teacher, one school administrator, and one person from the community who is involved in business. — CRS 22-7-104 (1)
- Any school district that demonstrates that, prior to January 1, 2000, the school district had in place a committee or council that performed at least the duties specified for a school district accountability committee in this section is not required to appoint or elect a school district accountability committee pursuant to subsection (1) of this section. — CRS 22-7-104 (4)

- Membership requirements for grandfathered accountability committees: The advisory accountability committee shall consist of at least one parent, one teacher, one school administrator, and a taxpayer from the district. — old CRS 22-7-104 (1)

School District Accountability Committees — Duties

- **Areas of study beyond those specified in statute:** The areas of study by the district accountability committee shall be cooperatively determined at least annually by the committee and the board of education. — CRS 22-7-104 (1)
- **Budget priorities:** The school district accountability committee shall make recommendations to the board of education relative to the prioritization of expenditures of school district moneys. When it makes such recommendations, it shall attempt to consult with the school advisory councils in the school district. The board of education shall consider such recommendations . . . in adopting the budget. — CRS 22-7-105
- **Review of school improvement plans:** Each building’s goals and objectives and plan shall be reviewed by the district accountability committee before its submission to the board of education of the district. Procedures for the implementation of the plan shall be included in the budget submitted to the board of education. — CRS 22-7-205 (1)
- **Consultation regarding district improvement plan:** After consultation with the district accountability committee and review of its recommendations, the board of education shall compile school building goals and objectives and plans and shall report a district’s high, but achievable, goals and objectives for the improvement of education in the district and a district plan to improve educational achievement, maximize graduation rates, and increase the ratings for the school’s accreditation category. . . . Such report shall be made available to the public no later than October 1. — CRS 22-7-205 (2)
- **Review of charter school applications:** The charter school application shall be reviewed by the district accountability committee prior to consideration by the local board of education. — CRS 22-30.5-107 (1)
- **Composition of district accountability charter review committee:** For the purposes of reviewing a charter school application, the district accountability committee shall include at least one person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, and one parent of a child enrolled in a charter school in the district; except that, if there are no charter schools in the district, the local board of education shall appoint a parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in the school district. — CRS 22-30.5-107 (1.5)
- **Adoption and revision of content standards:** In adopting content standards, each district shall seek input from and shall work in cooperation with educators, parents, students, business persons, members of the general community who are representative of the cultural diversity of the district, and the district’s accountability committee. — CRS 22-7-407 (1)
- **Review of content standards:** In revising such standards, each district shall seek recommendations from and work in cooperation with educators, parents, students,

business persons, members of the general community who are representative of the cultural diversity of the district, and the district's accountability committee. — CRS 22-7-407 (4)

- **Establishment of comprehensive health education advisory councils:** Instead of appointing a separate health education advisory council, a district may choose to add necessary representatives to the school district's accountability committee so that the accountability committee can carry out these functions. — CRS 22-25-106 (1)
- **Review of applications to waive state law:** Any application submitted by a school district that has a funded pupil count of three thousand or more pupils shall demonstrate that such application has the consent of a majority of the appropriate accountability committee. CRS 22-2-117 (1) (d)
- **Appointment of members to serve on a School Organization Planning Committee:** A School Organization Planning Committee is formed when a new school district is being created or a district is annexing part of another district. If a reorganization involves multiple school districts, the school district accountability committees for each district shall appoint one parent to the School Organization Planning Committee. If a single district is involved, the district accountability committee shall appoint three members who are parents. — CRS 22-30-106 (2) (a) (I and II)