



End-of-Clock Pathway Guidance Management by a Public or Private Entity

The pathway guidance documents are intended to help districts and schools understand the Accountability Clock pathways outlined in the Education Accountability Act of 2009. Please send any comments or questions to Brenda Bautsch at Bautsch_B@cde.state.co.us.

		District Pathway ☒	School Pathway ☒
Overview of Pathway	Pathway Definition	The Education Accountability Act outlines a pathway whereby a district may change internal management structures and/or governance of low-performing schools through a partnership with a private or public entity. Under this pathway, a district would bring in an external organization to manage an entire school or district <i>or</i> to manage targeted operations at the district, a particular school or a cluster of schools. If partnering with an external organization only for targeted operations, the external partner must have contractual authority and accountability. This pathway represents a continuum within which there are many variations to fit the unique context of a given district and its schools.	
	Colorado statutory reference	<p>If a school fails to make adequate progress under its turnaround plan or continues to operate under a priority improvement or turnaround plan for five consecutive years, the State Review Panel may evaluate the school and recommend:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“With regard to a district public school that is not a charter school, that the district public school should be managed by a private or public entity other than the school district”</i> C.R.S. §22-11-210(5)(a)(I)</p> <p>If a district fails to make substantial progress under its turnaround plan or has been in the accredited with priority improvement plan category or lower for five consecutive years, the State Review Panel may evaluate the school district and recommend:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“That a private or public entity, with the agreement of the school district, take over management of the school district or management of one or more of the district public schools.”</i> C.R.S. § 22-11-209(2)(a)(I)(B)</p>	



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	What is non-negotiable?	Districts selecting this pathway agree to negotiate a contract (scope, timeline, deliverables, authority and accountability) with an external entity to manage and/or operate all or targeted functions within a school or network of schools.
	What is flexible?	Negotiated contracts specify varying degrees of decision-making authority on the part of the external entity, including but not limited to authority related to human resource management, instruction and assessment, student culture and climate, finances, schedules and time, parent engagement, and other areas of need agreed upon by the district and management partner.
Rationale for Selecting this Pathway	For which causes of underperformance might this pathway be selected?	This pathway might be selected if district and/or school operating structures prove to be ineffective in improving outcomes for students over a period of time. This pathway allows a district to address multiple causes of underperformance, including instructional systems, leadership, human capital, operations, and governance structures.
Governance Considerations	What governance and oversight structures are associated with this pathway?	For districts selecting this pathway, the external entity may have some degree of governance authority over the identified schools. A district enacting this pathway would need to negotiate and articulate the unique governance structure with the identified management partner.
	What is the role of the board in implementing this strategy?	Because the school board will have the responsibility of holding the superintendent accountable for effectively enacting the negotiated contract with the management partner, it is critical that the board demonstrates understanding of the scope of the work. Additionally, the board must have clarity around how the engagement with the external entity strategically addresses a capacity gap within the district. The board will also play a key role in communicating with the community about the relationship between the district and management partner.



	<p>For charters, what are the roles of the charter school governing board and the authorizing board in effectively implementing this strategy?</p>	<p>The charter school authorizing board will hold the charter school leader accountable for improving performance.</p>
<p>Conditions Necessary for Success with this Strategy</p>	<p>What kind of leadership does the school district or Charter School Institute need to be able to provide?</p>	<p>District leaders must be willing to create and implement a vision for its low-performing schools which involves allowing external entities to execute on practices and policies designed to promote dramatically improved student outcomes. District leadership needs to consider ceding specified and negotiated control over school leadership, district supports, and other essential functions of school success (e.g. human resources, instruction, operations). District leadership must have the capacity and willingness to evaluate and hold accountable a management entity.</p>
	<p>What kind of school-level leadership must be in place?</p>	<p>School leaders must have the skills and dispositions to assume greater responsibility and accountability for student performance outcomes as well as to advocate for the needs of the school(s). School leaders must be willing to work with external entities in the operation and strategic planning of the school. An influential school leader will play a key role in helping staff make sense of, and buy into new procedures at the building level.</p>
	<p>What kind of leadership should the local board provide? For charter schools, what kind of leadership should the governing board provide?</p>	<p>Local board leadership will need to fully understand the rationale and opportunities inherent in differentiating support for low-performing schools. The board must also demonstrate willingness to engage with an external entity and change policy as needed. Clarity about indicators of success will be necessary as well, as the board will need to consistently monitor and drive for student improved performance.</p>
<p>Funding Considerations</p>	<p>What are the financial considerations associated with this strategy?</p>	<p>This approach might require additional financial costs for establishing a partnership with an external entity, or reallocation of resources within the district. Such a partnership would likely need to exist for at least 3-5 years.</p>



Risks/Special Considerations	What risks associated with this pathway might a district want to consider?	The success of this pathway is strongly related to the successful identification, negotiation, implementation and communication with the external management partner by the superintendent, board, and school leadership. This pathway also requires clarity related to roles, responsibilities, and authority in order to ensure a productive relationship between the district and management partner. If not communicated well, this pathway may lead to conflict and resistance.
	What other information is important to be aware of?	This approach may be paired with seeking waivers or Innovation status for one or more schools. Districts often engage potential external organizations through the release of an RFP.
Examples	Where has this pathway been implemented with success? What other resources would be helpful to look at if considering this pathway?	In Denver Public Schools, the Denver Schools Summit Network (DSSN) in far northeast Denver has engaged with the Blueprint Schools Network in some ways articulated in this guidance. Helpful Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restarting with an Education Management Organization: http://www.centerii.org/handbook/Resources/4_D_Restarting_with_EMO.pdf ● School Restructuring: What Works When: http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/School_Restructuring_Guide.pdf
CDE Contact Information	Which unit should a district contact for more information about this pathway?	For further information, please contact: School & District Performance Unit www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performance