



# Unified Improvement Planning: Guidance for Combined Plans

September 2025

## Purpose

This document provides an overview of this UIP flexibility for small districts followed by guidance for developing and updating a combined Unified Improvement Plan (UIP).

A combined Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) is a single plan for a small district (1,200 students or less) and all or select schools. The combined UIP flexibility is intended to promote alignment of priorities, foster a districtwide vision, and reduce duplication in planning and reporting in small districts. Please note for districts with only one school, the UIP online system will only have a district plan available and school elements will be included. A combined approach to Unified Improvement Planning is most effective for small districts:

- with one or two schools total, or one school per grade band.
- with limited capacity, where a single, coordinated plan streamlines improvement work.
- that are facing systemic issues that span multiple grade levels and can be addressed through unified strategies.

## Eligibility Criteria

The option to write a combined plan is a flexibility offered to small districts. Eligibility to submit a combined Unified Improvement Plan is determined annually based on district enrollment from the prior year's Student October Count. For instance, eligibility to submit a combined plan for the 2025–26 school year is based on the 2024 Student October Count.

Prior Year Student October Count	Eligibility	CDE approval required?
1,000 or less*	Automatic	NO
1,001–1,200	With approval from CDE	YES - request via <a href="mailto:uiphelp@cde.state.co.us">uiphelp@cde.state.co.us</a>



Prior Year Student October Count	Eligibility	CDE approval required?
More than 1,200	Not eligible	N/A

District administrators can view their eligibility status and must indicate if the district is electing to submit a combined plan and which schools will be included in the **UIP Online System**. See instructions in the [Developing a Combined UIP in the Online System](#) section in this document.

\* Districts with fewer than 1,000 students are also eligible to have their **District Accountability Committee (DAC)** serve as their **School Accountability Committees (SAC)**, allowing for a single accountability body across the district. For more information, see [School and District Accountability Committees](#).

## Considerations for Districts with Identified Schools

Districts with state or federally identified schools (e.g., Priority Improvement, Turnaround, On Watch, Comprehensive Support) may still submit a combined plan; however, additional considerations apply:

- The UIP must clearly and effectively address the specific needs, actions, and magnitude of issues at each identified school.
- The plan must document additional supports provided to identified schools beyond what is offered districtwide.
- Schools implementing a turnaround plan are required to submit a turnaround strategy in the UIP and integrate that strategy into the action plan. If the district is submitting a combined plan, this turnaround strategy must be included in the combined plan. If a district is submitting a combined plan and the district or at least one school is rated as turnaround, in the Online template the turnaround strategy box will be included on the Root Causes & Strategies tab found under the Major Improvement Strategies section.

In some cases, developing a separate UIP for an identified school and a combined plan for the remaining schools may be the most effective approach to provide focus for the school and more closely monitor the implementation and make needed adjustments.



## Flexibility in Inclusion

In addition to deciding whether to include identified schools in the combined UIP, districts may also elect to omit certain schools from the combined plan if:

- The school’s needs and challenges differ significantly from those of the rest of the district.
- The school is a charter or an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) with unique programming or structures that are not aligned with the context of the rest of the district.

## Combined Plan Requirements

A combined UIP must:

- Be developed and submitted using the district’s UIP template.
- Meet all district and school-level requirements, including any special grant, program, or identification expectations as defined in the quality criteria.
- Include:
  - Integration of required strategies for identified schools, such as turnaround plans.
  - Rationale for student performance priorities at the district level that considers data for each of the schools.
  - Identify trends, student performance priorities (SPPs), root causes, and major improvement strategies aligned to each of these planning elements for the district and each school. See an example below with combined specific language in *italics*:

### Root Cause Example

Current curriculum and scope/sequence *across all schools* are tied to textbooks and other resources as opposed to state standards. This causes gaps in skills *as students progress through our school system, and especially as they transition from one school to another* (e.g., elementary to middle school).



## Common Plan Considerations

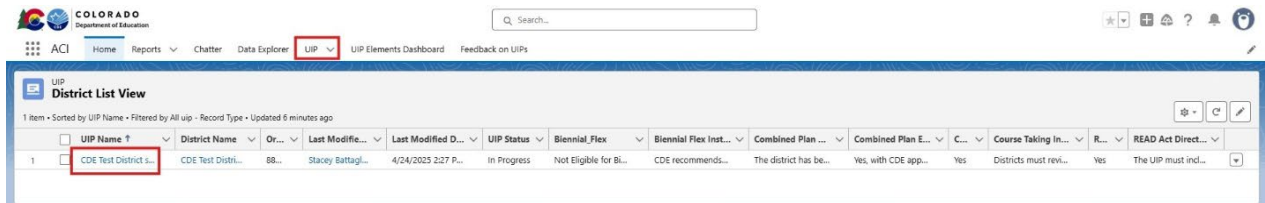
- School Level Approach - Districtwide plan with differentiated strategies by grade band (e.g., one for elementary, one for middle, one for high school).
- Systemic Approach - plan addressing systemic priorities across all schools, used when divergent needs are minimal. Content area priorities, root causes and strategies, and actions are used across all included schools. This may include common professional development, implementation of coaching structures for all levels, etc.
- Common Misconception - Assuming that combining plans automatically meets all requirements for included sites without explicitly addressing site-specific requirements. For instance, if a school in the district is identified as a turnaround plan type, then the combined UIP must include a turnaround strategy for that school.



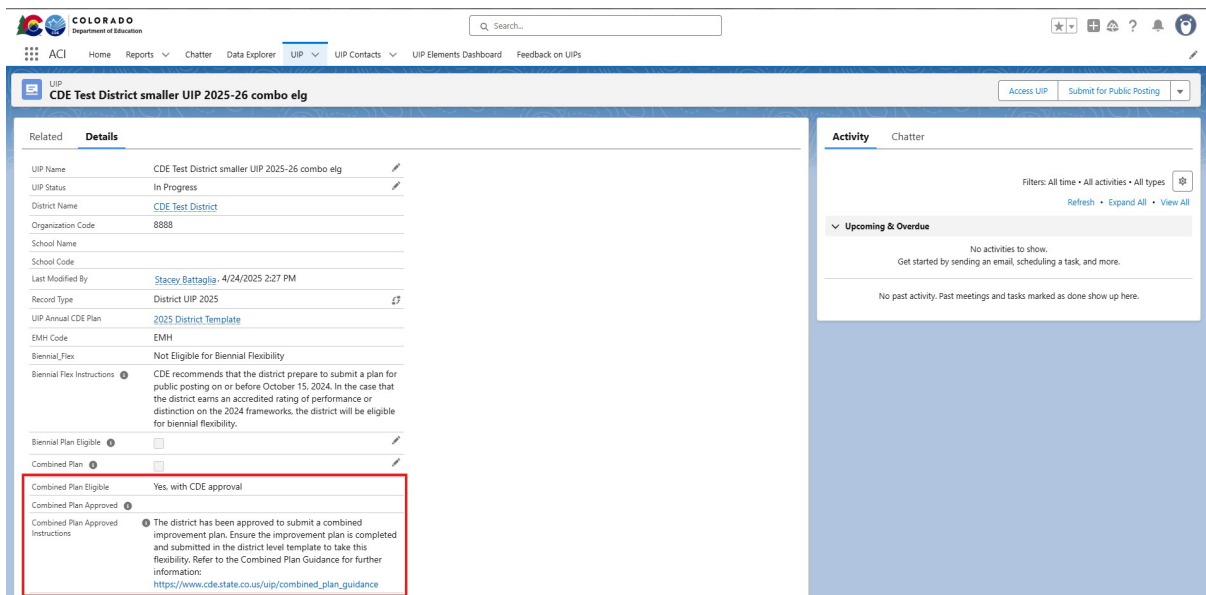
# Developing a Combined UIP in the Online System

## Determining Eligibility

Information regarding the district’s eligibility to submit a combined plan can be found in the district’s current UIP. Access the current district UIP template by clicking the UIP name under the “District List View” on the home screen. This will take users to the “UIP Details” page of the current district UIP.



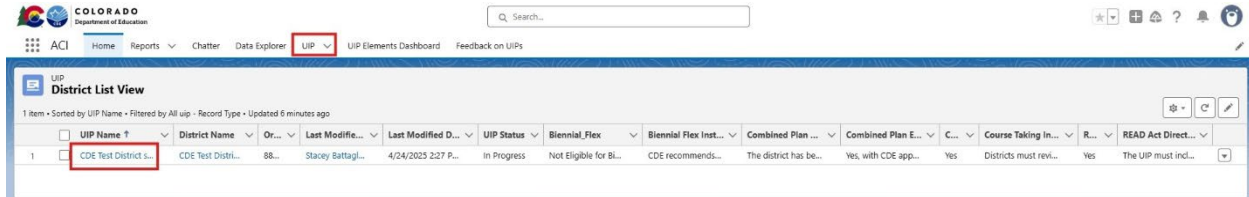
On the “UIP Details” page, refer to the “Combined Plan Eligible” field to determine if the district is eligible to submit a combined plan. The “Combined Plan Approved Instructions” field provides additional information about combined plan eligibility.





## Submitting a Combined Plan

A combined plan must be completed and submitted in the district UIP template. Access the current district UIP template by clicking the UIP name under the “District List View” on the Home screen. This will take users to the “UIP Details” page of the current district template.

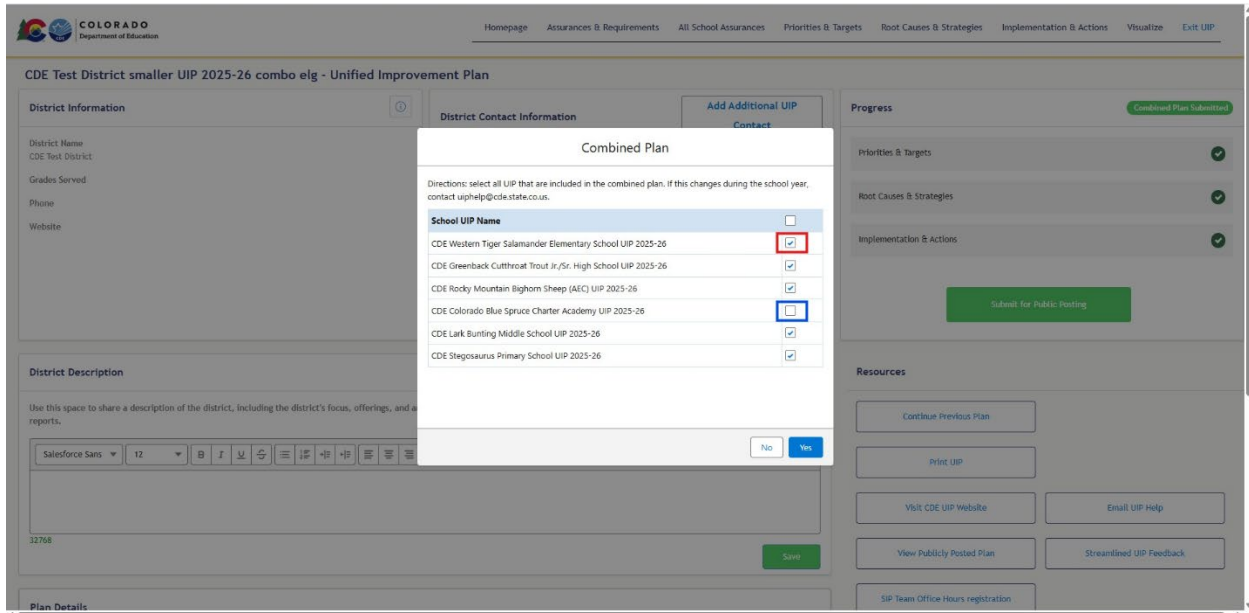


Select the “Access UIP” button to access the district UIP record. The UIP will open in a new window. Once in the UIP, the District Admin will be able to select which school(s) should be included in the combined plan. The popup box to indicate which schools will be included in the combined plan will always appear when the district UIP record is opened. Districts are able to include or not include schools through the writing process.



## Homepage Tab

To include schools in the combined plan, click the checkbox to the right of the school name. See the screenshot below for an example. District Admins use checks to indicate the school is included in the combined plan (red box) and omit checks when a school will not be included in the combined plan for this year’s UIP (blue box as an example).



The UIP Online System will automatically pull in the requirements for the schools that are selected to be included in the district’s combined plan. Based on the school’s performance ratings, the associated assurance statements, customized pre-populated requirements, READ Act Targets, Math Acceleration Targets, and/or Turnaround Strategies will be integrated into the district’s combined UIP record.

## Assurance & Requirements Tab

Information integrated from school UIPs begin to show on the Assurance & Requirements tab on the district’s UIP record. Below the district’s Assurance & Requirements box will be the included schools’ Assurance statements. The titles for these assurances are aligned with the “topic column” within [the assurances](#) of the Quality Criteria (see screenshot to the right).

<p>I PI T</p>	<p><b>Data Analysis</b> <i>Math Acceleration K-12</i></p>
<p>K-3</p>	<p><b>Data Analysis</b> <i>READ Act</i></p>



When looking at the schools' included assurance statements, white clickable checkboxes indicate that the assurance is a requirement based on the school's characteristics including performance rating. Checkboxes that are grayed out are not required for the indicated school. If the school cannot attest to the completion of any assurance listed, a narrative explanation may be added in the text box below the assurances by selecting the dropdown caret to the left of the school's name. Be sure to click Save Description to save the narrative explanation.

School UIP Name	Data Analysis	READ Data Analyzed	Math Acceleration	Stakeholder Development	Stakeholder Monitoring	Parent Notification	Stakeholder Awareness	Title I Schoolwide Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assurance Explanation The School Accountability Committee has a copy of the UIP and will approve the plan on Monday, October 13, 2025. We will be able to meet the requirements of the Stakeholder Development assurance after the SAC approves the draft plan.								
<a href="#">Save Description</a>								
> CDE Greenback Cutthroat Trout Jr./Sr. High School UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> CDE Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep (AEC) UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> CDE Lark Bunting Middle School UIP 2025-26	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> CDE Stegosaurus Primary School UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For example, the screenshot below shows that the first school is required to meet the READ Data Analyzed assurance statement while the second school does not need to meet the requirement of the READ Data Analyzed assurance statement. The Stakeholder Awareness assurance associated with ESSA Comprehensive Support is not required for either school.

School UIP Name	Data Analysis	READ Data Analyzed	Math Acceleration	Stakeholder Development	Stakeholder Monitoring	Parent Notification	Stakeholder Awareness	Title I Schoolwide Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assurance Explanation The School Accountability Committee has a copy of the UIP and will approve the plan on Monday, October 13, 2025. We will be able to meet the requirements of the Stakeholder Development assurance after the SAC approves the draft plan.								
<a href="#">Save Description</a>								
> CDE Greenback Cutthroat Trout Jr./Sr. High School UIP 2025-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In this section of the UIP, if the assurance statement is checked true or if information is added to the Assurance Explanation box, this data will transfer and appear on the individual school UIP records. If someone updates the school's UIP record for Assurances & Assurance Explanation, the district's UIP will reflect the changes made from the school's UIP. The information shown will reflect the last update from either the district or school UIP record. CDE recommends that if schools are included in the district's combined plan, the individual school UIP records should not be updated by any user.





Below the Assurance Statement section, a customized list of additional requirements for the district will appear. The “School” header in the blue bar will include the customized list of additional requirements for the included schools. Customized additional requirements for each school included in the combined UIP can be found by clicking the dropdown caret to the left of the school’s name and the different program requirement headers.

**Customized List of Additional Requirement(s)**

The categories below represent school or district characteristics that are associated with additional requirements in the UIP. Use the dropdown arrows to determine which, if any, associated requirements need to be satisfied in this UIP. For additional information on these requirements, refer to the Quality Criteria documents linked under “Resources” on this page, or visit [https://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip\\_general\\_resources#criteriaandrequirements](https://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip_general_resources#criteriaandrequirements).

- State ID Reporting
- Districts with Schools on Clock
- Course Taking Analysis
- Math Acceleration
- READ Act Reporting
- EASI Grant

**School**

- CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School UIP 2025-26
  - State ID Reporting
  - Federal ID Reporting
  - Course Taking Analysis
  - Math Acceleration
  - READ Act Reporting
  - EASI Grant

The school has not met state expectations for attainment on the 2025 SPF performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a Turnaround Plan. CDE will review the school’s plan and provide feedback. Schools assigned a Turnaround plan type based on the 2025 SPF must – Notify parents of the plan type and UIP process; hold a public hearing with the local board; – include family engagement strategies in the action plan; – identify turnaround strategies in the UIP; – if serving grades K-3, integrate an early childhood needs assessment into the UIP. Information on these expectations can be found here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/early/etna> - Refer to the for additional details about plan requirements: [https://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip\\_general\\_resources#criteriaandrequirements](https://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip_general_resources#criteriaandrequirements)

If a school is identified under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the school’s ESSA Profile will be available to download for planning purposes. The ESSA Profile will NOT be included in the publicly available UIP for the district or school.

- Federal ID Reporting

The school has been identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) under ESSA and must submit a plan for review and posting every year unless eligible for biennial flexibility. The school must create an improvement plan that meets related ESSA requirements. Details can be found in the Quality Criteria and on the ESSA Planning Requirements webpage: (<https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/essaplanningrequirements>). The school, LEA and CDE must approve the plan, monitor implementation, and ensure progress towards meeting exit criteria. If the school does not meet CDE-defined exit criteria within 3 years, the CDE will take more rigorous action in the 4th year.

8888 - CDE Test District - 2222 - CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School\_2025-26 ESSA School Profile.xlsx





## Priorities & Targets Tab

For combined plans, the included schools could prompt additional READ Act Target box and/or Math Acceleration boxes to be included, depending on the school’s performance rating. The READ Act Target box and Math Acceleration box should be used if not already addressed as part of the Student Performance Priorities.

READ Act requirements apply to sites that serve kindergarten through third grade students. All districts meet this requirement. Be mindful of whether schools included in the combined plan also need to meet this requirement. See the screenshot below of READ Act Targets fields.

**READ Act Targets**

Identify Targets

Instructions: If not already addressed as a part of the Student Performance Priorities, review and enter READ Act Targets for students reaching grade level expectations by the end of grade 3 and the performance of students with a significant reading deficiency.

What is the current performance of students in reaching grade level expectations by the end of grade 3?  
Example Name

What is the 2-year (end of 2026-27) measure and target?  
Example Name

What is the 1-year (end of 2025-26) measure and target?  
Example Name

What is the interim measure (e.g., tool or assessment) and specific mid-year target? On what date will the school measure this interim target?  
Example Name xxx/xx/xxxx

+ Add Additional Interim Target

What is the current performance of students with a significant reading deficiency (SRD)?  
Example Name

What is the 2-year (end of 2026-27) measure and target?  
Example Name

What is the 1-year (end of 2025-26) measure and target?  
Example Name

What is the interim measure (e.g., tool or assessment) and specific mid-year target? On what date will the school measure this interim target?  
Example Name xxx/xx/xxxx

+ Add Additional Interim Target

Math Acceleration requirements apply to sites that serve kindergarten through 12th grade and have an Improvement, Priority Improvement, or Turnaround performance rating. See the screenshot below for an example of Math Acceleration Targets fields.

**Math Acceleration Targets**

Identify Targets

Instructions: If not already addressed as a part of the Student Performance Priorities, review and enter Math Acceleration for below grade level or struggling students in math

What is the current performance of students below grade level or struggling in math?  
Example Name

What is the 2-year (end of 2026-27) measure and target?  
Example Name

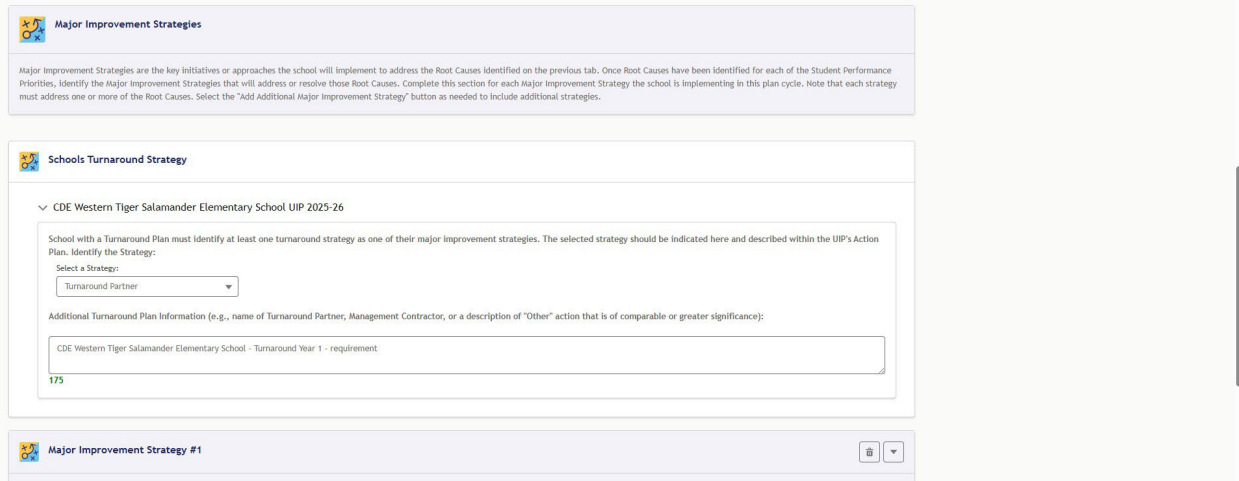
What is the 1-year (end of 2025-26) measure and target?  
Example Name

What is the interim measure (e.g., tool or assessment) and specific mid-year target? On what date will the school measure this interim target?  
Example Name xxx/xx/xxxx

+ Add Additional Interim Target

## Root Causes & Strategies Tab

Sites that have a performance rating of Turnaround are required to identify a state-required turnaround strategy and articulate an action plan aligned to needs identified in data analysis. If the district and/or one of the included schools in the combined plan have a Turnaround performance rating, a turnaround strategy box will populate in the Major Improvement Strategies section on the Root Causes & Strategies tab on the UIP template. See the screenshot below for an example of Turnaround Strategy fields.



**Major Improvement Strategies**

Major Improvement Strategies are the key initiatives or approaches the school will implement to address the Root Causes identified on the previous tab. Once Root Causes have been identified for each of the Student Performance Priorities, identify the Major Improvement Strategies that will address or resolve those Root Causes. Complete this section for each Major Improvement Strategy the school is implementing in this plan cycle. Note that each strategy must address one or more of the Root Causes. Select the "Add Additional Major Improvement Strategy" button as needed to include additional strategies.

**Schools Turnaround Strategy**

▼ CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School UIP 2025-26

School with a Turnaround Plan must identify at least one turnaround strategy as one of their major improvement strategies. The selected strategy should be indicated here and described within the UIP's Action Plan. Identify the Strategy:

Select a Strategy:

Turnaround Partner

Additional Turnaround Plan Information (e.g., name of Turnaround Partner, Management Contractor, or a description of "Other" action that is of comparable or greater significance):

CDE Western Tiger Salamander Elementary School - Turnaround Year 1 - requirement

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**Major Improvement Strategy #1**

## Implementation & Actions Tab

There are no additional features or integrations that populate on this tab for combined plans.