

Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Schools

Willow Creek Elementary School UIP 2022-23 | **School:** Willow Creek Elementary School | **District:** Cherry Creek 5 | **Org ID:** 0130 | **School ID:** 9624 |
Framework: Performance Plan: Low Participation |

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Executive Summary



Priority Performance Challenges

- *Performance on the CMAS ELA assessment has shown a significant decrease.*



Root Cause

- Less Fidelity in Standards-Driven Instruction
- Inadequate Analysis of School-Wide Data
- Uneven Implementation of Professional Learning Communities
- Inconsistent Application of Equity and Culture
- Lack of Vertical Articulation in Writing



Major Improvement Strategies

- Standards-Driven Instruction
- Professional Learning Communities
- Equity, Culture and Community Engagement
- Engagement Focus Strategies



Access the School Performance Framework here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance>

Improvement Plan Information

Additional Information about the School

Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification

Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis

Willow Creek opened as a neighborhood school in 1977 to meet the needs of a new community. Due to neighborhood population changes, combined with the desirability of the school's learning environment, approximately 28% of students currently attending Willow Creek are non-residents of our district. An additional 10% of the current student body is comprised of "School of Choice" students, an option provided by Colorado state law that allows parents to actively select school enrollment for their children within their home district.

Willow Creek Elementary continues to celebrate the recognition received in 1999, 2006, and 2018 as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Willow Creek has also been recognized with the John Irwin Award (excellence) and the Governor's Award (growth) every year since the awards' inception. The culture at Willow Creek is filled with positive energy and one in which children feel safe and thrive. We have very little turn over with staff and with students. As a PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) school, we have adopted ROAR expectations (Responsibility, Own our Actions, Attitude, and Relationships). We teach students these common expectations throughout the building whether they are in the classroom, hallways, playground, library, specials or cafeteria. Students are positively reinforced on a regular basis for meeting those expectations. Instructionally, we are committed to providing a rigorous curriculum across content areas while instilling a love of learning in our students. Instruction is differentiated to meet the variety of needs

of our learners. We encourage collaboration among our students because students gain a higher level of understanding when they can discuss their thinking and consider the perspective of others. Our committed staff holds high expectations of our students as well as ourselves. Our staff is continuing to develop and hone their skills in Professional Learning Communities. We are working to hold ourselves accountable as a staff to focus on learning, a collaborative culture, and measuring student growth. We are grounding ourselves in standards and measuring student learning to advance achievement. Excellent programming in art, music, physical education, and STEM complements the core instruction to promote a well-rounded education for each of our students. We partner with our community to offer many after-school clubs that provide a variety of opportunities. We also have a strong PTO and partnership with our community.

Willow Creek Elementary is located in Centennial, Colorado, in the Cherry Creek School District. We have an enrollment of 492 students with the following demographics:

Gender

Boys: 49% Girls: 51%

Race/Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaskan Native: < 1%

Asian: 11%

Black or African American: 1%

Hispanic: 10%

White: 64%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: <1%

Multiple Races: 12%

Other Categories

Free and Reduced Lunch: 5%

English Language Learners: 8%

Prior Year Targets

Provide a summary of your progress in implementing the Major Improvement Strategies and if they had the intended effect on systems, adult actions, and student outcomes (e.g. targets).

Our most recent UIP was for 2019-2020. Because of the interruptions caused by the COVID pandemic, some strategies were implemented only partially and some were impossible to do at all. However, we did what we could and saw some success, although there were no CMAS results in 2020 to measure what we achieved.

In Achievement, we think our work had some lasting success. On our 2021-2022 School Performance Framework, our minority students as a whole scored higher than the students as a whole on the CMAS assessments.

Comparison of Scale Scores for Minority Students and All Students

	ELA	Math
Minority Students	761.7	759.3
All Students	757.6	756.2

In Academic Growth, we are unable to judge the effects of our strategies, since we have not had growth scores for both subjects in 4th and 5th grade. Judging from what results we have, we suspect fifth grade has high growth, while fourth grade shows little or negative growth.

In Student Engagement, we have not been able to give the survey again to judge change, but from the general behavior we have seen since returning full-time to school, we believe we have regressed in this area.

Based on your reflection and evaluation, provide a summary of the adjustments that you will make for this year's plan.

So many things have changed since 2019-2019, it would not be useful to adjust the plan from 2019. Data from 2021-2022 will become our baseline to begin our new unified improvement plan.

Current Performance

- On the School Performance Framework, we received an accreditation rating of Performance Plan: Low Participation, earning a score of 86.2 points out of 100. Only two elementary schools in our district (out of 43 schools that are only grade K-5) earned a higher score.
 - In the Academic Achievement category, we received a rating of "Exceeds" in every category except "Students with Disabilities," where we rated "Approaching."

- In Academic Growth, we were lower than expected in ELA (42%ile), which rated "Approaching." But in Math, we were at the 72%ile, leading to an "Exceeds" rating. Of course, the 2022 CMAS was the first year that we had testing in both subject across all grades, so the opportunity to measure growth was severely limited. We are not relying upon growth data for building this plan.
- In English Language Proficiency, the Median Growth Percentile was 84%ile, and our "On Track to EL Proficiency" was 92%.

Looking at CMAS data from 21-22, our overall school performance generally exceeds both state and district results.

2022 CMAS Results for Grades 3–5

Percent of Students College or Career Ready

	ELA	Math
Grade 3 — State	40.7%	39.4%
Grade 3 — District	47.1%	49.1%
Grade 3 — Willow Creek	45.8%	51.8%
Grade 4 — State	44.1%	30.7%
Grade 4 — District	51.7%	36.2%
Grade 4 — Willow Creek	62.3%	54.3%
Grade 5 — State	45.4%	34.9%
Grade 5 — District	49.2%	41.4%
Grade 5 — Willow Creek	79.7%	66.7%

In addition to state assessments, we piloted a district-chosen assessment called FastBridge last year. It was administered in fall, winter, and spring and allowed us to screen students in the areas of reading and math. It both assisted us in finding students who needed extra help and let us track growth. After we received our 2022 CMAS scores, our district assessment experts compared FastBridge results from last year with CMAS results and discovered a correlation of 0.7. Since we lack state growth data from 2022 for most of our students, we feel comfortable using the FastBridge data to help us assess growth. According to the 2021-2022 Fall to Spring aReading FastBridge assessment, 61% of our students made typical or aggressive growth by the end of the year (34% typical, 27% aggressive).

From 2018-2021, we had less than 1% of our students with documented behavior incidents. Last year, in 21-22, that number rose to 2% of our students with documented behaviors.

Trend Analysis



Trend Direction: Decreasing

Performance Indicator Target: Academic Achievement (Status)

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of students of disabilities who were college or career ready on the CMAS ELA and Math assessments generally declined and showed significant differences with the performance of our students without disabilities.



Trend Direction: Decreasing

Performance Indicator Target: Academic Achievement (Status)

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of our students who were college or career ready on the ELA CMAS assessment dropped from 71.3% to 62.3%. Using our district's Tableau tool for exploring data, we dug into the longitudinal data and the Detailed Content Standards for the ELA assessment. The majority of the decline appears to have happened during the COVID pandemic, with the scores for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 being significantly lower than 2018-2019 (almost 8 percentage points). Since our district's universal reading assessment went from i-Ready to FastBridge this past year, we do not have local data to compare for the past year.



Trend Direction: Decreasing

Performance Indicator Target: Student Engagement

Since our return to in-person schooling and a normal schedule, we have noticed a significant increase in behavior incidents and referrals to the principal. This trend seems to have increased this fall. Classroom teachers report that inattention and indifference to school work has also gotten worse.

Additional Trend Information:

Our progress with students with disabilities varies widely. Some of that is undoubtedly due to the very small sample size, but much of the variation may also be due to the difficulties of providing services during the pandemic.

2022 CMAS Results for Grades 3–5

Percentage of Students College or Career Ready

Students with Disabilities vs. Students without Disabilities

	with disability	with disability	no disability	no disability
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2017-2018	37.9%	44.8%	75.2%	71.3%
2018-2019	36.4%	39.4%	75.8%	72.2%
2020-2021	21.4%	20.0%	68.3%	58.2%
2021-2022	25.0%	34.6%	66.7%	60.6%

Root Causes and Priority Performance Challenges



Priority Performance Challenge: Performance on the CMAS ELA assessment has shown a significant decrease.

The percentage of students who were rated college or career ready on the CMAS ELA has dropped from 71.3% in 2018 to 62.3% in 2022.



Root Cause: Less Fidelity in Standards-Driven Instruction

With implementation of Foundations, HMH, and Orton Gillingham, teacher focus has been on understanding curriculum and not unpacking how the new curricula support the standards.

Root Cause: Inadequate Analysis of School-Wide Data



Not all teachers are experienced users of data walls or know the fundamentals of data analysis. Lack of consistent school-wide data and protocols for data analysis are impeding identification of students who need intervention. In addition, FastBridge was a new assessment last year, and we lacked sufficient training around understanding the data it provides and how to use the attached resources.



Root Cause: Uneven Implementation of Professional Learning Communities

PLCs have not been implemented with fidelity across all grade levels. A lack of assessment and knowledge of where individuals and teams were with the process and protocols last year led to a lack of continuity and capacity building among teams.



Root Cause: Inconsistent Application of Equity and Culture

In the chaos of the past three years, our focus on equity and culture has wavered.



Root Cause: Lack of Vertical Articulation in Writing

In discussions about individual grade levels' performance on the CMAS ELA detailed content standards, we discovered variations in how each grade level evaluated writing.



Root Cause: Lack of Clarity Around IEPs

Students with disabilities — and their teachers and families — do not have as deep an understanding of what the IEPs require as they need to help students succeed.



Priority Performance Challenge: Student engagement has decreased, with behavior challenges increasing.

Teachers report that students are more inattentive in class and referrals to the principal are increasing. Students seem to struggle to "do school" successfully.



Root Cause: Inconsistent Application of Equity and Culture

In the chaos of the past three years, our focus on equity and culture has wavered.



Root Cause: Insufficient Focus of SEL Time

While we have scheduled SEL Time into the class day, we are no longer as focused on the POWER and ROAR expectations for student behavior as we were in previous years.

Magnitude of Performance Challenges and Rationale for Selection:



Performance Challenge #1

Data over the last five years indicates a trend of decreasing performance in reading and writing — key skills needed by our students to succeed in middle and high school. We believe it is important to arrest this slide now, instead of assuming that it is just a matter of catching up from the learning loss during the pandemic.

This challenge is also very timely in terms of curriculum work we are doing. Last year the district merged several new reading curriculums in K-2, and this year we are making the shift to new reading curriculum in grades 3-5. This change also includes a new writing curriculum. As we make this shift and merge many programs, we want to ensure that we are teaching the standards and that our students are able to read and comprehend at grade level. While many of our students at Willow Creek have high achievement, we want them also to show growth that is typical or aggressive according to FastBridge. In CMAS we "exceed" in reading in achievement data on our SPF, but in growth our score is only "meets." Meanwhile, our students with disabilities lag behind in ELA achievement.

Performance Challenge #2

Due to covid and subsequent social isolation for families and students, we need to reconnect as a community. Creating a strategized plan to do this will increase student engagement and academics.

Magnitude of Root Causes and Rationale for Selection:



Collaborative conversations were had with Willow Creek's stakeholders: Our MTSS coordinator/interventionist and instructional coach helped determine root causes of priority performance challenges, teachers were consulted for their ideas and feedback, special-education teachers reported what they saw with the students they serve, and deep analysis of data on ELA performance confirmed the magnitude of some of our instructional problems.

Some root causes have made themselves quite obvious to all. Due to many days of missed school, unfinished learning, and social isolation, students and families need to re-engage and connect with their school community. The students themselves clearly need to learn or re-learn how to "do school."

Action and Progress Monitoring Plans

Major Improvement Strategy and Action Plan



Standards-Driven Instruction

Describe what will success look like: Teachers will know grade-level standards well and how to best use the new curricular resources to address those standards.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy: There is extensive research around the importance of teachers having clarity around grade-level standards and how to apply them when planning for student learning.

Associated Root Causes:



Less Fidelity in Standards-Driven Instruction:

With implementation of Foundations, HMH, and Orton Gillingham, teacher focus has been on understanding curriculum and not unpacking how the new curricula support the standards.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

IB Name	Description	Start/End/Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Action Steps Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Family Connection Meetings	Teachers invite families to meet with them to get to know their families and students prior to conferences (first 30 days)	08/11/2022 09/22/2022	Sign up sheets	General Education Teachers, ELS, GT Teacher, Special education staff, specials teachers	
 SEL Common Time	Adding a common time for each grade level to teach the curriculum Second Step and respond to students' social needs.	08/15/2022 10/26/2022	Master calendar, second step, staff sharing of ideas, PBIS committee	All grade level teachers with support from Mental Health	
 Professional Learning/Standards	Provide teachers with protocol for determining relevant, essential standards	08/26/2022 05/26/2022	Protocols	Instructional Coach, teachers, principal, PLT facilitator	In Progress

	HMH Coach consults 3 times a year on Into Reading curriculum	08/26/2022 05/26/2022	HMH materials	HMH Coach	In Progress
HMH					
	Providing time and professional learning on how to best utilize new literacy curriculum. Meet as K-2 Team to align and discuss new curriculum	08/26/2022 05/26/2022		Staff. Instructional Coach	In Progress
New Curriculum					
	Grade levels will use data walls to help identify next steps to engage students in academics based on data	08/26/2022 05/26/2022	Data Wall, FastBridge Trainings	MTSS/Interventionist/Instructional Coach, Teachers	
Uniform Data Wall					
	Continual improvement of professional learning communities and building teacher efficacy to impact engagement and achievement	08/26/2022 05/26/2022	Articles, videos, protocols	General Education Teachers, Instructional Coach, Interventionist/MTSS	
PLC					
	Students will know their accommodations on their IEPs and goals	08/26/2022 05/26/2022		Special Education Teachers, MH, Special Service Providers	
Students with Disabilities					



Professional Learning Communities

Describe what will success look like: Our PLCs will implement best practices for collaborative work. PLT facilitators will work with their teams to create common formative assessments and analyze data to determine instructional next steps, with an emphasis on reading this year.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy: There is extensive research around student achievement when a professional learning community is in place. The PLC cycle will allow our teachers to collaboratively examine student work and analyze student data in order to adjust our instructional approaches to meet the needs of all students.

Associated Root Causes:



Inadequate Analysis of School-Wide Data:

Not all teachers are experienced users of data walls or know the fundamentals of data analysis. Lack of consistent school-wide data and protocols for data analysis are impeding identification of students who need intervention. In addition, FastBridge was a new assessment last year, and we lacked sufficient training around understanding the data it provides and how to use the attached resources.



Uneven Implementation of Professional Learning Communities:

PLCs have not been implemented with fidelity across all grade levels. A lack of assessment and knowledge of where individuals and teams were with the process and protocols last year led to a lack of continuity and capacity building among teams.



Inconsistent Application of Equity and Culture:

In the chaos of the past three years, our focus on equity and culture has wavered.



Lack of Vertical Articulation in Writing:

In discussions about individual grade levels' performance on the CMAS ELA detailed content standards, we discovered variations in how each grade level evaluated writing.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

IB Name	Description	Start/End/Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Action Steps Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Data Analysis	Examine data using a data analysis protocol and make instructional adjustments as needed.	08/25/2022 05/26/2022	CRE Data Analysis Protocol	Instructional Caoch, PLC teams, PLT facilitator	In Progress

Instructional



PLC Efficacy

Build teacher knowledge and efficacy of PLC model through a variety of approaches (article reading, observing effective models, etc).

08/25/2022
05/26/2022

Artcicles, videos, discussions, etc

Caoch, PLC teams, PLT facilitator

In Progress



Equity, Culture and Community Engagement

Describe what will success look like: Staff will have an increased awareness of our own racial consciousness while examining systems and structures in our building that may lead to inequities.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy: As a district we understand the importance of all students having a voice and feeling seen, heard, and valued. There is a multitude of reserach around the importance of student belonging.

Associated Root Causes:



Inconsistent Application of Equity and Culture:

In the chaos of the past three years, our focus on equity and culture has wavered.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

IB Name	Description	Start/End/Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Action Steps Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
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Equity Team

Equity Team picks areas of emphasis for the year.

08/26/2022
05/26/2022

Team



Family Connection

All Staff met with families at the beginning of the school year with the primary goal being "connection" and building relationships.

08/26/2022
05/26/2022



Engagement Focus Strategies

Describe what will success look like: Teachers will connect with families within the first 30 days of school to get to know their students and families to help students re-engage and form relationships with families. Teachers will use Second Step and other tools to connect with students and build relationships during their scheduled Social Emotional Teaching time. Teachers will use data walls during Professional Learning Communities to make instructional teaching decisions based on data.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy: Connection is one component of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The US Department of Health has put out studies showing increased anxiety in students as well as a mental health crisis among youth. Zaretta Hammond has a plethora of research around engaging all families.

Associated Root Causes:



Insufficient Focus of SEL Time:

While we have scheduled SEL Time into the class day, we are no longer as focused on the POWER and ROAR expectations for student behavior as we were in previous years.



Lack of Clarity Around IEPs:

Students with disabilities — and their teachers and families — do not have as deep an understanding of what the IEPs require as they need to help students succeed.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Action Steps Associated with Major Improvement Strategy

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
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Progress Monitoring: Student Target Setting



Priority Performance Challenge : Performance on the CMAS ELA assessment has shown a significant decrease.



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Academic Achievement (Status)

MEASURES / METRICS: ELA

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

2022-2023: We will increase the number of students who are college and career ready on CMAS ELA from 62.3% in 2022 to 65.3% in 2023.

2023-2024:

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2022-2023:



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Academic Achievement (Status)

MEASURES / METRICS: ELA

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

2022-2023: The number of students with disabilities who score on the CMAS ELA assessment in the college and career ready category will increase from 25% to 33% in 2022-2023.

2023-2024:

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2022-2023:



Priority Performance Challenge : Student engagement has decreased, with behavior challenges increasing.



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Student Engagement

MEASURES / METRICS:

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

2022-2023: Our behavior incidents will decrease by 12.5% over the 22-23 school year.

2023-2024:

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2022-2023:
