

## **2026-27 CDE Writing Sample & Exercise**

**Directions:** Below is an excerpt from the Gonzalez Elementary School’s Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) that would be considered by the State Review Panel during the Document Review Feedback. To complete the writing sample, please review the information presented below and **respond to the two questions** at the end of the excerpt. Please also be sure to **include your name on your writing sample**.

### **Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis**

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**Provide a brief description of the school to set the context for readers. Include the general process for developing the UIP and participants (e.g., School Accountability Committee involvement). The description may include demographics and local context, such as location, performance status, notable recent events or changes, stakeholders involved in writing the UIP, and an overview of the general process. Please also provide a description of the trend analysis that includes at least three years of data (state and local data).**

Gonzalez Elementary is a school in the small town of Gonzalez located in rural District 70. Gonzalez Elementary has a high poverty rate with a free and reduced rate of 76 percent. Approximately one-fifth of the student population is English Language Learners (ELLs). Gonzalez Elementary operates as a school-wide Title I school. There is a high mobility rate with our families. Class sizes average 20 with 185 students in kindergarten through fifth grade and twenty-four preschool students. Our staff includes 9 classroom teachers, 3 ELL teachers with three and a half instructional aides, two interventionists, one music teacher, and one physical education teacher. Our students travel to Gonzalez Elementary from surrounding areas. For economic reasons, many families are in transitional living situations and often live in homes or mobile units with extended family members. While the principal and the Title I interventionists wrote the UIP, staff members contributed to the data analysis process, priority performance challenges, major improvement strategies, and determining root causes. The school's accountability committee consisting of students, staff, parents, and community representatives reviewed and discussed the contents of the plan.

According to the most recent School Performance Framework, Gonzalez Elementary is Approaching the academic performance indicator as well as the academic growth gaps indicator.

According to Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), the percentage of students who move from 'at risk' to 'benchmark' is greater in kindergarten. There is also a pattern commonly seen at our school with the percentage of first grade students who are at 'benchmark' decreasing at mid-year. We attribute this to students taking the Oral Reading Fluency component for the first time. While the percentage climbs at the end of the year, the increase is not at the same rate of growth as it was for this cohort of students at the end of their kindergarten year.

DIBELS data shows a six percent decrease in 'Intensive' students from the beginning of the school year to the end in grades K-5. However, K-3 students only showed a 2% decrease among the 'Intensive' students.

On the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments, our academic achievement and academic growth are at the Approaching rating. English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science were also Approaching. The English Language Proficiency in academic growth is Does Not Meet. According to the school growth report, all students in English Language Arts showed adequate growth except the female subgroup which scored in the 43rd percentile. The males, however, scored above the district and state percentiles. In Math, the only subgroups making adequate growth were fifth grade students, which are above the district and state percentiles. The other subgroups scored lower than district and state.

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) indicates that we met the projected growth in all academic areas except for fourth grade who did not meet projected growth in any area.

## **Priority Performance Challenges, Strategies, and Goals**

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**Provide a rationale for why these challenges have been selected and address the magnitude of the overall performance challenges:**

- In reviewing the NWEA mean Rasch Unit (RIT) scale scores according to the grade level report, the area of concern for math is in number sense. This is consistent with reports by classroom teachers with the students' difficulties in number sense. NWEA also shows that all grades are growing throughout the year in all subjects except fourth grade, which is not showing growth in any subject.
- In reviewing DIBELS data, there is little movement from intensive into strategic and from strategic into grade level.
- In reviewing CMAS and NWEA data, an area of concern is vocabulary.

### **Priority Performance Challenge: Math-Need to increase number sense schoolwide**

- Performance Indicator: Academic Achievement (Status)
- Annual Performance Target: Students in grades 3 through 5 will meet or exceed the stage average on the state testing of CMAS
- Interim Measures: NWEA 3 times per year
- Performance Indicator: Academic Growth
- Annual Performance Target: Growth as measured by CMAS will be above the 50th growth percentile.
- Interim Measures: NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAPS) testing three times per year

## **Priority Performance Challenge: Math-Need to increase number sense schoolwide**

- **Major Improvement Strategy Name:** Math-Integrate math talks and journals into the classrooms
  - **Major Improvement Strategy Description:** Classroom teachers will use strategies learned at professional development to help students better understand number sense through the use of techniques such as math talks and journals.
- **Major Improvement Strategy Name:** Math-Professional Development
  - **Major Improvement Strategy Description:** Professional development focusing on number sense using trained math staff within the building.

## **Priority Performance Challenge: Reading-Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ)**

### **Act-Need to have more students K-3 at benchmark**

- Performance Indicator: Academic Achievement (Status)
- Annual Performance Targets: Students in grades 3 through 5 will meet or exceed the State average on CMAS ELA
- Interim Measures: NWEA Maps testing three times per year District Literacy testing / three times per year using DIBELS
- Performance Indicator: Academic Growth
- Annual Performance Targets: Growth as measured by CMAS (ELA) will be above the 50th growth percentile.
- Interim Measures: NWEA Maps three times per year and DIBELS three times per year

### **Priority Performance Challenge: Reading-READ Act-Need to have more students K-3 at benchmark**

- **Major Improvement Strategy Name:** READ-Build background knowledge
  - **Major Improvement Strategy Description:** Use techniques from sources such as Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and technology more consistently to build background knowledge in our students.
- **Major Improvement Strategy Name:** Ongoing professional development in reading techniques
  - **Major Improvement Strategy Description:** Share teachers' knowledge in direct explicit systematic teaching techniques at building level more consistently.
- **Major Improvement Strategy Name:** READ Act purchase and integrate decodable instructional materials
  - **Major Improvement Strategy Description:** Purchase and integrate decodable instructional materials into direct systematic explicit reading lessons.

Standard	Leadership analyzes data to identify and address high-priority challenges, and to adjust implementation of the action plan.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership first concentrates on a limited number of priorities to achieve early, visible wins.</li><li>• There are regular progress monitoring performance and implementation of data and, as appropriate, results lead to elimination of tactics that do not work.</li><li>• Benchmarks are used to assess progress toward goals; goals are adjusted as progress is made.</li><li>• Data on progress toward goals drives organizational and instructional decision making.</li></ul>

**Directions:** After reviewing the excerpt from Gonzalez Elementary School’s UIP, please respond to the two questions below to complete your writing sample. Please respond to each question in 300 words or less. Please also include your name.

**Save the document as “YOUR NAME.CDE.SRP.Writing Sample” and upload it with your resume when you complete the application.**

**Name:**

1. Please use the evidence from the UIP excerpt and the standard and sub-indicators listed above to analyze the school’s performance, as it pertains to SRP Standard 1.3 within one or two paragraphs.

[insert response here]

2. Please also list 2-3 questions that you have for the school after reviewing this section of the UIP.

[insert questions here]