When it comes to school and district-level student academic performance, it is not easy to see how well Colorado kids are doing. This important data helps us understand how our public schools are working. The collection and sharing of this information is required by Colorado state law and the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Taxpayers deserve this information. Civil rights groups need this information to ask important questions about fairness and equity in our schools. Families need this information to make decisions and advocate for their students.

Colorado was previously a model for providing data to families about how schools and districts supported student performance, but in recent years we have fallen to the bottom of the pack. Colorado has invested millions of dollars to create tools for the public to explore aggregate data that the state collects about the public education system. In the past, families and communities were able to access this critical information. The state has now greatly limited the data on school and district-level student academic performance that it releases publicly. That means these data are often impossible to see, and when available, are not easily understandable for families, educators, or students.

Specifically, much of the data about the percentage of students who meet grade-level expectations in key academic subjects as measured by Colorado’s state tests are suppressed. Even more of the data are suppressed in looking at the academic performance by different groups of students like English language learners, students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, students on Individualized Education Programs, or students from different racial or ethnic backgrounds.

We are equally concerned that current practices will also impact the public’s ability to see and learn from other collected data such as school and district-level demographics, attendance, discipline and postsecondary readiness data.

This report card is prepared by the Colorado Right to Know Coalition. As a coalition we believe the state must:

• Protect individual student privacy to ensure important personal information and data are safe.
• Shine a light on student success and equitable outcomes in academic performance.
• Ensure publicly accessible and usable information.
• Leverage data to promote a statewide culture of learning about what works for students.

We have created this report to be used by stakeholders across Colorado so that we can collectively bring awareness to an important issue in education: transparency of school and district-level student academic performance data. We believe the state, including the Colorado General Assembly, the Governor, and the Colorado Department of Education can address the issues raised in this report card.

We have a transparency problem in Colorado. Families and communities have a Right to Know.

Learn More at www.RightToKnowCo.org  fb.me/righttoknowco  @Right2KnowCo
The Right to Know Coalition is a group of organizations, families, public-school advocates, researchers, and educators who have come together under the belief that knowledge is power and improvement is needed in our schools. We can accomplish this with an honest, data-driven, and objective view of our education system. Together we can figure out what works, what doesn’t, and how we can best help teachers and students thrive.
Report Card for Education Transparency & Access
How Does Colorado Perform?

How to read this report card: This report card identifies a set of principles that gauge openness and transparency in public education. It then rates whether the state Does Not Meet, Approaches, or Meets Expectations with regard to each of these principles. The state is defined in this report card as the General Assembly, the Governor, and the Department of Education. For more information on the rating and rationale, see the Right to Know Report Card Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting Individual Student Privacy</td>
<td>Does the state safeguard personal data and have robust systems that prevent the public from accessing and identifying individual student records?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Student Outcomes</td>
<td>Does the state share school and district-level demographic data? Does the state share overall school and district-level student academic performance data?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on Every Student</td>
<td>Does the state share academic performance data about different groups of students, such as family income, race/ethnicity, different learning needs, and if they are English language learners?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility for Educators</td>
<td>Does the state share academic performance data about different groups of students with teachers and school leaders that helps them understand outcomes and make data-driven adjustments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility for Students, Families, and Communities</td>
<td>Does the state make it easy for students, families, and communities to access and understand information about schools and districts, including academic performance for different groups of students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furthering Learning and Understanding</td>
<td>Does the state promote a culture of continuous improvement by supporting independent researchers and other related agencies to conduct valid research into what is working to improve student outcomes?</td>
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# Right to Know Report Card Rubric

The Right to Know Coalition has relied on the expertise of its members to create this report card rubric and ratings.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protecting Individual Student Privacy</strong></td>
<td>• Data collected is either less than or beyond the scope of statutory requirements.</td>
<td>• Data collected is either slightly less than or slightly beyond the scope of statutory requirements.</td>
<td>• Data collected meets statutory requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The state is out of compliance with federal and state laws that protect the privacy of individual students.</td>
<td>• The state is in compliance with most federal and state laws to protect the privacy of individual students.</td>
<td>• The state is in compliance with federal and state laws to protect the privacy of individual students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is a consistent record of state privacy breaches.</td>
<td>• There is a record of few state privacy breaches.</td>
<td>• There is no record of state privacy breaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The state has piecemeal or ad-hoc security measures in place to safeguard information.</td>
<td>• The state has a data security system to safeguard information in the state data system, but it is out of date.</td>
<td>• The state has a robust data security system to safeguard information in the state data system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right To Know Rating:</td>
<td>Approaches Expectations</td>
<td>Meets Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationale:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The state has created an infrastructure to collect, manage, and protect data collected according to statutory requirements, and has recently doubled down on investments in its data security system. The state complies with and responds to guidance from federal and state experts on privacy. There is no known record of privacy breaches of personally identifiable information through protected student records or aggregate reporting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Sharing Student Outcomes** | • There is substantial school and district-level demographic information missing on multiple groups of students. | • There is some school and district-level demographic information missing on multiple groups of students. | • There is full school and district-level demographic information provided on multiple groups of students. |
| | • There are substantial overall school and district-level student academic performance data that are missing. | • There are some overall school and district-level student academic performance data that are missing. | • Most overall school and district-level student academic performance data are available. |
| | | | |
| Right To Know Rating: Approaches Expectations | | | The state has created an infrastructure to collect, manage, and protect data collected according to statutory requirements, and has recently doubled down on investments in its data security system. The state complies with and responds to guidance from federal and state experts on privacy. There is no known record of privacy breaches of personally identifiable information through protected student records or aggregate reporting. |
| **Rationale:** | | | In 2018, nearly 40% of all schools had no reported data about how many English language learners were receiving services in the school. | Does the state share school and district-level demographic data? |
| | | | | Does the state share overall school and district-level student academic performance data? |

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### Right to Know Report Card Rubric

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<tr>
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<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
<th>Approaches Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on Every Student</td>
<td>The public is not able to access information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.</td>
<td>The public is able to access some information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.</td>
<td>The public is able to access most information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The state does not provide disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.</td>
<td>The state provides some disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.</td>
<td>The state provides disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-tabulation is nearly impossible except for the most evenly distributed large schools and districts.</td>
<td>Some cross-tabulation is possible in most schools and districts.</td>
<td>Cross-tabulation is possible except in instances of remarkably small populations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right To Know Rating: Does Not Meet Expectations</td>
<td>Rationale: When looking at whether students met or exceeded expectations in 2018, 25% of the school-level data by eligibility for free or reduced price lunch was suppressed. 65% of grade-level data in schools and districts by student eligibility for free or reduced price lunch was suppressed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility for Educators</td>
<td>Educators have very limited access or unusable data about their own school/classroom.</td>
<td>Educators have some access to usable data about their own school/classroom, depending on whether and how districts provide the data.</td>
<td>Educators have easy access to data about their own school/classroom, and is not dependent on districts making that data useable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires very high levels of data literacy which makes data-driven learning nearly impossible.</td>
<td>Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires moderate levels of data literacy, making some data-driven learning possible.</td>
<td>Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires moderate levels of data literacy, making it easy to have a culture of data-driven learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is nearly impossible for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools.</td>
<td>There are limitations for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools.</td>
<td>It is easy for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools, which facilitates learning from peers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right To Know Rating: Approaches Expectations</td>
<td>Rationale: The state primarily provides data to districts, meaning that whether reports are shared with schools and teachers is dependent on individual district practices and capacity. The state’s new Data Explorer tool is a step in improving educators’ ability to draw comparisons to other schools and classrooms, but the tool and ability to access it, still requires a high level of data literacy.</td>
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**Right to Know Report Card Rubric**

**SUBJECT**

**Does Not Meet Expectations**

- The public is not able to access information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.
- The state does not provide disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.
- Cross-tabulation is nearly impossible except for the most evenly distributed large schools and districts.

**Approaches Expectations**

- The public is able to access some information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.
- The state provides some disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.
- Some cross-tabulation is possible in most schools and districts.

**Meets Expectations**

- The public is able to access most information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.
- The state provides disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.
- Cross-tabulation is possible except in instances of remarkably small populations.

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**Right To Know Rating: Does Not Meet Expectations**

Rationale: When looking at whether students met or exceeded expectations in 2018, 25% of the school-level data by eligibility for free or reduced price lunch was suppressed. 65% of grade-level data in schools and districts by student eligibility for free or reduced price lunch was suppressed.

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**Right To Know Rating: Approaches Expectations**

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- The public is able to access some information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.
- The state provides some disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.
- Some cross-tabulation is possible in most schools and districts.

**Meets Expectations**

- The public is able to access most information about the performance levels of a majority of students of color, or other populations of interest in equity analyses.
- The state provides disaggregated school and district-level data on most students.
- Cross-tabulation is possible except in instances of remarkably small populations.

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**Accessibility for Educators**

**Does Not Meet Expectations**

- Educators have very limited access or unusable data about their own school/classroom.
- Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires very high levels of data literacy which makes data-driven learning nearly impossible.
- It is nearly impossible for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools.

**Approaches Expectations**

- Educators have some access to usable data about their own school/classroom, depending on whether and how districts provide the data.
- Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires moderate levels of data literacy, making some data-driven learning possible.
- There are limitations for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools.

**Meets Expectations**

- Educators have easy access to data about their own school/classroom, and is not dependent on districts making that data useable.
- Data from the state is provided to educators in a way that requires moderate levels of data literacy making it easy to have a culture of data-driven learning.
- It is easy for educators to be able to compare data on student performance for their schools compared to similar schools, which facilitates learning from peers.

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| Does the state make it easy for students, families, and communities to access and understand information about schools and districts, including academic performance for different groups of students? | - The state has limited and difficult to understand tools for communicating school and district-level performance, including standards-based achievement for different groups of students.  
  - No materials are translated into other major languages of families in the state, and systems are not user-friendly.  
  - Data for different groups of students are difficult to find and presented as raw data tables or other cumbersome formats.  
  **Right to Know Rating:** Does Not Meet Expectations  
  **Rationale:** While the state does have SchoolView and School Dashboards, and newly created Performance Snapshots and Data Explorer, the resources require high levels of data literacy, are not translated, nor are in both web and paper-based forms. |
|                                                                        |                                                                                                         |
| **Furthering Learning and Understanding**                               |                                                                                                         |
| Does the state promote a culture of continuous improvement by supporting independent researchers and other related agencies to conduct valid research into what is working to improve student outcomes? | - Research requests are not approved in a timely manner. The research request process is confusing, and criteria for approval are not transparent.  
  - Research approval is politicized and decisions are made by a body that may not have expertise and knowledge about research topics and/or methods.  
  **Right To Know Rating:** Does Not Meet Expectations  
  **Rationale:** Before CDE implemented its current research request process (pre-September 2016), it received more research applications (17 in 2014, 15 in 2015) than it did in 2016, 2017, and the first half of 2018 (4, 9, and 3 requests respectively). The average decision time for requests in 2014-2016 was around 90 days. After the new process was implemented, average decision time increased to closer to 250 days, and nearly half of the 16 requests made since Sept. 2016 remained “in progress,” as of July 2018 when CDE provided this information. |
|                                                                        |                                                                                                         |
|                                                                        |                                                                                                         |