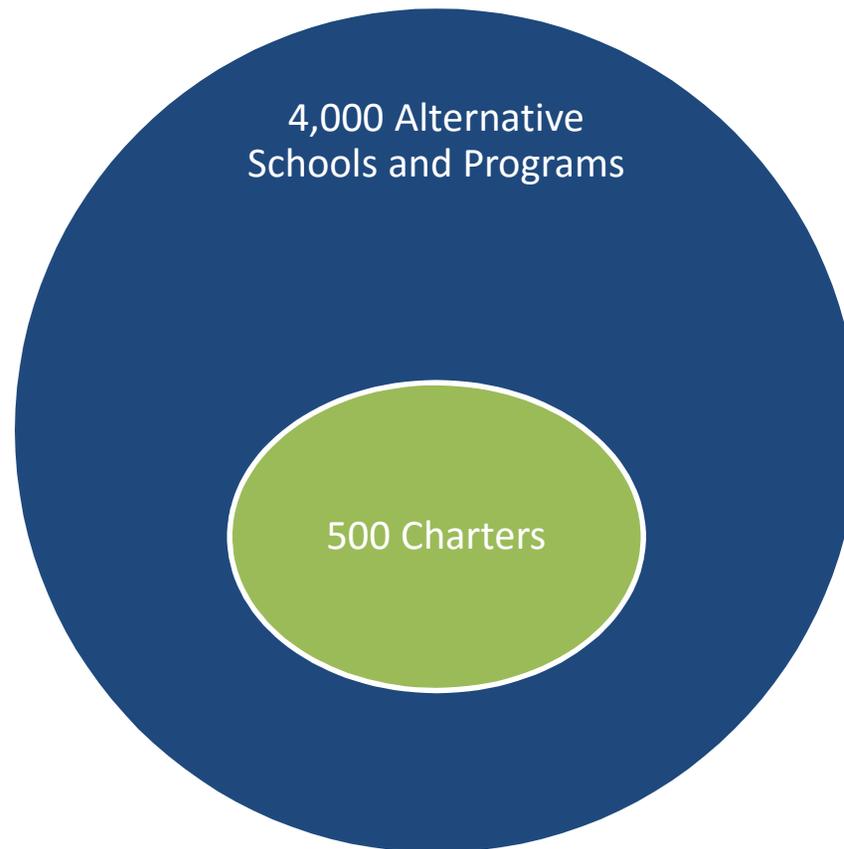
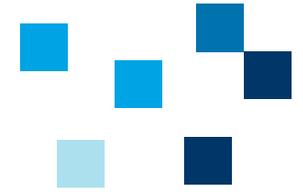


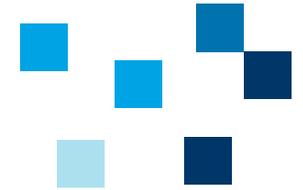
# Alternative School Accountability Challenge



A Guide to Better Policy and Effective  
Accountability Frameworks

# Alternative Schools





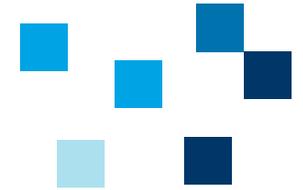
# Definitions

## Alternative schools –

**schools of choice (or destination)  
with high concentrations e.g. 75%  
highest risk students**

## Alternative accountability –

**system operated in parallel to  
mainstream accountability for a  
small subset of unique schools  
whose performance is predictably  
atypical**



# Background: Students

Proficiency very low -

Growth rates demonstrably slower – perhaps 20%

Credits hard to make up – over age / under credit students often defined as being 2 years or more behind in credit accumulation

| National Average HS 4 year grad rate | Alternative school 4 year grad rate |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 80%                                  | 44%                                 |
|                                      |                                     |

<http://charterschoolquality.org/publications-tools/for-charter-schools/>

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/B5EC6D1C-F88A-4610-8F0F-A14D63420115/0/FindingsofOMPG.pdf>

## Colorado Alternative Student Growth, Compared to Traditional High School Students: Math

2007 Median SGP, Math, by School Type and Grade



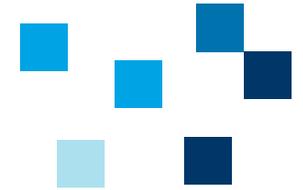
■ High-Risk AEC  
■ Traditional School

2008 Median SGP, Math, by School Type and Grade



■ High-Risk AEC  
■ Traditional School

# State Accountability

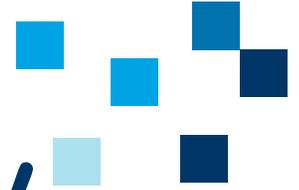


State accountability targets for proficiency, growth rates, and participation will predictably fall short

State options:

- sanction or even close schools
- find a way to duck the consequences
- develop alternative accountability structures

# Alternative Accountability

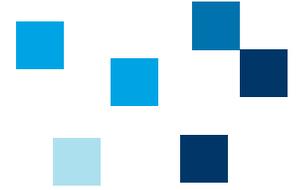


Maintain a focus on outcomes using achievable targets – modifications in two main areas:

-extended time frame for completion

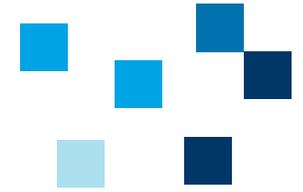
-expanded range of measures

# Alternative Accountability State Development



-school based system with clear  
performance consequences

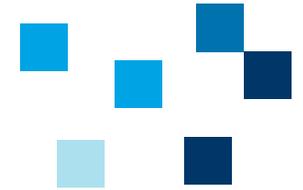
-significant charter states



# Model Elements

- Tight AEC Definition
- Accessible Designation Process
- Applicable to All Including Charters
- Alternative Measures
- Flexibility in Selection of Measures
- Emphasis on Growth
- Targets set w Data
- Periodic Review

# 1. Tight Definition: Clear and tight definition of which schools qualify as alternative, limited to those most exceptional



| <b>Eligible Students</b>   | <b># of States</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| Poor Academics (e.g., retained, poor test results, academic failure, behind grade level) | 20                 |
| Chronic suspensions and/or expulsions  | 19                 |
| Prior dropouts, out of school for extended period  | 17                 |
| Pregnant/ Parenting Teens  | 15                 |
| Poor, inconsistent attendance/ Chronic Truancy   | 13                 |
| Problem/Disruptive Behaviors   | 13                 |
| Credit deficient/ over-aged and under-credited   | 10                 |
| Alcohol or substance issues  | 9                  |
| Adjudicated youth/court involvement  | 8                  |
| Experienced major trauma, abuse, neglect   | 8                  |
| Homeless   | 7                  |
| English language learners  | 7                  |
| In the foster system/ wards of the court   | 6                  |
| <b>Free &amp; reduced meal eligibility</b>   | <b>6</b>           |

**1. Tight Definition: Clear and tight definition of which schools qualify as alternative, limited to those most exceptional**

**States with generally beneficial alternative accountability systems include restrictive access thresholds**

**Colorado 95%\***

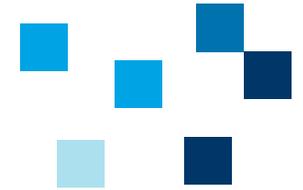
**South Carolina: 85%**

**Texas: 75%**

**Arizona and California: 70%**

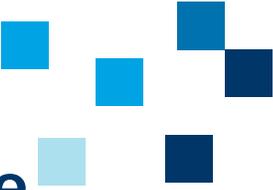
**Ohio and Florida: 51%**

***New Mexico: 20%***



**2. A clear process for how schools access alternative accountability, including roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders**

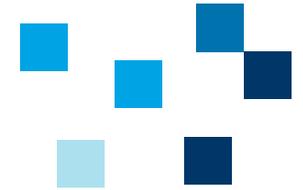
**3. Policy extends to all school types - charter, district-run, and state schools**



## 4. Alternative accountability system includes the use of alternative outcome measures

34 states have statutes and/or regulations that specifically define alternative options

- Schools only (12 states)
- Programs only (11 states)
- Both schools and programs (11 states)



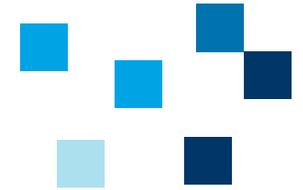
**5. Allow for schools to select measures that match the mission of the school**

**6. Focus on individual growth of students**

**7. Performance targets set using actual data**

**8. Subject to periodic review**

# Sample State Ratings



| 1  | Statute is being proposed, has recently passed, or partially meet criteria |                     |                                |                                   |                                      |                                   |                       |                 |             |
|--|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 2  | Statute is in place and systems, rules are being developed                 |                     |                                |                                   |                                      |                                   |                       |                 |             |
| 3  | Statute, and systems or rules are in place                                 |                     |                                |                                   |                                      |                                   |                       |                 |             |
| Sample State Ratings on Essential Elements of Effective Alternative Accountability Systems |  |                     |                                |                                   |                                      |                                   |                       |                 |             |
| State  | Identifying Schools  |                     |                                | Alternative Accountability System |                                      |                                   |                       |                 | TOTAL SCORE |
|  | Definition of Alternative Schools  | Designation Process | Applicable to all School Types | Alternative Measures              | Flexibility in Selection of Measures | Focus on Student Growth Over Time | Targets Based on Data | Periodic Review |             |
| AZ   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 0                                    | 3                                 | 3                     | 3               | 21          |
| CA   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 3                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 15          |
| CO   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 3                                    | 3                                 | 3                     | 3               | 24          |
| CT   | 1  | 1                   | 0                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 2           |
| FL   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 12          |
| ID   | 2  | 1                   | 3                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 6           |
| IO   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 9           |
| MN   | 3  | 3                   | 0                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 6           |
| NC   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 3                                    | 2                                 | 0                     | 0               | 17          |
| OH   | 3  | 0                   | 0                              | 3                                 | 0                                    | 2                                 | 3                     | 3               | 14          |
| SC   | 2  | 2                   | 0                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 4           |
| TN   | 3  | 0                   | 0                              | 0                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 3           |
| TX   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 0                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 12          |
| WI   | 3  | 3                   | 3                              | 3                                 | 3                                    | 0                                 | 0                     | 0               | 15          |