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*Colorado is implementing significant education reforms aimed at ensuring all students graduate college- and career-ready. While much research and discussion has gone into the policy development, we're now putting those policies into action. Here's a brief snapshot of our strategic priorities including implementation milestones, supports now available, and a look of what to expect ahead.*

## Educator Effectiveness

### Overview:

To support districts in implementing S.B. 10-191, CDE has trained 27 districts on the Colorado State Model Evaluation System and they are now piloting the system. Their experience and feedback is informing improvements to the model system prior to the system being available as an option for all districts to use beginning in the 2013-14 school year.

### What's Happening Now:

There's a lot of interest around the nation in what Colorado is doing with its Educator Evaluation system. For example, a *New York Times* reporter recently attended a day-long training session on the State Model Evaluation System. To read the article, log onto <http://nyti.ms/X3k17b>. The article provides authentic insight on the new evaluation requirements and the model system.

### **S.B. 10-191 Sample Work Plan**

A new resource is available on the CDE Educator Effectiveness website to support district leaders preparing for the evaluation requirements called for by S.B. 10-191. This sample work plan provides a sample timeline (now through 2014), items to consider, and questions to ask yourself to ensure your district is ready to implement either the Colorado State Model Evaluation System or your own system that complies with State Board of Education rules. To download the tool visit the S.B. 10-191 section of the CDE Educator Effectiveness website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/SB-Implement.asp>

### **Trainings on the Colorado Model Evaluation System**

CDE has worked with BOCES and school districts to create a master schedule of trainings on the Colorado State Model Evaluation System for all regions of the state. This training is a train-the-trainer model so district staff can go back to their district with a toolkit provided by CDE, and train the rest of their staff on the Colorado Model Evaluation System. If your district will be using the model system, you can view the train-the-trainer schedule at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/SMES-trainings.asp>. Please note that train-

the-trainer sessions are being coordinated between CDE and districts/BOCES. If you are interested in attending, work directly with your district or BOCES leadership as they will identify the appropriate staff to attend the trainings.

### **Evaluator Certifications**

Any person conducting an evaluation of licensed school personnel must hold an administrator's license or go through a state approved training program. Because the way educators are evaluated is changing with the passage of S.B. 10-191, the need for training on new evaluation expectations and systems is increasing. To support districts in the implementation of S.B. 10-191, the Colorado Department of Education created a model evaluation system as an option for districts. Districts choosing to use the Colorado State Model Evaluation System will need additional training on the technical requirements of the new system (i.e. the training mentioned above). To view a new fact sheet outlining the available evaluator training programs and the training requirements for districts using the new Colorado State Model Evaluation System, visit the Resources section of the CDE Educator Effectiveness website:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/FactSheets.asp>

### **What's on the Horizon**

#### **Guidance on 50 Percent Student Growth Portion of Evaluation**

The law requires 50 percent of each teacher's evaluation be determined by the academic growth of the teacher's students based on multiple measures. CDE is developing a draft guidance document on how to aggregate multiple assessments into one final 50 percent student growth score. This score would be combined with the 50 percent professional practice (rubric) score and result in an overall rating using the new evaluation system. CDE is also drafting guidance on how to select and combine student growth measures for a final student learning over time rating and models on how to combine ratings for all Quality Standards into a final rating. This draft guidance is slated to be available in December 2012.

#### **Assessment Resource Bank**

Through the use of the Colorado Content Collaboratives, CDE is working with educators who are leaders in their content areas, and assessment experts from around the state and nation to build an assessment Resource Bank with fair, valid and reliable measures of student learning based on the Colorado Academic Standards for *all content areas and all grades*. This Resource Bank will be piloted by the 27 pilot districts this year and will serve as an optional resource for all districts as they implement the requirements of S.B. 10-191 in the 2013-14 school year. The Resource Bank will be expanded over time with high-quality assessments for all content areas and grade levels. CDE is assisting districts to assess the fairness and validity of their own student growth measures. Districts are encouraged to begin thinking about which measures of student growth they have available, and how they will combine multiple measures to assess performance on the Student Growth Quality Standard. The Resource Bank, and the models and guidelines, is on target to be available in December 2012.

### **Important Upcoming Deadlines**

All school districts will be required to provide CDE Assurances that will specify whether they are implementing the Colorado State Model Evaluation System or another evaluation

system that meets or exceeds the State Quality Standards. The CDE Assurances and Checklist will be available in December 2012 and must be submitted to CDE by July 2013. More information will be available on this in the December CDE Update.

For more information about educator effectiveness, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/> or contact Katy Anthes, executive director of educator effectiveness, 303-866-6654.

View the fact sheets at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/FactSheets.asp>  
Use the Communications Toolkit (including pre-written drop-in articles for use with communicating with your staff and parents) :  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/CommunicationToolkits.asp>

## Standards

### Overview

CDE is supporting districts and schools as they transition to the new standards. CDE recommends districts use the 2012-13 school year to phase in standards-based curriculum in preparation for full implementation of the standards in 2013-14.

### What's Happening Now

Colorado Preschool Program staff have developed support documents to link the new Colorado Academic Standards for preschool with the early childhood best practices that are already present in high quality early childhood care and education settings. These supplementary documents are designed to assist preschool educators with effective implementation of the preschool standards by sharing examples of activities for children and illustrating connections to the Colorado's Discipline Concept Maps. The documents can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/qualitystandards.htm#Support>.

### What's on the Horizon

- Recommendations for school readiness assessments are expected to be presented to the state board in November.
- The notice of the rulemaking process for the remainder of the READ Act is scheduled for the November state board meeting with hearings in both January and February in advance of adoption in March 2013.

For more information about standards, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/index.asp> or contact Melissa Colman, executive director of teaching and learning, 303-866-6737. View the standards fact sheet at <http://bit.ly/TAMm5I>.

## Assessments

### Overview

#### **Reading, Writing and Mathematics Summative Assessments**

Colorado is a governing member of the multi-state assessment consortium, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is developing computer-

based English language arts assessments in grades 3 through 11. The consortium is also developing mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 with two separate high school tracks (1. algebra I, geometry, algebra II and 2. integrated I, integrated II, integrated III). As a governing state, staff from the CDE, the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), and Colorado educators will be actively working with individuals from the U.S. to develop common assessments. These assessments are expected to be administered for the first time in the Spring of 2015. Until the PARCC assessments are ready for implementation, Colorado will continue to administer the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) to measure student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

### **Science and Social Studies Summative Assessments**

New science and social studies assessments will be computer-based and designed to measure the Colorado Academic Standards, adopted in 2009. These assessments will be administered for the first time in the Spring of 2014. To allow maximum flexibility at the local level in determining scope and sequence in teaching the high school social studies and science standards, the science assessments will be administered in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school, and the social studies assessments will be administered in grades 4 and 7 and once in high school.

### **Alternate Assessments**

New science and social studies alternate assessments will be administered operationally in the spring of 2014 and will be designed to measure the Extended Evidence Outcomes of the Colorado Academic Standards. In accord with the summative assessment design, the alternate science assessments will be administered in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school, and the social studies alternate assessments will be administered in grades 4 and 7 and once in high school.

### **English Language Proficiency Assessments**

Colorado will administer the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment exams, W-APT and ACCESS for ELLs® to measure student acquisition of the Colorado English Language Proficiency standards. These assessments will be implemented in the 2012-2013 school year.

### ***What's Happening Now***

**Science and Social Studies Summative Assessments.** CDE is asking for feedback from superintendents, district curriculum directors and science and social studies content experts on the most appropriate high school grade level to administer the new science and social studies assessments. To ease the 11th-grade testing burden while still allowing districts flexibility in determining scope and sequencing for these two content areas, the proposed plan moves the high school science and social studies assessments from the spring of 11th-grade to the fall of 12th-grade.

In October, Colorado educators engaged in item writing for the upcoming science and social studies assessments. Through this process, educators played an active role in determining and shaping the content of the Colorado summative assessments.

**Online Assessment Readiness.** PARCC has issued guidance designed to inform schools and districts as they make annual instructional technology purchases. The PARCC Technology Guidelines and FAQ are available on the Assessment Unit's homepage at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/index.asp>.

As Colorado begins its transition to computer-based assessments, it is important for districts to participate in the Online Readiness Survey that will initially occur in November and that will continue to gather information in the future on a periodic basis. This survey will support transition to online assessments. More information regarding the role of the district technology coordinator and the survey will be shared in the upcoming month.

**English Language Proficiency and Alternate Assessments.** The Assessment Unit is offering multiple training opportunities for the administration of ACCESS for ELLs and for the Colorado Alternate Assessment. Trainings for district assessment coordinators, ELL staff, and special education directors will be held in Greeley (Nov. 1), Golden (Nov. 6) and Montrose (Nov. 8).

#### *What's on the Horizon*

**Item Review for the Science and Social Studies Alternate Assessments.** In November, Colorado educators will have the opportunity to review items for the upcoming science and social studies alternate assessments. Additional feedback opportunities will also exist in the future to ensure that the new summative and alternate assessments are designed to adequately reflect student performance through participation in item writing, passage review, and bias and sensitivity review.

For more information about assessments, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/index.asp> or contact Joyce Zurkowski, executive director of assessment at 303-866-6760. To view the Content Collaboratives fact sheet, visit <http://bit.ly/P3mY5U>.

## Accountability and Improvement

#### *What's Happening Now*

##### **School and District Performance Framework Requests to Reconsider**

CDE is reviewing districts' Requests to Reconsider. Requests will be reviewed and determinations shared with the individual districts before the Nov. 14 state board meeting. School level requests will receive a response before the Dec. 5 state board meeting.

##### **Unified Improvement Planning Fall Submission Cycle – Plans Posting to SchoolView**

To emphasize the continuous improvement cycle, CDE is offering additional submission windows for UIPs for public posting on SchoolView. The new (optional) submission cycle was created in response to the Spring Needs Assessment Survey in which districts expressed a desire to have plans updated earlier in the year. The updated UIPs will replace the current plans on SchoolView within the next several weeks. The next opportunity to submit revised plans for public posting will be during the winter submission cycle (Dec. 14 – Jan. 15). District and school level plan must be submitted annually for posting on

SchoolView by April 15.

### **Unified Improvement Planning Fall Training Schedule**

*Peer Review Sessions.* This second round of peer review sessions will cover the action planning portion of UIPs. The sessions are slated for Pueblo on Nov.12, Glenwood Springs on Nov.14, and Denver North Metro on Nov. 16. Participants will bring their school and/or district plans – and engage in a review of their peer’s school or district plans. CDE staff will provide basic training and hands-on support. Registration is open at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2012UIPScaffoldedReview>.

*Training on Progress Monitoring.* The fall training series continues in November with progress monitoring sessions scheduled in Pueblo on Nov. 27 and Loveland on Nov. 29. These sessions focus on implementing UIPs through a continuous improvement process. Participants will use data from implementation benchmarks to evaluate the degree to which major improvement strategies are being implemented, and make adjustments as needed. Participants will deepen their knowledge of the process, protocols and tools for engaging local planning teams to monitor the progress of school and district improvement work. Participants should bring their draft 2012-13 UIP. Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2012UIPPProcess>.

*Arranging Additional Trainings.* If multiple districts in a region would like to host a training session, CDE staff can provide additional training on the UIP process as scheduling allows. Contact Erin Loften, [loften\\_e@cde.state.co.us](mailto:loften_e@cde.state.co.us).

A list of upcoming UIP trainings and materials can be found at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/UIP\\_TrainingAndSupport\\_Register.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Register.asp).

### **What's on the Horizon**

#### **Public Reporting of School and District Performance Frameworks**

The SPFs and DPFs will be public and posted on SchoolView in conjunction with the Dec. 5 State Board of Education meeting.

#### **Revision of Unified Improvement Plans in the 2012-13 UIP Template**

As districts and schools revise their UIPs, please note districts and schools are expected to use the 2012-13 UIP template which is designed to assist planning teams in meeting all state, federal and program requirements.

The preliminary UIP pre-populated reports districts received in September have the UIP template attached to their pre-populated data reports. Final pre-populated reports will be released by December. Superintendents and district accountability contacts will be notified once those reports are available. In some cases, schools and districts will be expected to complete and attach program addenda (e.g., turnaround addendum for turnaround districts and schools). Instructions for when to include the required addenda are included in the customized directions of the pre-populated report (p. 3 for schools; p. 4 for districts). Addenda forms and explanation of requirements are available at:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/UIP\\_Templates.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/UIP_Templates.asp).

### **Important Upcoming Deadlines**

- Jan. 15, 2013: Some schools and districts are required to submit UIPs to CDE for review. This includes (1) schools and districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type, and (2) districts required to complete a Student Graduation Completion Plan or identified for improvement under Title III. Some grant programs may require submission (e.g., TIG, ISP) as well.
- April 15, 2013: School and district UIPs must be submitted for public posting on SchoolView.

For more information regarding accountability, improvement and planning, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/> or contact Keith Owen, deputy commissioner, 303-866-6099.

## **Innovation and Choice**

### **Overview**

The Division of Innovation, Choice and Engagement develops partnerships, ideas and thinking about education to create bold solutions that launch and sustain learner success inside and outside the classroom.

### **What's Happening Now**

A letter was sent to school libraries announcing the 2012-13 Colorado school library survey. The survey is voluntary but all schools are encouraged to participate. Access the survey at <http://www.lrs.org/slsurvey>. The results will help schools plan, evaluate and budget for library services. Data also serve as the basis for studies that demonstrate the impact of school libraries on student achievement.

The Colorado Department of Labor's Rural Workforce Commission and public libraries launched the Virtual Workforce Centers at the library (<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDLE-CRWC/CDLE/1251629041128>) project. After two years of planning, this partnership establishes workforce centers in public libraries as a bridge for job-seekers living 50 miles or more from a regional workforce center. High school students are encouraged to visit for job opportunities and employment advice.

### **What's on the Horizon:**

CDE released two studies on online learning. The studies, "A Study of Online Learning: Perspectives of Online Learners and Educators" and "Characteristics of Colorado's Online Students" are available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/reports.asp>

### **Important Upcoming Deadlines:**

Proposals for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant Program are due at 11 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 14. To submit proposals, email [elo@colegacy.org](mailto:elo@colegacy.org). To access the RFP application and frequently asked questions, please visit <http://colegacy.org/elo/>. For more information, contact Laura Noonan, [Noonan\\_l@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Noonan_l@cde.state.co.us).

For more information on innovation and choice, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/index.asp> or contact Amy Anderson, associate commissioner of innovation, choice and engagement, 303-866-6938.

## Organizational Effectiveness

*This month's update focuses on the development of the state's graduation guidelines.*

### Overview

The state board of education is required by law to adopt a set of guidelines for high school graduation by May 2013. School boards may use their own locally-developed graduation requirements so long as they "meet or exceed" any minimum standards or core competencies/skills adopted by the state board. Districts will have the 2013-14 school year for adoption. Districts will then implement their requirements with the ninth-grade class of 2014-15 for their graduation in 2018-19.

### What's Happening Now

Educators and community members continue to draft and refine guidelines for high school graduation. The Graduation Guidelines Development Council is expanding its membership to better represent high school and state demographic interests and will be renamed the Graduation Guidelines Advisory Council. Once full membership is finalized, member names will be posted online.

Graduation diploma principles have been drafted. Ways to consider students accomplished in math, reading, writing, science and other content are being explored. Drafts of these designs are being shared extensively at educator, business and higher education meetings over the course of fall/early winter. A webinar about this progress will be shared soon. Presentations will be made to the state board of education periodically with adoption scheduled by May 2013.

Updates will be sent to schools and districts. For more information, visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/SecondaryInitiatives/GraduationGuidelines.htm>

For more information, contact Jo O'Brien, assistant commissioner, strategic priorities and research, (303) 866-6852.

## For More Information

If you have general questions or need assistance, please contact:

- John Condie, field services manager for the Northwest, West Central and Pikes Peak regions. Contact John at 303-866-6630 or [condie\\_j@cde.state.co.us](mailto:condie_j@cde.state.co.us)
- Jhon Penn, executive director of field services, and field services manager for the Northeast, North Central and Metro regions. Contact Jhon at 303-866-6632 or [penn\\_j@cde.state.co.us](mailto:penn_j@cde.state.co.us)
- Tina Goar, field services manager for the Southeast and Southwest regions and the Rural Council. Contact Tina at 303-866-6608 or [goar\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:goar_t@cde.state.co.us).