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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:

The CDE Educator Effectiveness team supports Colorado school districts and BOCES with guidelines, trainings and resources for implementing the state's educator effectiveness law, S.B. 10-191. The team's ultimate goal is to support Colorado's great educators as they strive to continually improve their impact on student learning.

What's Happening Now:

Resources for Student Academic Growth

S.B. 10-191 rules require that districts seek to ensure that assessments selected for educator evaluation purposes are fair, valid and reliable. CDE is developing resources to support districts in building out and choosing these assessments that support the student academic growth portion of the new evaluation requirements.

- **New Student Academic Growth Web Content.** The CDE Educator Effectiveness website is updated with information from State Board Rules for student academic growth including the definition and steps/criteria for determining multiple measures of growth. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/SB-StudentGrowth.asp>
- **Assessment Review Tool.** The Assessment Review Tool used by the Colorado Content Collaboratives has been released for district use. This tool assists districts in reviewing their assessments including rating them on their alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards, methods of scoring, degree to which the assessments are fair and unbiased, and the assessment's ability to provide opportunities for learning. Districts can use this tool as a first step in ensuring that measurements of student growth are fair, valid and reliable. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/ImplementationResources.asp>

What's on the Horizon:

More Resources for Student Academic Growth

- **Dec. 3 - CDE Resource Bank Launches.** The Colorado Content Collaboratives (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/ContentCollaboratives/ContentCollaborativeCohorts.asp>)

have been reviewing assessments in each content area and grade level to determine their degree of alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards and appropriateness for use in Colorado classrooms. Once identified, these high quality assessments will be part of the CDE Resource Bank. The December launch will include assessments from Cohort 1 of the Content Collaboratives project: dance, drama and theatre arts, music, reading, writing and communicating, social studies and visual arts. In January, assessments from Cohort II will be added to the resource bank: comprehensive health, mathematics, physical education, science, world languages, and career and technical education. While the bank will continue to be updated with more assessments and instructional supports, this initial launch allows pilot districts to field test assessments for use in teacher evaluations this year.

- **December: Draft Guidance and Examples for Student Growth.** To support districts in selecting and using multiple measures of student academic growth in educator evaluations, CDE will release draft guidance and examples of student growth. This draft guidance will be adapted based on field feedback and pilot tests and updated versions will be posted on the CDE Educator Effectiveness website.

Assurance

All school districts must provide CDE an assurance that specifies if they are implementing the Colorado State Model Evaluation System or another evaluation system that meets or exceeds the State Quality Standards. The CDE assurance 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 January *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: <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 continues to support districts and schools during the transition to the new standards. CDE recommends that districts use the 2012-13 school year to begin phasing in the standards-based curriculum in preparation for full implementation of the standards in 2013-14.

What's Happening Now:

Regional Standards Workshops. Beginning in January 2013, the Standards and Instructional Support Office will provide a series of regional workshops in standards-based curriculum design. The workshops will be coordinated regionally. A letter will be sent to superintendents and BOCES directors in early December to invite interested districts/BOCES to host the workshops. The final list of locations and times will be released in late December.

School Readiness. At the November State Board of Education meeting, the department presented recommendations related to school readiness provisions within S.B. 08-212 (CAP4K). CAP4K requires districts to implement individual school readiness plans and school readiness assessments beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. CAP4K also requires the state board to adopt one or more assessments aligned with the department's definition of school readiness. The department recommends the state board: (1) offer districts a menu of school readiness assessments, (2) approve Teaching Strategies Gold as the first school readiness assessment tool for the menu, and (3) pending positive technical reports and final review, approve additional school readiness assessment tools for the menu. The department also recommends districts phase-in school readiness plans and assessment over two years beginning in 2013-2014.

The READ Act. The rulemaking process for implementation of the READ Act was noticed and draft rules were presented at the November State Board of Education meeting. The draft rules include a definition of a significant reading deficiency and rules related to assessment and data collection. Hearings on the READ Act rules will be conducted at the January and February state board meetings in advance of rule adoption in March 2013. Information about the READ Act and a link to the draft rules can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>. A READ Act pamphlet is also available at this link and will be disseminated through regional meetings beginning in January. The pamphlet provides information about key components of the legislation in an easy-to-read format for all educators.

What's on the Horizon:

- **Wednesday, Dec. 5:** The State Board of Education will vote on whether to adopt one or a menu of assessments for measuring school readiness and the department will make final recommendations regarding the district implementation timeline.

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. As a governing member of the multi-state assessment consortium, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), Colorado is building next generation English language arts and mathematics assessments. The consortium is developing computer-based English language arts and mathematics assessments in grades 3 - 8. There will also be English language arts assessments in grades 9-11 and three end-of-course mathematics assessments in high school. The assessments will be administered for the first time in spring 2015. Until then, the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) will continue to be administered to measure student achievement in reading, writing and math.

Science and Social Studies Summative Assessments. Colorado is developing new science and social studies assessments. These assessments will be computer-based and designed to measure the Colorado Academic Standards. These assessments will be administered in 2014. 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. Contingent upon legislative approval, the high school science and social studies assessments will be administered in the fall of grade 12 to allow maximum flexibility at the local level in determining scope and sequence in the teaching of the high school standards.

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

English Language Proficiency Assessments. Colorado will administer the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) exam and ACCESS, to measure student acquisition of the Colorado English Language Proficiency (CELP) standards. ACCESS will be administered in the 2012-2013 school year from Jan. 7, 2013 – Feb. 8, 2013.

What's Happening Now:

Item Review for the New Alternate Assessments. Educators recently reviewed items for the upcoming science and social studies alternate assessments. Through this process, educators played an active role in ensuring that the items administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities are appropriate for the population, that they measure the Extended Evidence Outcomes of the Colorado Academic Standards, and that they are free from potential bias and sensitivity issues.

Field Test for New Science and Social Studies Assessments. A sample group of school districts has been selected to participate in field testing for the new summative science and social studies assessments. The sample is representative of the student population and will provide valid information from which determinations about items and assessments can be made. Districts that are part of this sample have been invited to participate in the field test.

PARCC Assessments. Colorado provides on-going feedback on PARCC assessment policies. PARCC recently approved the College and Career Ready Determination (CCRD) Policy as well as the Policy Level Performance Level Descriptors.

- The CCRD Policy clearly defines the level of *academic* preparation in English language arts/literacy and mathematics needed for students to be successful in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in two- and four-year public institutions of higher education. These institutions include technical colleges and other institutions that award degrees or credentials aligned to entry into middle- or high-skilled jobs.
- There are multiple benefits of the College- and Career-Ready Determinations in English

language arts/literacy and in mathematics.

- Students who attain a CCRD in English language arts/literacy or a CCRD in mathematics will be able to enter directly into certain entry-level, credit-bearing courses in those subject areas without having to take placement tests.
- States within the PARCC consortium will have a common benchmark to define college and career readiness in English language arts/literacy and in mathematics.

Final versions of these policies, FAQ and summary of public feedback are available at <http://parcconline.org/parcc-assessment-policies>.

Online Assessment Readiness. As Colorado begins its transition to computer-based assessments, CDE invites districts to participate in the Technology Readiness Tool. Training for district technology coordinators began in November and the first collection window begins this month. For more information about the tool, contact Glen Sirakavit at sirakavit_g@cde.state.co.us.

English Language Proficiency. Training was recently concluded for the new English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS. To address questions raised during the trainings and provide information to help with the transition, CDE has published an FAQ available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/ELA-Transition_FAQ.asp. ACCESS materials will arrive in districts in December.

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 Final Release. CDE presented the final district accreditation ratings (<http://bit.ly/U17IDn>) under the Education Accountability Act at the November state board meeting. School Performance Frameworks will be approved by the state board on Dec. 5 and be available at <http://www.schoolview.org/>.

Growth Data Reporting. The School and District Growth Summaries are available at <http://www.schoolview.org/ColoradoGrowthModel.asp>. Growth results can also be found in the performance tab of CDE's online Data Center.

Finalized UIP Pre-Populated Templates. Once the final performance frameworks are released in early December, CDE will update the pre-populated reports for the Unified Improvement Plans which will be available in mid-December. Note that pre-populated reports are not available for Alternative Education Campuses because of the wide variability of performance indicators. As districts and schools revise their UIPs, the 2012-13 UIP template is expected to be used to ensure all state, federal and program requirements are

being met. 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/uip/UIP_Templates.asp.

Federal Programs. A summary report and interactive webpage will be released in early 2013 outlining effective strategies that were identified as a result of the high growth schools study. Schools looking to improve their students' performance would benefit from reviewing the summary report or the interactive webpage.

The Office of Competitive Grants and Awards is working with Pueblo 60 and Denver Public Schools to approve limited funding for suspended Tiered Intervention Grants. The continuation of funds for suspended grants will be linked to the achievement of specific benchmarks.

What's on the Horizon:

- **Jan. 15 - UIP Winter Submission Cycle – Required Plans Due.** Some schools and districts are required to submit UIPs to CDE for review by Jan. 15, 2013. 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. Plans must be submitted through the online Tracker system which will open for UIP winter submissions on Dec. 14. Resources for UIP submissions are available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Tracker.asp.
- **Submission of UIPs for SchoolView – Winter Cycle.** CDE is offering another optional submission window this winter for any district and/or school to submit revised UIPs for posting on SchoolView. Any district or school choosing to submit a plan for posting this winter must submit plans through the online Tracker system. The submission window in Tracker is open from Dec. 14 through Jan. 15, 2013 (coinciding with the window for submitting required plans for review). Plans submitted during the UIP Winter Cycle will replace the currently posted plans in February. All school and district plans must be submitted for public posting on SchoolView on or before April 15, 2013. For more information regarding UIP submissions, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/Downloads/UnifiedImprovementPlanning/2012-13_Submission_Outline_Chart.pdf.

School Improvement Grants. Suspended SIG funds from five schools were reinstated to three schools under conditions that bold turnaround strategies are implemented. CDE staff continues to work with these districts and school leaders to create detailed implementation and budget plans to use the funding to make immediate and significant improvements in student learning.

Upcoming Teaching, Empowerment, Leading and Learning (TELL) Survey. The third iteration of the biennial Teaching, Empowerment, Leading and Learning (TELL) survey will

open in February 2013. Survey results support school and district improvement planning and they inform policy decisions.

Start planning now on how to get a good response rate in your schools and districts -- and how the data can inform improvement planning. For more information, visit <http://www.tellcolorado.org/>

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **Dec. 14:** Districts confirm “headcount” numbers for the TELL survey.
- **Jan. 11, 2013** – Applications due for Supplemental Educational Services (SES) Providers for 2013-14.
- **Jan. 15, 2013:** Some schools and districts are required to submit UIPs for review.
- **April 15, 2013:** School and district UIPs must be submitted for 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:

All 11 applicants that applied for the **Tier 1 2012-13 Colorado Charter School Program Grant** were selected. The federal grant helps new charter schools with start-up and implementation costs in their planning and start-up years. Awards ranged from \$196,500 - \$215,000. For a list of schools funded, go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/fundingawards.asp>. For more information, contact Gina Schlieman, Schlieman_g@cde.state.co.us.

In November, 10 state statutes were added to the existing 13 statutes detailing what requirements charter schools can automatically waive. This was a result of the state board's approval of changes to the rules governing charter waivers. The revised waiver request form can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/waivers.asp>. For more information, contact Jessica Fuller, fuller_j@cde.state.co.us.

What's on the Horizon:

The Office of Dropout Prevention and Engagement, in partnership with The International Association for K-12 Online Learning, is conducting an online survey of public high schools regarding the use of credit recovery programs. Survey results will shape technical assistance to develop more effective credit recovery programs. The survey deadline is Friday, Dec. 14. For more information, contact Peter Fritz, 303-866-6601, fritz_p@cde.state.co.us. The report can be found at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DPSE_CreditRecovery

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **Dec. 14:** Submissions for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant are due by 11 a.m. The RFP is available at <http://colegacy.org/news/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/2012-13-Expanded-Learning-Opportunities-RFP1.pdf>. This grant provides districts, schools and small teams in various stages of planning and implementation, up to \$75,000, to grow proof points reflecting elements outlined in the ELO Strategic Plan, at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/download/ELO Narrative Final.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/download/ELO_Narrative_Final.pdf). For information on technical assistance webinars, FAQs and other resources, visit <http://colegacy.org/elo/>. For more information, contact Laura Noonan, 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 Teacher/Student Data Link project.

Overview:

As part of its statewide educational improvement initiatives, CDE has developed long-term strategies for data quality and its Teacher/Student Data Link initiative. Developing a reliable and accurate teacher/student data link is an important step for all Colorado school districts; it enables districts and the state to connect students with the educators responsible for their learning. There's tremendous opportunity to use this type of data to drive school and instructional improvement and educator growth, but to be beneficial, the data must be trusted, accurate and reliable.

Three primary components ensure an accurate and reliable link—standard course codes, teacher/student data link data collection and roster verification.

What's Happening Now:

CDE is working with the Colorado Legacy Foundation and our vendor, Battelle for Kids (BFK) to pilot the Roster Verification Tool. Twelve Integration Districts will participate in the Teacher/Student Data Link project. Some districts will pilot the BFK Roster Verification system while others will pilot the Teacher/Student Data Link data collection.

While some districts have already provided CDE with Teacher/Student Data Link data, CDE will request another data extract to ensure the latest data is analyzed. CDE is also identifying the reports and business rules to be implemented in the Teacher/Student Data Link data collection and building those over the next few months.

CDE will send out the data request for the BFK Roster Verification system to the Integration Districts in preparation for the January pilot. CDE will reach out to the superintendents of the Integration Districts and prepare them to communicate with their principals and teachers about the BFK Roster Verification pilot and what it means to them.

What's on the Horizon:

In January and February, CDE will open the first round of piloting the BFK Roster Verification system. That pilot will last until March. In April, CDE will open a second round of testing in the Roster Verification tool based on lessons learned from the first round.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **Nov. – Jan. 2013:** CDE pilots the Battelle for Kids Roster Verification system.
- **Jan. 2013:** First round of Roster Verification pilot
- **April 2013:** Second round of Roster Verification pilot

For more information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rise/TSDL.asp> or contact Lisa Bradley, Information Management Services project manager, 303-866-4902.

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
- 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
- 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.