CDE UPDATE
Strategic Priorities

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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 the most significant initiatives and the latest key implementation milestones.

Educator Effectiveness

Overview:
The CDE Educator Effectiveness staff have collected, compiled and reviewed data and feedback from the first year of the evaluation system pilot. As a result, CDE has changed and improved its rubrics. Updated teacher and principal rubrics for the State Model Evaluation System are available online for preview. Last year, the principal rubric was piloted in 27 districts and the teacher rubric was beta tested. Feedback was collected and used to improve them. The updated rubrics incorporate revisions based on pilot feedback and input from educators and districts.

The rubrics will continue to be tested this year, but are available now as a tool for districts that want to practice with them. If you have more input on the rubrics, please contact Jean Williams (Williams_j@cde.state.co.us).

What's Happening Now:
Districts are considering how to compile appropriate student growth measures that will comprise 50 percent of evaluation scores. A basic, draft guidance document on how to select and combine student growth measures is expected to be ready in the Fall of 2012 based on information from national experts (Technical Steering committee), Content Collaborative participants and CDE staff.

From October through December, CDE will work with pilot districts to test, practice and get feedback on the guidance and how to put the student growth measure together. Based on this input, we will refine the guidance documents and improve the models in the second half of next year. Guidance and training for all districts will begin in January 2013.

What's on the Horizon:
The Educator Effectiveness staff is working with BOCES to create a master schedule of trainings for all regions this year. CDE expects to offer about 20 trainings on the state model system. By November, the CDE website should include a schedule and registration database. Built on a train-the-trainer model, district staff, principals and teacher leaders can use a CDE training toolkit to train other staff members.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
This year probationary and non-probationary teachers must receive a written evaluation at least two weeks before their last contract day. School district and BOCES leaders should

prepare for conducting annual evaluations and transitioning from administering evaluations every three years to every academic year. In 2012-13, districts will use their current evaluation system to meet this requirement. However, beginning in 2013-14, school districts and BOCES will either adopt the State Model Evaluation System (http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/RB-CDEModelEvaluationSystem.asp) or a locally-developed system that meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.

For more information about educator effectiveness, contact Katy Anthes, executive director of educator effectiveness, 303-866-6654.

Standards

Overview:
CDE supports Colorado districts and schools during transition to the new Colorado Academic Standards. CDE recommends districts use the 2012-13 school year to begin phasing-in standards-based curriculum in preparation for full implementation of the new standards in 2013-14.

What's Happening Now:
- The first phase of Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project has begun. This project emerged from district/field requests for increased support around the new Colorado Academic Standards. In response, CDE's Standards and Instructional Support team will support local educators in their process for developing their own curriculum based on the Colorado Academic Standards. For more information, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/index.asp

- A series of regional informational meetings is scheduled regarding district requirements for school readiness (pursuant to SB 08-212, CAP4K) and the Colorado READ Act (HB 12-1238). CAP4K requires school districts to develop individual school readiness plans for all children in state-funded preschool and kindergarten beginning in 2013-14.The law also requires the state board to adopt one or more assessments for measuring students' levels of school readiness. The Colorado READ Act, passed in May 2012, repeals the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA) as of July 1, 2013. The READ Act has implications for assessing literacy skills in kindergarten through third-grade, identification of and interventions for students with significant reading deficiencies, parent involvement, and school and district performance ratings. Included in the act is funding to support intervention for students with significant reading deficiencies, regional literacy support, and a new literacy grant program. Opportunity for input on recommendations for school readiness assessments and rules for implementing the READ Act will be provided. Meeting dates and locations can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/RegionalMeetings.asp

What's on the Horizon:
- This fall, the first phase of the District Sample Curriculum Project will include educators creating year-at-a-glance and unit overview samples for all 10 content areas within the Colorado Academic Standards, grades K-12. These samples will sequence standards and grade level expectations across a course/year and incorporate 21st century skills and evidence outcomes. To facilitate the creation of these materials through local collaboration, the Office of Standards and Instructional Support will conduct four workshop sessions, each focusing on a particular grade-level band for each content area. The link below gives greater detail on the project and its initial phase. http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/index.asp

- Recommendations for school readiness assessments will be presented to the state board at its November meeting.

- The rule-making hearing for the Early Literacy Grant Program within the READ Act will be on Wednesday, Oct. 17 at 9:30 a.m. The notice of rulemaking process for the remainder of the READ Act is scheduled for the November state board of education meeting with hearings in January and February in advance of adoption in March 2013.

For more information about standards, contact Melissa Colsman, executive director of teaching and learning, 303-866-6737.

Assessments

High School Graduation Guidelines & Endorsed Diploma

Overview:
State law (section 22-2-106) requires the state board of education to adopt guidelines for high school graduation requirements by May 2013. Districts will have the 2013-14 school year to adopt local graduation requirements that meet or exceed the state guidelines. Districts will then implement their graduation requirements beginning with their ninth-grade class of 2014-15. The law outlines several considerations that the state board must take into account when adopting guidelines including: alignment with the description of postsecondary and workforce readiness; alignment with postsecondary academic admission standards; recognition of multiple and diverse pathways to a diploma; articulation through a standards-based education system; attainment of skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century; and importance of academic and career planning.

In addition to developing graduation guidelines, the law calls for the state board and Colorado Commission on Higher Education to jointly adopt high school diploma endorsement criteria indicating a student's level of postsecondary and workforce readiness. A postsecondary and workforce readiness endorsed diploma identifies student excellence over and above a standard high school diploma. The endorsement rewards high school graduates for excellence by guaranteeing that the student meets "minimum academic qualifications for admission to, and to be eligible, subject to additional institutional review of other admission and placement qualifications, for placement into credit-bearing courses at all open, modified open, or moderately selective public institutions of higher education in Colorado; as well as priority consideration for admission into Colorado's selective and highly selective institutions." The endorsed diploma criteria have been developed and will be piloted in several districts this fall in partnership with the Department of Higher Education. Once refined through the pilot, the criteria will be brought to the state board and Colorado Commission on Higher Education for joint adoption.

What's Happening Now:
- Graduation Guidelines: September 2012 – May 2013: The Graduation Guidelines Council will meet monthly to draft and refine guidelines for high school graduation requirements. CDE staff will present at stakeholder meetings to gather feedback on the drafts. Presentations will be made to the state board periodically with adoption scheduled by May 2013.
- Endorsed Diploma: September 2012 – May 2013: Several districts will pilot the endorsed diploma criteria, working closely with CDE and the Department of Higher Education.

What's on the Horizon:
- May 2013: Final guidelines for high school graduation requirements submitted for state board of education adoption

- Spring 2013: Final endorsed diploma criteria presented to the state board of education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education for adoption

For more information about graduation guidelines and endorsed diplomas, contact Jo O'Brien, assistant commissioner for strategic projects and research at 303-866-6852.

Accountability, Improvement and Planning

What's Happening Now:
School and District Performance Frameworks
Districts received the 2012 school and district performance framework reports from CDE. The department encourages superintendents to share the preliminary results with district key central office staff and principals and to discuss performance. For resources to support this work, please visit the CDE District and School Performance Framework website at http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/PerformanceFrameworks.asp. Click on "Resources" to find updated tools such as:
- An online tutorial of the SPF;
- Annotated DPFs/SPFs;
- A summary of changes from the 2011 to 2012 SPF.

As schools and district work through the reports and begin using them as a starting place for the Unified Improvement Plan data narrative, please contact Alyssa Pearson (pearson_a@cde.state.co.us) for assistance in understanding the data or accountability.

Unified Improvement Planning Templates and Pre-Populated Reports
For 2012-13, all schools and districts are expected to complete an improvement plan using CDE's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) template. The school and district templates incorporate state and federal accountability requirements into a single improvement plan. The district, school and Alternative Education Campus (AEC) templates are available on the CDE website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_Templates.asp.

The pre-populated reports will be released on Friday, Sept. 7 for schools and districts – with Section I appended to the entire template. The Word versions of the reports are not available through CEDAR. A link to access these reports (link to a zip file) will be emailed to superintendents and accountability contacts. Contacts will only be able to download reports for their own districts and schools.

Unified Improvement Planning Fall Training Schedule
UIP training sessions are underway to support districts through the stages of the improvement planning process. Registration is still open for upcoming trainings and peer review sessions. training will be provided in data analysis, action planning, progress monitoring, and to engage in facilitated peer reviews. Visit the "Training" page of the UIP web page for upcoming dates, locations and session descriptions: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Register.asp.

What's on the Horizon:
School Accreditation Forms and Request for Reconsideration
Districts must submit an accreditation category for each of their schools by Oct. 15. If the framework or category used differs from the state framework, it must also be submitted through the request to reconsider process. Districts have an opportunity to request that CDE reconsider its district accreditation category or any of the assigned school plan types by submitting additional evidence. Detailed guidance on submitting accreditation categories and requests to reconsider is provided in the policy guidance found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/RequestToReconsider.asp

Unified Improvement Planning Submissions for SchoolView
CDE is adding two optional submission windows and due dates to the calendar for posting 2012-13 Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) on SchoolView. This was a request from the field in support of the "continuous improvement" cycle of the process. The additional submission windows will allow improvement plans to be viewed publicly as active documents that better reflect real time planning and implementation. New fall and winter submission dates are optional for districts and schools. District Tracker contacts will receive more detailed instructions and information soon. See the 2012-13 Outline of Plan Submissions at http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/Downloads/UnifiedImprovementPlanning/2012-13_Submission_Outline_Chart.pdf for more details.

Unified Improvement Planning Optional Fall Review for Select Districts
As a support for districts on Priority Improvement or Turnaround, CDE is offering an optional review of the district's revised data narrative (including root cause analysis) for the 2012-13 UIP. The review provides support and feedback sooner in the planning process to ensure the data narrative is strong as the district makes decisions about action planning. Plans for the optional fall review are due by Oct. 15 and will be submitted via the Tracker system. This fall submission will not take replace the required winter submission which is due Jan. 15. Only districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type will have the option to submit plans for the fall review. See the 2012-13 Outline of Plan Submissions (http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/Downloads/UnifiedImprovementPlanning/2012-13_Submission_Outline_Chart.pdf) for a listing of optional and required submissions. For more information, contact your performance manager or the improvement planning office.

The Federal Program Administration Unit is developing **Program Quality Indicators** for schools and districts which could be used to improve federal programs like Title I and Title II and programs supporting English Language Learners. This month, Title I plans to have self-assessments available as a companion to a School Support Team review, and as a stand-alone quality-check for a Title I program. The tool will be piloted in the fall with several volunteer schools. Staff from Federal Programs and Language, Culture and Equity began work on a set of program quality indicators for ELL programs this past spring, visiting 12 districts to assess what contributed to a quality program. More work on this project will continue through the fall as results are gathered.

Federal Programs will roll out revised School Support Team rubrics this fall. In a process that has taken more than a year, CDE staff and others collaborated to rewrite the nine standards and indicators which have grounded the work since 2004. This month look for more rubric and process information when the first reviews, new standards and indicators will be used.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
- **Sept. 7** - Release of preliminary pre-populated 2012 Unified Improvement Plans (Section I) to districts.
- **Oct. 5** - Release of preliminary 2012 AEC School Performance Framework reports to districts for review.
- **Oct. 15** - Deadline for all districts to submit School Accreditation Form and (if desired) Requests to Reconsider district accreditation ratings and school plan type assignments.
- **Oct. 15** – (Optional) Deadline for priority improvement and turnaround districts to submit UIPs through the Tracker system for CDE's fall UIP (Data Narrative) review.
- **Oct. 15** – (Optional) Deadline for districts and schools to submit 2012-13 UIPs through Tracker for the fall public posting on SchoolView.org.

For more information regarding accountability, improvement and planning, contact Keith Owen, deputy commissioner, 303-866-6099.

Innovation and Choice

Overview:
CDE supports partnerships, ideas and creative thinking about education to create bold solutions that launch and sustain learner success inside and outside the classroom.

What's Happening Now:
CDE expects about 20 new charter schools to apply for the Colorado Charter Schools Program Start-Up Grant this year. This is up from 12 applicants (of which eight were awarded grants) in the 2011 grant cycle. These grants support charter schools in their early years of development with critical expenses related to starting and growing the new schools.

What's on the Horizon:
- On Sept. 4, the Colorado Legacy Foundation and CDE will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) that gives districts, schools and smaller teams in various stages of planning and implementation an opportunity to apply for funding of up to $75,000, to grow proof points that reflect elements outlined in the [Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) vision and strategic plan](#) – also found at http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/download/ELO_Narrative_Final.pdf. Funding priorities include re-imagined use of time and human capital, creative approaches to addressing the needs of rural schools/districts, blended learning and competency-based approaches to completing courses and grade levels. CLF and CDE expect to fund a handful of projects in this first phase of investment with a goal of funding up to 30 projects over the next two years, pending available resources. Submissions must be received no later than 11 a.m. on Dec. 14. For more information, contact Laura Noonan, Noonan_l@cde.state.co.us

- National, state and local organizations recently partnered to switch to a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. MTSS will integrate two evidence-based models: Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The MTSS approach will be more comprehensive and provide better alignment to improve the academic and behavior outcomes for all students. Organizations include the National Association of Elementary School Principals, RtI Action Network, Colorado Association of School Executives, CDE and principals from 10 Colorado districts. Colorado is one of four states selected for this program. Others include Wyoming, Montana and Kentucky. This work begins Sept. 7.

For more information on innovation and choice, contact Amy Anderson, associate commissioner of innovation, choice and engagement, 303-866-6938.

Organizational Effectiveness

Improvements coming in data system through Data Pipeline project

Overview:
Data Pipeline is a streamlined approach to efficiently move required education information from school districts to the Colorado Department of Education. Data Pipeline, also referred to simply as Pipeline, replaces the existing Automated Data Exchange (ADE) and takes CDE from 19 point-in-time collections to six transactional interchanges or data themes. The interchanges are focused on a student profile, staff profile, organization profile, special education and discipline. These interchanges are intended to be transactional in nature therefore allowing districts to regularly submit data to CDE while routinely cleaning the data over time. The strategic objectives are to reduce data redundancy, capture more timely data and streamline the data collection process.

What does this mean to you?
By 2013-2014, districts will have a new system for reporting collected data that will reduce many of the redundancies found in the current system. Pipeline offers enhanced functionality such as online error correction, web services, additional user roles within the system allowing differentiated access to data, notifications to districts when students transfer to other districts, and matching capability from the Record Integration Tracking System (RITS) and Educator Identifier System (EDIS) within Pipeline.

What's Happening Now?
Monthly webinars are being conducted to share project status and timelines for piloting and implementation. CDE recently finalized the file layout for Student Profile and will finalize the Staff Profile soon thereafter. This month CDE will present the final file layouts to the Educational Data Advisory Committee for approval. Then the file layouts will be posted on the Data Pipeline project website and sent to all districts and vendors.

What's on the Horizon?
This fall pilots for the Directory collection and RITS and EDIS system begin. If your district is interested in participating in the pilot or if you have questions, contact Lisa Bradley, Bradley_l@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-4902. Updates will be regularly published in the *Scoop* e-newsletter.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
September 2012 – Finalize layouts for Student and Staff Profile
September 2012 – Pilot the Directory Collection
October 2012 – Pilot RITS/EDIS

For more information, contact Lisa Bradley, IMS 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.