CDE UPDATE
Strategic Priorities

COLORADO
DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION   cde

September 2013

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Colorado is implementing significant education improvements 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:
Classroom teaching and school leadership are the strongest school-based factors impacting student achievement. CDE supports the state's 178 school districts to attract, prepare and support great educators as a part of meeting the requirements of S.B.10-191, the Great Teachers and Leaders Act.

What's Happening Now:
New Educator Evaluation Requirements
Beginning this school year, all Colorado school districts will implement an evaluation system that aligns with the teacher and principal Quality Standards and Colorado State Board of Education rules. However, this first year is a hold-harmless year, meaning a final rating of partially effective or ineffective will not count towards the loss of an educator's non-probationary status. This gives all districts and educators the opportunity to adjust to the new evaluation requirements in a low-stakes environment. The new evaluation requirements include opportunities for reflection, review, professional development and growth. Some supports that are available include:

Colorado State Model Evaluation System resources:
- Training Tools: a number of resources are available to train staff including PowerPoint presentations, pre-recorded orientation webinars, handouts and more: http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/trainingtools

- Teacher System resources: Access the teacher rubric, Excel tool for the system, resources for gathering observable evidence and a two-page reference guide on the Teacher Quality Standards helpful for reflection and ongoing conversation on the aspects of great teaching. http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-teacher

- Principal/Assistant Principal System resources: Access the principal/assistant principal rubric, Excel tool for the system, and a reference guide on the Principal/Assistant Principal Quality Standards helpful for reflection and ongoing conversation on the aspects of great leadership. http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-principal

Measuring student learning:
- Measures of student learning guidance:
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/StudentGrowthGuide
- Inter-rater agreement:
  Six short videos of practicing educators to support fair and consistent evaluations:
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/interrateragreement

Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL)
TSDL is an improved system for transferring data from schools and districts to CDE. It will support state and district efforts to learn from the past, understand the present and use data to make decisions that improve education systems for students. Beginning this month, all Colorado school districts can begin submitting TSDL information into Data Pipeline through an interchange. Each district has identified a designee who can upload data as frequently as needed to maintain accurate data throughout the school year. To learn more, visit:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/rise/TSDL.asp

Training Webinar Series
To support districts in the evaluation process, CDE will host a series of webinars through November. Each month, one town hall webinar (on a high level topic) and one technical assistance webinar (topic will be based on a poll given at that month's town hall meeting) will be offered. To view the webinar schedule, visit:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-trainings

What's on the Horizon:
Specialized Service Professionals
Several districts/BOCES are piloting the evaluation of specialized service professionals for the 2013-14 school year. All drafted rubrics for specialized service professionals will be available on the Educator Effectiveness website by **Sept. 15**
(http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/specializedserviceprofessionals).There will also be a link to provide feedback on the evaluation tools.

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

Standards

Overview:
The 2013-14 school year marks the first year of full implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards, the implementation of the READ Act, and the first of a two-year school readiness initiative implementation process. The Teaching and Learning Unit strives to offer schools and districts resources and supports to enhance student learning and achievement.

What's Happening Now:
Standards
A guide is now available that reflects the processes used by Colorado educators to translate the Colorado Academic Standards into the 700-plus curriculum samples currently available. The guide describes a process for creating curriculum for all 10 content areas of the standards, that:

- Provides course or year-long sequencing of the standards
- Promotes the instructional shifts embodied by the standards
- Illustrates the interdependence of grade level expectations within and across content areas

Because the curriculum design process is an inherently iterative process of continuous improvement, users may find it helpful to read the guide before beginning curriculum work. Users are encouraged to move back and forth between the sections during the curriculum writing process. The purpose of the guide is to help deepen the user's understanding of the Colorado Academic Standards and spark conversations about creating curriculum for all students and all standards. Access the process guide and samples here: http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/SampleCurriculum-Resources.asp

School Readiness

Additions to the school readiness assessment menu: CDE has initiated a request for information to solicit additional assessments for review for the school readiness assessment menu. This fall, the school readiness assessment subcommittee will meet to review additional school readiness assessments. Recommendations from the subcommittee will be brought to the state board for discussion in November, with a vote anticipated in December.

Resources: New resources for school readiness implementation are now available. CDE released a School Readiness Assessment Guidance document that provides information on the background of the school readiness initiative, recommendations for assessment usage related to school readiness and the READ Act and a sample school readiness plan. The document is available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/assessment. CDE now has two staff members to provide assistance to districts, teachers and schools: Kindergarten Program Manager Suzanne Rougier (rougier_s@cde.state.co.us) and Kindergarten Readiness Specialist Amy Cameron (cameron_a@cde.state.co.us).

Distribution of school readiness funds: In August, the department sent grant notification documents to districts that requested funds for kindergarten subscriptions to *Teaching Strategies GOLD*®. Districts can request the funds once they have set up the agreements with *Teaching Strategies.* For more information, contact Suzanne Rougier at rougier_s@cde.state.co.us.

Teaching Strategies GOLD modifications: All versions of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® have been shortened based on feedback from users and ongoing research on assessment items supporting child outcome ratings. Three objectives and six items have been eliminated and changes will be reflected in the online system. In addition, three self-help items will be suppressed in the online system for kindergarten level classrooms. In the coming months, the department will conduct focus groups of kindergarten teachers to collect feedback on the items within *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® to determine further customizations.

The READ Act

New resources: In early September, The Office of Literacy will provide modules on the cycle of instruction and identifying a student with significant reading deficiency. These learning modules will support the implementation of the READ Act and quality literacy instruction and will be available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp.

Interim Assessment: State board of education rules stipulate that the interim assessment list for the READ Act may be approved in the 2014-15 school year. The currently approved interim assessments are DRA2, PALS, and DIBELS Next. This fall, the department will initiate an interim assessment review process to determine which interim assessments to submit for state board approval. The department anticipates making recommendations to the state board on interim assessments at the November board meeting with a vote anticipated at the December meeting. In early September, the department will release a request for information (RFI) to solicit interim assessments for review in October. The department will ask local educators with literacy expertise to assist with the review process. Applications for the review committee will be available on the READ Act web page

(http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp) by Sept. 15. A facilitator will support the review process using criteria in the READ Act state board rules. For a full description of the review process, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp. Following adoption of an approved interim assessment list, **districts have until July 1, 2016 (as allowed in statute, C.R.S. 22-7-1209) to transition to the approved interim assessments.**

Distribution of READ funds: The state allocated $15.3 million to the Early Literacy Fund for the 2013-14 school year to be distributed to districts according to the number of students identified with a significant reading deficiency across the state. The department anticipates distribution of funds by the end of September. The law specifies that districts must provide interventions to each K-3 student identified with a significant reading deficiency. Per-pupil intervention money for students with significant reading deficiencies must be used in one or more ways that include providing full-day kindergarten, purchasing tutoring services in reading, providing other targeted, scientifically- or evidence-based intervention services (including but not limited to those identified in the READ program advisory list, or operating a summer school literacy program). Funds may also be used to purchase diagnostic assessments on the approved assessment list.

For more information about standards, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/index.asp or contact Melissa Colsman, executive director of teaching and learning, 303-866-6737.

Assessments

Overview:
Assessments administered by the unit include summative content assessments, English language proficiency assessments, college/career ready assessments and alternate content assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

What's Happening Now:
Science and Social Studies Fall Field Testing
Fall field tests will be administered from **Sept. 16 through Sept. 30** for elementary and middle school content and from **Oct. 28 through Nov. 22** for high school content. Field testing for the alternate science and social studies assessments, developed for students with significant cognitive disabilities, will be available from **Oct. 21 through Nov. 22**.

District Assessment Personnel
Districts need to keep their information about their contact information for district assessment coordinators and technology coordinators up-to-date. Districts should verify their district assessment coordinator information is current at http://www2.cde.state.co.us/assessment/DAC.asp. To verify the correct district technology coordinator for your district, visit: http://www2.cde.state.co.us/assessment/DTC.asp.

ACCESS Trainings
ACCESS for ELLs test administration trainings will be held for district assessment coordinators and English language learner coordinators in September and October. To register, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/ela. Trainings dates and locations are:
- Friday, Sept. 13 in Grand Junction
- Tuesday, Sept. 24 in Greeley
- Friday, Sept. 27 in Pueblo
- Tuesday, Oct. 1 in Limon
- Thursday, Oct. 3 in Boulder
- Monday, Oct. 7, in Aurora

What's on the Horizon:
Educator Recruitment for Science and Social Studies Assessments
Educator involvement in the development and review of state assessments is essential to ensuring the item content is appropriate for students and that the items are not unfairly advantageous or disadvantageous to any particular group of students. Assessment development provides a unique professional development opportunity for participating educators. All districts are encouraged to participate in this process. Educators who have been selected from the educator database will be invited to participate in assessment development activities. For more information, visit: http://educator.force.com/CO. Participants will be reimbursed for travel expenses and may also receive substitute pay or honorarium.

The next educator item development opportunities involve the review of science and social studies items for content, bias and sensitivity. The summative item review meeting will be **Oct. 8-9**. The alternate assessment review meeting for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will be on **Oct. 16-18**. Both meetings will be in the Denver area. For more information about the new Colorado summative science and social studies assessments, contact Jason Clymer, clymer_j@cde.state.co.us. For more information about the new alternate science and social studies assessments, contact Mira Monroe, Monroe_m@cde.state.co.us.

For more information about assessments, contact Joyce Zurkowski, executive director of assessment, 303-866-6760, zurkowski_j@cde.state.co.us, or you can visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/index.asp.

Accountability, Performance & Support

Overview:
CDE supports schools and districts in the continuous improvement process through its focus on implementing quality improvement plans, school and district support systems, accountability measures, federal programs and data analysis.

What's Happening Now:
School and District Performance Frameworks
CDE recently sent districts their 2013 school and district performance framework reports and asks that those reports are shared district key central office staff and principals and start conversations about performance to prepare for UIP planning. For resources to support this work, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/PerformanceFrameworks.asp. Click on "Resources" to find tools including:
- An online tutorial of the SPF
- Annotated DPFs/SPFs
- A summary of changes from the 2012 to 2013 SPF

CDE has staff available to assist districts via phone during its specific office hours. To sign up for this consultation, log onto www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0A4FA4AB2DA02-office.

Intent to Submit Request for Reconsideration
Districts planning to submit a request to reconsider of the accreditation rating or a school's plan type assignment must notify Lisa Steffen, steffen_l@cde.state.co.us by **Sept. 16.** CDE staff can provide technical assistance and guidance around the request to reconsider process. For more information, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/RequestToReconsider.asp. Final requests to reconsider are due by **Oct. 15**. All requests submitted on **Oct. 15** will become public record.

Publicly Available Data
With the public release of the 2013 TCAP and growth data, SchoolView has been updated

with those results. Online tools are available.

- Colorado Growth Model visualization tool
  https://edx.cde.state.co.us/growth_model/public/index.htm includes achievement and growth results for 2013. This is a good tool for comparing schools and districts visually.
- School and District Growth Summary Reports
  http://www.schoolview.org/ColoradoGrowthModel.asp and the Data Center http://bit.ly/17Nyiio include a static report providing growth results comparing school, district and state performance. Also included are dynamic views to see performance of individual schools and districts.
- Data Lab, http://www.schoolview.org/performance.asp, includes a tool that looks at large data sets to query the achievement and growth results in reading, writing and math.

Unified Improvement Planning Templates and Pre-Populated Reports
All districts and schools (including new schools) must complete an improvement plan using CDE's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) template. The templates incorporate state and federal accountability requirements into a single improvement plan and are available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_Templates.asp. Changes to the template are outlined in the Revisions to the 2013 Template document, http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/RevisionToUIPResources2013.pdf.

Pre-populated reports will be released by Sept. 4 in Word format for districts and schools – with Section I appended to the entire template. Word versions of the reports are not available through CEDAR. A link to access these reports will be emailed to superintendents and accountability contacts.

Unified Improvement Planning Fall Training Schedule
Training will be offered this fall to support districts through the stages of the improvement planning process. Registration is now open. For more information and to register, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Register.asp.

Federal Programs
CDE is reviewing modifications to the consolidated applications submitted by school districts and BOCES. If ESEA staff are unable to give final approval, the LEA will be contacted regarding necessary modifications. Final approval allows districts to request funds from CDE. Final approval is anticipated by mid-October. At that point ESEA programs will have distributed $165 million in NCLB funding to 150 local educational agencies.

What's on the Horizon:
School Accreditation Forms and Request for Reconsideration
Districts must submit an accreditation category for each of their schools to CDE by **Oct. 15**. If the framework or category used differs from the state framework, it must be submitted through the request to reconsider process. Districts can 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 Posting on SchoolView
There are two optional submission windows for publicly posting updated Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) on SchoolView which are in addition to the required windows in January and April. Every district and school must submit a revised/updated UIP by **April 15**; schools and districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type must submit by **Jan. 15**. The

Oct. 15 and **Jan. 15** submission dates for publicly posting plans are optional for districts and schools. For more information, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_tracker.

Unified Improvement Planning Optional Fall Review for Select Districts
Optional review of the revised UIP for 2013-14 is available for priority improvement and turn-around districts. This support is also being offered to all schools that have been awarded a Tiered Intervention Grant to give feedback sooner in the process to ensure the plan is stronger as the district and/or school begins implementation. Plans for the optional fall review are due by **Oct. 15** and will be submitted via the Tracker system. This fall submission does not take the place of the required winter submission due **Jan. 15** for Priority Improvement/Turnaround plans. For more information, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_tracker.

Federal Programs
Onsite ESEA program (Title IA, Title ID, Title IIA, Title III, and Immigrant Set Aside) monitoring reviews will be conducted in several districts this year. These will occur in districts not visited during the first four years of the 5-year monitoring cycle. Districts will be notified via email and the postal service. With the completion of this cycle, staff will update the indicators to more closely align with changes to the accountability system.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
- **Sept. 4** - Release of preliminary pre-populated 2013 Unified Improvement Plans (Section I) to districts.
- **Sept. 16**- Deadline for districts to submit an intent to submit a school or district request to reconsider.
- **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 and Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG) schools to submit UIPs through the Tracker system for a fall UIP (Data Narrative) review from CDE.
- **Oct. 15** – (Optional) Deadline for districts and schools to submit 2013-14 revised UIPs through Tracker for the fall public posting on SchoolView.org.

For more information on accountability and improvement, 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 on the Horizon:
Districts can apply for non-competitive grants to enhance collections in school library programs, thanks to an appropriation by the 2013 Legislature of $2 million to the State Library. A preliminary list of award amounts by district is at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/StateGrants.htm.
Eligibility forms will be available in mid-September. Funds will be distributed in October and must be expended by June 30, 2014. Uses include purchasing items for the library programs

in some or all schools such as print or online resources that benefit students and early learning efforts, but not hardware or classroom-based materials. Further information will be provided when available.

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

Organizational Effectiveness

*This month's update focuses on **RISE** and **Data Pipeline**.*

Overview:
Data Pipeline efficiently captures state educational data affecting every local education agency data collections process. Data Pipeline replaces the Automated Data Exchange (ADE). Superintendent support and involvement in the Data Pipeline project has been an integral component for the project's success.

CDE successfully launched Data Pipeline on Sept. 1. All interchanges and collections are open for data submission. CDE appreciates the tremendous effort that went in to making this final launch successful. From the Pipeline Project Team developing the system, to the LEA's participating in pilots, and to the eexecutive leadership, thank you for your support, feedback and assistance throughout the year.

What's Happening Now:
Training and Weekly Town Halls
Student October Count training sessions will be conducted during the Data Pipeline Town Halls through September. Please ensure your teams attend. To join these weekly events, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/train_trainings.asp

Data teams can download the new file layouts at:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/inter_interchanges.asp

What's on the Horizon:
Special Education Individualized Education Program Interchange Training
The Special Education Data Pipeline Team will conduct weekly training webinars in September and scheduling classroom training regionally in September and October.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
- Nov. 8 - Student October Count data submissions close

For more information, contact Lisa Bradley, IMS project manager, 303-866-4902. Visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/index.asp for more information.

For More Information

If you have general questions or need assistance, 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.

To access CDE fact sheets visit:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs. Access superintendent and principal tools at http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/superintendentandprincipaltools.

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