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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:

Important: User's Guide and Excel Versions of Rubrics

On Aug. 1, the user's guide for the Colorado State Model Evaluation System was released along with the Excel versions of the teacher and principal rubrics. Since the release, CDE has been made aware of several improvements that needed to be made to both the user's guide and Excel versions of the rubrics. As a result, all districts using the state model system are being asked to download the current version of the user's guide and Excel rubrics using the links below (a summary of the changes made are also available via these links).

- Download the guide (http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/Ed_Eval_User_Guide_8.pdf)
- Please note: changes that were made don't affect any training you had using the Aug.
 1 version of the user's guide.
- Download the current <u>Excel version of the teacher</u> <u>rubric</u> (<u>http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-teacher</u>) and the <u>Excel version of the principal rubric</u> (<u>http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-principal</u>).

For more information on the user's guide, contact Jean Williams at williams_j@cde.state.co.us. For more information on the Excel rubrics, contact Sed Keller at keller s@cde.state.co.us.

CDE Resource Bank Update

The CDE Resource Bank (http://www.coloradoplc.org/assessment) supports teachers by providing tools and resources that reinforce standards-based teaching and learning. About 550 assessments have been added to the Resource Bank through a review or development process by Content Collaboratives. The assessments provide Colorado educators with a starting point in understanding student learning and may be used for educator effectiveness.

They also support Colorado Academic Standards content areas as well as career and technical education pathways.

The most recent addition to the CDE Resource Bank are performance assessments (http://www.coloradoplc.org/node/12765) developed by Content Collaboratives this summer. Twenty performance assessments have been added and an additional 15 performance assessments are in process. Additionally, school districts or BOCES can now submit an assessment for inclusion in the bank. For an assessment to be considered for inclusion, a team of educators needs to review the assessment using CDE's Assessment Review Form (http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/educatoreffectiveness/downloads/implementation%20resources/assessment-content-review-tool.xlsx).

Training Webinars

To support districts as they get started on the evaluation process, the Educator Effectiveness team is offering a series of webinars this fall. The schedule for October is:

- Tuesday, Oct. 8 from 3:45-5:15 p.m.: "Beginning the student learning objective process"
- Tuesday, Oct. 22 from 3:45-5:15 p.m.: Technical assistance webinar (topic will be based on poll requests from the Oct. 8 webinar)

To view the schedule of webinars and to register, visit the trainings website (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-trainings). Districts can also request training support on the Educator Effectiveness website (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/training-request-form).

Quality Standards Reference Guides

The Teacher and Principal Quality Standards provide a common vision of great teaching and school leadership. They serve as the basis of educator evaluations as well as a tool for self-reflection, goal setting and ongoing professional growth. The Teacher Quality
Standards and Principal Quality Standards reference guides highlight critical aspects of great teaching and school leadership. You are encouraged to distribute these guides at staff meetings, professional development workshops, etc. and use these them as a quick reference to summarize the rubric and help increase the conversation about the complexity and importance of great teaching and leadership.

- Teacher Quality Standards Reference Guide: http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/teacherqualitystandardsreferenceguide
- Principal Quality Standards Reference Guide: http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-principal

Elevate Colorado

To support fair and consistent evaluations, CDE has developed tools to promote common interpretations of teacher quality and help evaluators provide useful and actionable feedback to educators. One such tool is Elevate Colorado, an online inter-rater agreement training system. This online system helps evaluators develop a deeper understanding of the professional practices embodied in the Colorado State Model Evaluation System's teacher rubric. While Elevate Colorado won't be available in full capacity until August 2014, components are available now. Educators can view short videos of practicing teachers, align observable professional practices from Standards I-III of the Colorado State Model Evaluation System rubric and receive feedback showing how close their alignment is compared to that of master scorers.

To begin, visit the Elevate Colorado website (http://www.mlpelevate.com/cdesignup.html).

Please register, use the tutorials provided to explore the system, and view a lesson to practice aligning professional practices from the rubric. Once you're finished, there will be an opportunity to complete a short feedback form on the quality of the content and the system. Your input will be invaluable as we progress in the development of the system and build out full teaching cases that will incorporate multiple videos and artifacts of a teacher over time.

Student and Teacher Perception Survey Toolkits

Gathering student and teacher perceptions are optional measures that can be used in the professional practice portion of educator evaluations. If you are thinking about using Teacher and/or Student Perception Surveys in 2013-14 school year as a component of your educator evaluations, the Colorado Legacy Foundation (CLF) has engaged in a rigorous development and pilot process to create surveys that are specifically designed with input from Colorado districts, teachers, and students and aligned to Colorado's Teacher and Principal Quality Standards. These surveys are available for optional district use and CLF has released a student perception survey toolkit to support teacher evaluations and a teacher perception survey toolkit to support principal evaluations with everything needed for implementation. For more information, visit the links below.

- Student Perception Survey Toolkit (to support teacher evaluations): http://colegacy.org/initiatives/educator-effectiveness/data-use/studentsurvey/
- Teacher Perception Survey Toolkit (to support principal evaluations):
 http://colegacy.org/initiatives/educator-effectiveness/data-use/teachersurvey/

Specialized Service Professionals Pilot Rubrics

Selected districts and BOCES will be piloting the evaluation of specialized service professionals for the 2013-14 school year. The rubrics that are being used for the pilot are available on the Educator Effectiveness website

(http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/specializedserviceprofessionals). CDE will be making improvements to these rubrics over the course of the 2013-14 school year and the final rubrics to be used for the evaluation of specialized service professionals in the 2014-15 school year will be available in August 2014.

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:

School Readiness

Guidance document: Additional resources for school readiness implementation are now available. A School Readiness Assessment Guidance document 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. View the document at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/assessment.

Technical assistance: Through the Early Learning Challenge Fund, CDE 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).

Teaching Strategies GOLD: The school readiness website has information to support districts implementing Teaching Strategies GOLD in kindergarten, including technical support with managing subscriptions and the GOLD Nuggets Newsletter. Access these resources at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/informationfordistrictspilotinggold20132014-0

The READ Act

Guidance for students with disabilities: The Office of Literacy in collaboration with the Exceptional Student Services Unit has released guidance related to implementing READ plans for students with disabilities. The guidance document and a recorded webinar are available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/documentsandfags.

Reviews of Interim Reading Assessments: The department is looking for qualified reading educators to participate in an interim reading assessment review process. Reviewers will assist the department in identifying appropriate interim reading assessments for the READ Act. State board of education rules stipulate that the interim reading assessment list for the READ Act will be updated prior to the 2014-2015 school year. This month, the department released a request for information (RFI) to solicit interim assessments to be reviewed by Colorado reading educators on **October 24**. All interested reading educators are encouraged to apply and are advised to read the evaluation rubrics within the RFI before initiating an application. View the RFI and application at

http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp. CDE anticipates making recommendations to the state board on interim assessments at the **November** board meeting with a vote anticipated at the **December** meeting. Following the adoption of an approved interim assessment list, districts will have until July 1, 2016 to transition to the approved interim assessments.

READ Act resources: The Colorado READ Act provides resources to districts through per pupil intervention funding based on the number of students identified with a significant reading deficiency. READ funds were distributed to districts in September. 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.

Technical assistance: The READ Act also provides resources through regional technical assistants. To view the regional technical assistants, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/contactus.

For more information, go to

http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/contactus#sthash.0i1DmNLk.dpuf

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.

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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 testing for the science and social studies elementary and middle school content field tests was completed in September. Field testing for high school content will be from **Oct. 28 through Nov. 22.** Field testing for the alternate science and social studies assessments, developed for students with significant cognitive disabilities, will be from **Oct. 21 through Nov. 22.**

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) English Language Arts and Mathematics Field Testing

Districts were notified in September of initially selected schools for field testing. These schools were randomly selected by PARCC to ensure representation across Colorado and across the consortium. PARCC field testing will be administered over two spring assessment windows. The Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) window runs from **March 24 through April 11**. The End-of-Year (EOY) Assessment window runs from **May 5 through June 6**. A new PARCC fact sheet is available in the assessment communications resources on the CDE website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs-assessment. For more information about PARCC, contact Stephanie Boyd at boyd s@cde.state.co.us.

ACCESS for ELLs Training

Remaining October trainings are Tuesday, **Oct. 1**, in Limon; Thursday, **Oct. 3** in Boulder; Monday, **Oct. 7**, in Aurora. To register, visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2013ACCESSAdminTrg.

New Assessment eNewsletter

CDE recently launched a new e-newsletter providing important monthly updates to help with the implementation of new assessments in Colorado. Please <u>subscribe</u>! (http://bit.ly/1bfF6p3) To view the archive, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/e-newsletters.

What's on the Horizon:

CoAlt Administration Trainings

CDE will provide CoAlt assessment administration trainings for district assessment coordinators in November and December. CoAlt assessments are for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Training dates and locations are listed below:

- November 18: Grand Junction
- November 20: Durango
- November 22: Pueblo
- November 25: Greeley
- December 4: Limon
- December 11: Denver/Golden

Contact Mira Monroe at Monroe_m@cde.state.co.us for more information about the CoAlt assessments.

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.

New Assessment Scores Workgroup

A workgroup from the Colorado School Public Relations Association (COSPRA), a team of professional communication experts, is developing a statewide communications plan focusing on the new assessment scores resulting from implementing more rigorous standards and assessments. While the likely 'score dip' is about 18 months away, the group wants to be proactive in shaping the context of the community discussion. The plan will support ways for education and community leaders to talk about how to appropriately interpret scores on the new assessments. The COSPRA workgroup is using best practices from across the country to craft key messages; identify stakeholders and methods for early engagement; and develop components for a district communications toolkit. Stay tuned for the release of key messages and other supports this fall.

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 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 also 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 available at:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/RequestToReconsider.asp.

If an intent to submit a request was not communicated to CDE by **Sept.16**, districts may still submit requests to reconsider, but CDE staff are not able to provide technical assistance on the data included in the request. All requests officially submitted on **Oct. 15** will become public record.

Unified Improvement Planning Templates and Pre-Populated Reports

All pre-populated reports for the UIP have been released. An email with a unique URL was sent to superintendents and district accountability contacts on Sept. 4. The URL links to a Zip file containing Word versions of the district and school level UIP reports. These reports are not available in CEDAR. If you didn't receive an email, please contact Jamie Baker at baker j@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6108.

The pre-populated reports have the UIP template attached. 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. To access addenda forms and additional resources, go to: www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_templates.

Some of the data in the reports are preliminary (e.g., plan type) or are not yet available (e.g.,

Title III AMAOs, performance framework data for AECs). Reports will be re-populated for all districts, all AECs, and any schools with updated information (i.e., plan type assignment updated through the request to reconsider process) once the Performance Frameworks have been finalized in December.

Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Timeline

Based on feedback and through discussion with the S.B. 163 Superintendents' Accountability Task Force, CDE is making adjustments to the UIP timeline. The planning process is considered a continuous improvement cycle, meaning that schools and districts are engaged in planning, evaluating and implementing the plans on an ongoing basis. Schools and districts are encouraged to build a planning calendar for their own local situation – rather than letting state timelines dictate the process. CDE refined the due dates this year so that only schools and districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type must submit by Jan. 15, 2014. Any other program reviews will take place in alignment with the April 15, 2014 submission deadline. Schools and districts can still submit updated plans through Tracker at multiple times during the year far in advance of the spring deadline to update plans on SchoolView earlier in the year. Resources for submitting UIPs (including timelines and instructional guides for using Tracker) can be found on the UIP Submissions site: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip trainingandsupport tracker.

Fall Unified Improvement Plan Submissions and Technical Assistance

The first 2013-14 submission cycle for submitting UIPs for public posting on SchoolView is **Sept. 30 to Oct. 15**. Submission is optional and open to all districts to submit any district and/or school plans that have been revised and may replace the currently posted plan on SchoolView. Plans may be submitted again during the winter and spring cycles as long as every district and school plan has been submitted for posting by **April 15**, **2014**. CDE is tracking plan submissions to ensure that each plan has been submitted for posting by the required date.

For districts on Priority Improvement or Turnaround and for schools receiving a Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG), CDE is offering additional support by providing an optional UIP review. Eligible districts/schools should submit a draft of their UIP (even if it is just the updated data narrative) by **Oct. 15** through Tracker. The review provides support and feedback sooner in the planning process to help strengthen the plan. This review is optional and does not replace the required winter review.

Submission reminders will be sent via email to district Tracker contacts throughout the year, as submission windows approach. A more detailed submission timeline is also available on the UIP website.

Unified Improvement Planning Fall Training Schedule

Several fall training sessions are still open for registration! Upcoming sessions include UIP Basics II (Action Planning), Going Beyond TCAP Data for Improvement Planning and Progress Monitoring. Sessions are offered in various regions of the state. For details including session descriptions, dates, and locations, visit the UIP Training webpage at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport.

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. If interested, contact Erin Loften, loften_e@cde.state.co.us.

Exceptional Student Services

Accommodations: The Colorado Accommodation Manual: Selecting and Using Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment is posted at

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/accommodations. PowerPoints used for the webinar trainings are posted on the Assessment Unit webpage under Trainings at http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment.

Standards: The Unit is working with the Office of Standards and Instruction on the District Sample Curriculum Project as the office goes out this fall to work with district teams and build out a sample unit for each grade and content area with accommodations, instructional strategies and resources. These units are incorporated into trainings and serve as a model for the Implementing Standards-Based Differentiated Instruction Blended Learning Project. Five elementary teams and five secondary teams will be selected (teams were asked to register via an item in *The Scoop*) to complete in an eight-week online course and then work with nine CDE specialists to design, deliver and evaluate a unit of instruction.

Assessment: As soon as arrangements are complete and the consortia vendor for the alternate ELA and math assessments are announced, training will begin for teachers. This is a great opportunity to improve standards-based instruction and assessment for students with a significant cognitive disability and to measure their progress on new alternate assessments for tested content areas. Colorado teachers will have an opportunity to participate in assessment development activities.

Data Pipeline will house the 11th-grade Alternate Assessment for the Colorado ACT. Training for district assessment coordinators and data respondents is planned for late fall for the spring 2014 administration.

On the Horizon:

Final SPF and DPF Ratings

CDE will present the district accreditation categories to the state board of education at the **Nov. 13** meeting. The state board will approve the school plan type assignments at its **Dec. 4** meeting. After the presentation, the 2013 School and District Performance Frameworks will be available in SchoolView and Data Center.

Implementation of S.B. 13-193 (Increasing Parent Involvement in Schools)

This legislation calls for activities by CDE, local boards, schools and districts to engage in activities that will increase family involvement in schools. Key responsibilities include:

- Appointing a district-level parent engagement liaison to serve as the CDE's point of contact for parent involvement.
- Encouraging greater parent participation on district accountability committees and school accountability committees.
- Implementing the local school board's parent engagement policy.
- For schools with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type, the Unified Improvement Plan must include parent involvement activities.

CDE, in partnership with the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) provides support to districts and schools, including:

- Developing and offering statewide trainings, including presentations based on best practices and skills needed by district and charter school personnel in working with parents.
- Developing tools and resources to meaningfully gather input and monitoring Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) implementation.
- Coordinating professional development/technical assistance provisions to schools and districts for facilitating DAC and SAC meetings and meeting requirements
- Other supports as the need arises

To support this work, CDE hired Darcy Hutchins, director of family and community partnership

engagement. Darcy can be reached at https://hutchins_d@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-5921.

Federal Programs

CDE will honor a variety of districts and schools for their accomplishments (Centers of Excellence, John Irwin Schools of Excellence, Governor's Distinguished Improvement, Districts Accredited with Distinction and/or ESEA Reward Schools) with a ceremony on Tuesday, Dec. 3, from 9 a.m. to noon in the Colorado Department of Education Lobby at 201 E. Colfax Ave. in Denver. Data for each of these awards are being compiled and validated now. CDE will notify award-winning sites in late-November. Due to space limitations, attendance will be limited to the superintendent and one guest.

Seventy-three districts/BOCES have final approval in the NCLB Consolidated Application and can access funding. Title program consultants are working closely with all other districts to resolve the remaining questions surrounding applications and to provide final approval. Final approval is expected by mid-October.

Upcoming Dates:

- Oct. 1 and Oct. 9: ESSU Webinar: Writing Measurable Goals for Students Receiving Instruction on Alternate Standards
- Oct. 5: Release of preliminary 2013 AEC School Performance Framework reports to districts for review.
- Oct. 15: Priority Improvement and Turnaround Districts may submit a revised UIP to CDE for an early review and feedback. *Note: this does not take the place of the required winter review.*
 - -Schools receiving a Tiered Intervention Grant may submit a revised UIP to CDE for an early review and feedback. *Note: this does not take the place of the required winter review for TIG schools on Priority Improvement or Turnaround.*
 - -All districts and schools have the option to submit their revised UIP to CDE through the Tracker system to update the publicly posted plan on SchoolView.
 - -Deadline for all districts to submit School Accreditation Form and (if desired) Requests to Reconsider district accreditation ratings and school plan type assignments.

For more information on accountability and improvement, contact Keith Owen, Deputy Commissioner, 303-866-6099.

Organizational Effectiveness

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

Data Pipeline efficiently captures state educational data and replaces the Automated Data Exchange (ADE). Superintendent support and involvement in the Data Pipeline project is incredibly important as Pipeline is a critical, integral component for the success of RISE.

During the first year of Data Pipeline there is a lot to learn as new processes are developed to accommodate the shift in data collection approach. CDE is confident that as these new processes develop, collection will be more efficient and allow the state to be more responsive to legislative changes in data requests with minimal impact on LEA's.

What's Happening Now:

Open Snapshots and Collections

Student October Snapshot and December Finance Collection are open for submissions in Data Pipeline.

Training and Weekly Town Halls

Student Profile and Student October snapshot training sessions continue. To join these weekly events, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/train_trainings.asp.

Phase Pilot II Special Education End of Year Pilot

This pilot tests the functionality of the IEP Interchange in both the ESSU Statewide Data Management System and Data Pipeline. Contact the CDE support team to get involved datapipeline.support@cde.state.co.us.

Data Teams need to download the new file layouts. Please direct data teams to http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/inter-interchanges.asp

What's on the Horizon:

Special Education Individualized Education Program (IEP) Interchange Training
The Special Education Data Pipeline Team will schedule classroom training regionally in
October.

Visit the Data Pipeline homepage for more information http://www.cde.state.co.us/DataPipeline/index.asp.

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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