CDE UPDATE
Strategic Priorities

COLORADO
DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION **cde**

March 2014

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http://www.cde.state.co.us/update/

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:
Evaluation Process Webinars
CDE is offering a series of monthly webinars with topics that follow the part of the evaluation process districts are working through. Participants will engage with CDE staff and others around the state. March's webinar is on **March 26** from 4-5:30 p.m. and focuses on preparing for final ratings and end of year conferences. To register, visit:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014EEwebinarseries.
Note: In advance of each webinar, a short 10-15 minute recorded module with an overview of the webinar content will be available at
http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/trainingwebinarsonthestatemodelevaluation process. CDE recommends watching the module prior to the webinar.

State Model Specialized Service Professionals Trainings
Several one-day trainings will be held in April and May for specialized service professionals and their evaluators. The sessions will focus on both parts of the evaluation system: professional practices and measures of student outcomes. Participants will learn about the critical effects of S.B. 10-191, the evaluation process, components of the specialized service professional rubrics, instructions on how to score the rubrics, and how to make determinations for the measures of student outcomes. For a list of dates and locations and to register, visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ssptraining. If you have questions, contact Tricia Majors at Majors_T@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6678.

Assurances for Educator Evaluation Systems
By **July 1** of each year, all districts and BOCES are to provide an assurance that they are evaluating their licensed personnel against the educator Quality Standards that are aligned with S.B. 10-191 and state board rules. To view the 2014 assurances and other resources related to submitting assurances, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb-

assurances. If you have questions, contact Toby King at King_T@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6964.

Educator Effectiveness Team Available for Content Specific Questions
Realizing school districts and BOCES are in different stages as they implement new educator evaluation elements, the Educator Effectiveness team is available to support you with your content specific questions. Whether you have a question on measures of student learning, professional practices, inter-rater agreement, the online performance management system, or other issues, the team can help. For direct assistance, contact Toby King at King_T@cde.state.co.us or call 303-866-6964.

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 three-year school readiness initiative implementation process. The Teaching and Learning Unit offers schools and districts resources and supports to enhance student learning and achievement.

What's Happening Now:
Standards
On **March 31**, more than 100 full instructional units based on the Colorado Academic Standards will be posted on the website. These units, authored by teams of educators representing 116 Colorado school districts, include learning experiences, teacher and student resources, assessment ideas and differentiation options. One full instructional unit, based on a select unit overview sample (http://bit.ly/1ebcMzg), has been created for each grade and content area by the teacher-author teams (e.g., one unit K-12 for each academic content area). An example of one of these units is available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction.

Early Learning and School Readiness
School Readiness Assessment Funding: Applications are available for school readiness assessment funding for the 2014-15 school year. Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant provides resources and supports for districts with implementation of school readiness plans and assessments in kindergarten including subscription costs for Teaching Strategies GOLD for kindergarten students. The application and a recorded webinar about funding are available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness.

School Readiness Support: Area meetings will be held in March to provide information on the school readiness initiative and assessment funding. Meetings will be held March 6 in Ft. Collins, March 10 in Steamboat Springs, March 12 in South Denver, March 19 in Limon and a date to be determined in North Denver. Information on meeting dates, locations, and registration can be found at http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness. Contact Suzanne Rougier at rougier_s@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6971 with questions or requests for support.

The READ Act
Approved List of New Interim Reading Assessments: The READ Act requires the state board of education to approve a list of interim reading assessments for use in identification of significant reading deficiencies and progress monitoring for students in kindergarten through third grade. The board approved seven English and three Spanish reading assessments:

aimsweb, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Learning Skills Next (DIBELS Next), Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL), Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), i Ready, ISIP Early Reading, ISIP Early Reading Spanish, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Español and STAR Early Learning.

Districts have until **July 1, 2016** to transition to the approved interim assessments. The department will conduct another assessment review process prior to this date. A description of the review process can be found at http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readreviewprocess.

Early Literacy Assessment Tool Project: The 2012 School Finance Act required CDE to issue a competitive request for proposals for the state to purchase an early literacy assessment tool teachers can use to obtain real-time assessment of the reading skill levels of students in kindergarten through third grade. The intent was to support state purchase of software that provides individualized assessments with immediate results, stores and analyzes those results and recommends activities based on those results. In 2013, the contract was awarded to Amplify for its DIBELS Next system and Burst diagnostic reading assessments. Funding covers the cost of the online software license and training. Hardware is not included. Districts currently participating in the project as well as interested districts must submit an application for the licenses by **April 15**. For more, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/assessmenttool.

Instructional Programming Resource Bank: CDE has issued a request for information to solicit instructional programs for the advisory list in the CDE READ Act resource bank for the 2014-15 school year. This is not a competitive process. Any provider that meets the criteria specified in the RFI may be considered for inclusion on the list. The list will be updated annually. For more information, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp.

Follow-up: Media Panel Discussion
CDE coordinated a panel discussion focusing on key education reform efforts on **Feb. 22** at the Colorado Press Association annual conference in Denver. Session attendees (reporters and editors) heard directly from Jill Hawley, associate commissioner, CDE; Linda Reed, superintendent, Archuleta School District; Tiffany Utoft, integration project manager, Thompson School District; Maura Walz, editor, Chalkbeat Colorado; and Sunny Flynn, a Jefferson county parent speaking against Common Core. The goal of the session was to provide Colorado journalists with factual information on subjects such as Colorado Academic Standards/Common Core State Standards and allow them to hear directly from educators like Tiffany Utoft and Linda Reed who have actual experience implementing the reform efforts. Maura Walz encouraged the reporters to go beyond the typical political stories on common core and move towards talking to their local teachers about their implementation experience, benefits, concerns, etc. Districts should be prepared for local media to be in touch with them. Please feel free to contact the CDE communications team for any support: CDE_Communications_Office@cde.state.co.us.

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:__
WestEd Study on Impact of Assessment
CDE is actively listening to and hearing from educators around the state about concerns regarding the implementation of the new upcoming assessments. To do its best problem-solving, CDE is working with the nonprofit education research agency WestEd to study the implications of assessment changes on districts to research assessment requirements, gather data from a representative sample of districts across the state regarding the implications of the requirements and submit findings and recommendations to the department. This study will also take into consideration district and school level assessments. The multi-phase study will provide information this spring (from data gathered prior to the science and social studies assessments), summer (from data gathered after the science and social studies assessments) and at various times during the 2014-15 school year to inform the work pre/post PARCC administration. The department will share results of the study with stakeholders, use the information to refine policies and procedures and use the recommendations to propose any policy changes that might emerge from the findings. For more information, visit http://bit.ly/1cy0VyR.

TCAP
TCAP testing for grades 4-10 and grade 3 writing and mathematics starts this month. For regular testers, the window opens **March 10**. For early testers, the window opens **March 3**. Materials should be returned to CTB as soon as possible after the closing of the district 3-week testing window.

Site Readiness Preparation
The elementary and middle school science and social studies assessments will be delivered online this spring from **April 14-May 2**. Various site readiness activities conducted by CDE, paired with school success in spring and fall field testing, suggests most schools are on track to administer the assessments online. Contact Collin Bonner at 303-866-6752 or bonner_c@cde.state.co.us if your district has any of these issues:

- low bandwidth (<5mbs)
- reliance on thin clients
- Linux systems
- high student to device ratios. In a school that is going to be testing two grades, more than 6 students per device for the grade with the greatest number of students may be problematic, depending on the length of the school day (e.g., more than 150 students in 5th-grade with 25 devices meeting minimum requirements may present challenges for developing a testing schedule.)

CMAS Science and Social Studies Assessments
The new science and social studies assessments have a variety of accessibility features available to all students and accommodations available to students with disabilities and English language learners. Students requiring special online forms (text-to-speech, color contrast, and oral script) need to be reassigned to the relevant form on the Form Assignment page in PearsonAccess. District assessment coordinators, and their district data support, should also be updating student records in PearsonAccess to reflect student need for paper accommodations. For initial orders, records must be updated no later than **March 14**. DACs received training on how to accomplish these tasks in January and February. Additional support may be found under the Colorado section of pearsonaccess.com.

Accessibility Features and Accommodations Requiring Ordering and/or Online Form Assignment	Order through either Student Data Upload or Student-by-Student	Online Form Assignment
Form: Text-to-speech		X
Form: Color contrast		X
Form: Color contrast with text-to-speech		X
Form: Oral script with Oral script for online form (English, Spanish)	X	X
Accommodated paper form	X	
Paper form: Braille	X	
Paper form: Paper large print	X	
Oral script for paper form (English, Spanish)	X	

PARCC Field Testing
PARCC field testing starts **March 24**. Pre-selected participating schools are encouraged to complete TCAP testing prior to starting PARCC field testing. Hundreds of educators from participating states have been instrumental in developing and reviewing the test items. Students and schools will not be scored on the field tests, which are designed to make sure test items and the technology function correctly. PARCC will update items and tutorials this month based on feedback from the field. About 1.2 million students in 14 of the PARCC states – roughly 10 percent of students in grades 3 through 11 across the consortium – will take the field test this spring. All students in the PARCC states will have access to practice tests this spring, so students and teachers not participating in the field test can become familiar with the types of test items and the functionality of the online testing.

PARCC Bias and Sensitivity Reviews
All PARCC items go through a multi-stage review process by state department staff and educators in the field. Items are reviewed for content and for bias and sensitivity. PARCC will hold one of its many bias and sensitivity reviews in Colorado at the end of the month with selected educators from around the country.

What's on the Horizon:
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0
The provider of ACCESS for ELLs, WIDA, is developing a new online and paper-based assessment with a 35-state consortium, Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS). These next generation English Language Proficiency tests will be administered for the first time in 2015-16. For more information, visit http://assets.wceruw.org/aboutUs/grantTimeline.aspx. WIDA is field testing items for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. To learn more about the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 field test, visit http://www.wida.us/assessment/access20.aspx.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

Assessment	Assessment Window
CoAlt Reading, Writing and Math	Feb. 5 – March 14
TCAP Grade 3 Reading and Lectura	Feb. 24 – March 7
TCAP (all other grades and content areas)	March 10 – April 11
CMAS and CoAlt Elementary and Middle School Science and Social Studies	April 14 – May 2

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.

Notice of Rulemaking – Accountability Rules
At the January state board meeting, CDE presented revisions to the rules concerning accountability for districts and schools (SB 163 rules). These updates are required as a result of new legislation passed during the 2013 legislative session and the Office of Legislative Legal Services' review of the current rules. CDE is recommending a few revisions to better streamline the rules. The official hearing for the rules will be in March. Draft rules are posted at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/stateaccountabilityregulations. Written comments may be submitted to state.board@cde.state.co.us or by mail to: State Board Office, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Room 506, Denver, CO 80203-1087.

Alternative Education Campuses- 2014-15 Applications
Each year schools need to apply to receive Alternative Education Campus status. While many schools serve "at-risk" students and create interventions to ensure students graduate college and career ready, an AEC is unique because 95 percent of students are truly high-risk (http://bit.ly/1fhvaNc). AECs receive the same funding as other schools and are to follow all the same laws and regulations; however, AECs have specialized missions and structures, so a different accountability framework is used to better match the schools' purposes.

To support schools and districts with the 2014-15 applications for AEC status, CDE is pre-populating the applications with Student October Count and End of Year data based on October 2013 enrollment. In early March, districts with 2013-14 approved AECs will receive an email to access their student level pre-populated application at a secure FTP link. Districts are asked to complete the remaining portions of the application by the beginning of April. If a district wants to apply for a new school to receive AEC status, email Jessica Knevals, Knevals_j@cde.state.co.us.

Alternative Education Campuses- Operationalizing Criteria for Eligibility
The Accountability and Data Analysis Unit met with stakeholders to operationalize the definition of over-age and under-credit for Alternative Education Campus eligibility for 2014-15 applications. State law defined this as "[A student who] is over traditional school age for his or her grade level and lacks adequate credit hours for his or her grade level." CDE is reviewing feedback and will release final guidance in early March.

UIP Feedback
District-level and school-level feedback is released as it becomes available. Superintendents and district accountability contacts receive an email with instructions to obtain feedback and next steps in the improvement planning process. Schools are not contacted directly; districts decide when and how to share feedback with their school staff.

Districts and schools required to resubmit a revised plan for re-review, must upload the revised plan through the Tracker system by **March 31**. Districts are to ensure needed revisions are made to school plans. CDE provides trainings, by request. Look for session logistics on the UIP website and in the *Scoop* later this month.

UIPs for Public Posting
All district and school Unified Improvement Plans are to be submitted each year by **April 15** through the online Tracker system beginning **March 15**. More information on how to submit plans will be available later this month via *The Scoop*.

Family Engagement Promising Practice Trainings
CDE, in Collaboration with the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education, is hosting an encore training session on how to start a comprehensive, sustainable partnership structure in schools and districts. A Denver Metro training is slated for **April 17**. To register, visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FamilyEngagement2014#sthash.qgwuQIhm.dpuf.

Important Upcoming Deadlines
- **March 30:** Districts and schools with required changes are to submit revised UIPs for re-review (plans accepted by **March 31**).
- **April 4:** Deadline for districts to submit alternative education campus applications for 2014-15.
- **April 15:** District and school unified improvement plans must be submitted for public posting to SchoolView.

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

Organizational Effectiveness

Overview:
Local education agencies continue to submit data within **Data Pipeline**. CDE is strengthening the system from lessons learned as we progress through this initial year. This month Report Card March and ACCESS for ELLs SBD open. Other open collections are Human Resources, Special Education December Count, 11th-Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT, and Directory.

What's Happening Now:
Local education agencies are submitting and cleaning files for Report Card March. This collection opens **March 5** and closes **April 2.**

ACCESS for ELLs Student Biographical Data
This review is tentatively scheduled for **March 20-27**. This is an opportunity for districts to review and update the student biographical data associated with the ACCESS for ELLs state assessment. If there is a change to the schedule, the Assessment Unit will notify District Assessment Coordinators.

Human Resources
Staff Profile and Staff Assignment files should be submitted through the Staff Interchange. Snapshot approvals are due by **March 14**.

Special Education December Count
Administrative units continue to resolve duplicates and finalize snapshots by **March 6.**

11th-Grade Alternate Assessment
Another snapshot should be taken to update rosters. The test administration window is **April 1 -25**. Sign-off forms verifying the accuracy of entered student scores are due **May 8**.

Directory
The four day school week application is open. The due date is **May 9**. 2014-15 school codes changes may be submitted to CDE for entry into the Data Pipeline system for the 2014-15 school year. The annual four-day school week application can be accessed in Data Pipeline through the directory.

Student End of Year
This collection is open within production for piloting purposes.

Special Education Discipline
The discipline interchange continues to be open for submissions. Incident and action files should be included. The snapshot opens in May.

What's on the Horizon:
READ and Math Science Partnerships collections open in April.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:
- **March 6 –** Administrative units approve final December Count snapshots after resolving duplicate count issues.
- **March 14 –** Human Resources snapshot approval due.
- **March 14 –**11th-Grade Alternate Assessment snapshot taken to verify and update roster.
- **March 27 –** Tentative deadline for ACCESS for ELLs SBD.

For more information, contact Jan Rose Petro, director of data services, Petro_J@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6838. Submit questions and issues to datapipeline.support@cde.state.co.us.

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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