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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:**

#### **Evaluation Process Webinars**

CDE is offering a series of monthly webinars with topics following the part of the evaluation process districts are working through. Participants will engage with CDE staff and others around the state. April's webinar is on **Tuesday, April 22** from 4-5:30 p.m. and focuses on determining measures of student learning ratings and addresses how to do this when all the data isn't available. 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 is available at <http://bit.ly/1i0i6Jm>. CDE recommends watching the module prior to the webinar.

#### **State Model Specialized Service Professionals Trainings**

Last month the Educator Effectiveness team released the schedule for the specialized service professionals trainings focused on both parts of the evaluation system: professional practice and measures of student outcomes. An overwhelming response prompted the addition of two more training dates in May (**May 21** in Colorado Springs and **May 22** in Thornton). To register for an open training, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ssptraining>. If you have questions, contact Tricia Majors at [Majors\\_T@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Majors_T@cde.state.co.us) or 303-866-6678.

#### **New: Elevate Colorado (Inter-rater Agreement) Trainings**

The Educator Effectiveness team will provide several three-hour trainings in April and May for educators interested in learning how to build inter-rater agreement systems with Elevate Colorado. Elevate Colorado is an online training system that includes videos of lessons that are aligned by master coders to professional practices in the Colorado State Model Evaluation System teacher rubric. During the training, participants will explore components of an inter-rater agreement system and learn how to use Elevate Colorado as a part of that system. The technical components of Elevate Colorado and how to align evidence of a

teacher's practice will also be covered. To register, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MJVV2Q3>. Registration is free, but a minimum of 10 participants is required per training or the training could be cancelled. To have an accurate count, please register at least one week prior to your training. For more information, contact Joslyn Robich at [robich\\_joslyn2@cde.state.co.us](mailto:robich_joslyn2@cde.state.co.us) or 303-866-6221.

**What's on the Horizon:**

**Colorado State Model Evaluation System Teacher Rubric Resource Guide**

To support fair and consistent evaluations, CDE is developing tools to promote common interpretations of teacher quality. One tool being developed in partnership with the Colorado Legacy Foundation and PhocuseD On Learning, is a resource guide that defines the standards, elements and professional practices of the Colorado State Model Evaluation System teacher rubric. The guide will help educators come to a common understanding of all components of the teacher rubric and better decipher individual professional practices on the rubric. It will include detailed examples of what proficiency looks like in each element, coaching/self-reflection questions and links to additional resources. This new resource will serve as a learning tool for both leaders and teachers as they build their understanding and improve in all aspects of instruction. Watch for the **May CDE Update** for more information on the release of this tool.

**Important Upcoming Deadlines:**

**Submit your intent to use the Colorado State Model Performance Management System**

CDE has contracted with RANDA Solutions, Inc. to create an online performance management system to support districts using the Colorado State Model Evaluation System. The Colorado State Model Performance Management System, pending no major development issues, will be ready for the 2014-2015 school year. A [beta-test](http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/copms#betatest) (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/copms#betatest>) is happening now with select districts and will be conducted throughout spring 2014. The current development schedule anticipates a district's local access managers having access in July 2014 to set up CDE identity management. Educators and districts using the Colorado State Model Online Performance Management System are anticipated to have access to RANDA by early August 2014.

This is an optional tool provided free-of-charge to all districts. To assist the Educator Effectiveness team in creating training and implementation plans for this summer, please let us know if you are considering using the system for next year via the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RSDQG66> by **April 25**. If you have questions regarding the State Model Performance Management System, contact Joslyn Robich at [robich\\_joslyn2@cde.state.co.us](mailto:robich_joslyn2@cde.state.co.us) or 303-866-6221.

**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. 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](mailto:King_T@cde.state.co.us) or 303-866-6964.

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

### **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. The Teaching and Learning Unit offers schools and districts resources and supports to enhance student learning and achievement.

### **What's Happening Now:**

#### **Early Learning and School Readiness**

*School Readiness Assessment Funding:* 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. Applications for school readiness assessment funding for the 2014-15 school year were due in March; however, please contact Suzanne Rougier ([rougier\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:rougier_s@cde.state.co.us)) in the School Readiness Office if you have questions or wish to access these funds, but missed the deadline. As a reminder, full implementation of the school readiness initiative goes into effect during the 2015-2016 school year.

*School Readiness Summer Training Opportunities:* CDE will host summer training events to support the school readiness initiative. Training will be offered for teachers and principals related to formative assessment and best practices for kindergarten as well as training for districts implementing *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Tentative locations and dates are Sterling, **June 17**; Denver (south), **June 19**; Grand Junction, **June 24**; Steamboat Springs, **June 26**; La Junta, **July 22**; Alamosa, **July 29**; Durango, **July 31**; Denver (north), **Aug. 5**; Pueblo, **Aug. 7**; Denver (north), **Aug. 8**; Aurora, **Aug. 11** and Greeley, **Aug. 12**. More information about the events can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness>. Contact Suzanne Rougier at [rougier\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:rougier_s@cde.state.co.us) with questions.

*Colorado's Early Childhood and Preschool Quality Rating and Improvement System:* The Colorado Department of Human Services is implementing a new early childhood and preschool Quality Rating and Improvement System. The system will be embedded in the licensing of all early education and child care programs, including district-operated preschool programs and will be implemented in four phases beginning in 2014 and ending by January 2016.

Phase 1 will include current Qualistar-rated programs or programs accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Phase 2 will include programs that are partially quality rated. Phase 3 will include programs seeking to be early adopters who may be qualified to access grant funds for the rating process. Phase 4 will include all remaining programs. Districts can learn more about the system and implications for their preschool programs through their Colorado Preschool Program coordinators and a webinar on **April 23**. For more information, visit [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cde\\_calendar/2014-04](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_calendar/2014-04). When CDHS releases the full implementation timeline, CDE will work closely with CDHS to disseminate information to districts. More information is available at <http://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com/#!/qris/c5ch>.

*Colorado Preschool Program Regional Meetings:* Colorado Preschool Program staff are hosting a series of regional meetings for CPP coordinators. In addition to information on the CPP Coordinator Handbooks and 2014 Legislative Report, this year's topics include Results Matter Data Privacy Policy Kit, the upcoming launch of Colorado's new Quality Rating Improvement System, Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines and news about Colorado's Professional Development System. Dates, locations, registration and meeting information are available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp>. Contact Nan Vendegna

at [vendegna\\_n@cde.state.co.us](mailto:vendegna_n@cde.state.co.us) with questions.

### **The READ Act**

*Early Literacy Assessment Tool Project:* Applications for the Early Literacy Assessment Tool funding for the 2014-15 school year are due **April 15**. Funding covers the cost of the online software license and training for Amplify's DIBELS Next system. Hardware is not included. Districts participating in the project and those interested in participating must submit an application. For more information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/assessmenttool>.

*Regional READ Act Training:* The Office of Literacy will conduct a series of trainings for teachers in kindergarten through 3rd-grade, literacy coordinators and coaches and elementary school principals to support implementation of the READ Act. The trainings will include information about effective implementation practices, development of READ Plans, specific guidance for English Learners and the spring READ data collection. Dates, locations, registration and meeting information is at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>. Contact Marisa Herrera at [herrera\\_m@cde.state.co.us](mailto:herrera_m@cde.state.co.us) or 303-866-6189 with questions.

### **Important Upcoming Deadlines:**

The READ collection opens **April 1** and closes **June 30**. For more information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readdatapipeline>.

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

## **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:**

#### **TCAP**

TCAP testing window for grades 4-10 and grade 3 writing and math ends **April 11**. Materials should be returned to CTB as soon as possible after the closing of the district 3-week testing window, no later than **April 18**.

### **Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)**

#### **Science and Social Studies: Site Readiness Preparation: Important information for districts using iPads**

There are two mandatory software updates needed for iPads. Among other improvements, these updates reduce the bandwidth required to deliver online tests through TestNav.

#### **1. TestNav App Update:**

The mandatory TestNav app update for iOS devices is available and can be downloaded through the Apple app store. **Schools using iPads for CMAS testing in April must update the app if already installed OR download the new version directly from the App Store prior to starting testing.** For more information on the app update, visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment>.

## 2. **Operating System Update:**

Apple has released version 7.1 of the iOS operating system. Schools using iPads for CMAS testing in April must update to this iOS version. This update resolves a number of issues, including disabling a “search” feature. If this feature is not disabled, students may be kicked out of TestNav during testing. As a reminder, external keyboards are required for iPads used as testing devices.

### **Districts Using Chromebooks**

There are two mandatory updates for Chromebooks. Among other improvements, these updates reduce the bandwidth required to deliver online tests through TestNav.

#### 1. **TestNav App Update:**


The mandatory TestNav app update for Chromebook devices is available and can be downloaded through the Google Chrome app store. **Schools using Chromebooks for CMAS testing in April must update the app if already installed OR download the new version directly from the App Store prior to starting testing.** (If Chromebooks are set up to accept automatic updates, downloading is not necessary for those that already installed the earlier version of the app.) For more information on the app update, visit:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment>.

#### 2. **Operating System Update:**

Google released Chrome OS 33.0.1750.149. Schools using Chromebooks for CMAS testing in April must update to this version via the Chrome store or accept the automatic update when Chrome OS is next launched. Student responses may not be accurately captured on Chromebook devices that do not include this update.

### **Information for districts using the Internet Explorer (IE) 9, 10 and 11 Web Browsers**

Internet Explorer’s Accelerator feature (indicated by an arrow inside of a blue box ) provides users with access to online services after selecting text. In a secure testing environment, this can cause critical issues. For example, the Accelerator feature allows users to access browser-based functions that operate outside of the secure test environment, such as searching for the meaning of highlighted words or emailing text. Because TestNav detects this behavior as a security breach and shuts down the test, **the Accelerator feature must be disabled on student devices before testing begins.**

Disabling Accelerator functionality in IE is mandatory for districts using IE browsers. To disable the IE Accelerator feature, districts may choose one of the three options below:

1. Access the assessments through an approved browser other than IE. A recommended alternative browser is Chrome (version 31 or higher).
2. Disable the IE Accelerator function on multiple devices at the same time.
3. Manually disable the IE Accelerator function on individual machines. For more information on options 2 and 3, please go to: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment>.

### **CMAS Science and Social Studies Development**

CMAS and CoAlt science and social studies item development is an ongoing process with activities occurring throughout the year. Upcoming events include:

- CMAS high school science and social studies item writing with invited Colorado educators: **April 7-8.**
- CoAlt elementary and middle school item writing with invited Colorado educators: **May 7-9.**
- CoAlt high school item/bias/sensitivity review with invited Colorado educators: **May 5-6.**
- Educators are selected from the Colorado educator database. Educators can submit

their applications to participate in development activities at:  
<http://educator.force.com/CO>.

**CMAS Accessibility and Accommodations Assignment and Ordering**

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. Some of these require special online forms; some require paper-based accommodated materials.

Students requiring special online forms (text-to-speech, color contrast and oral script) need to be assigned to the relevant form on the Form Assignment page in PearsonAccess. This functionality is now open. DACs have been trained on how to complete this task. For districts not able to submit their accommodations materials orders through the Student Data Upload, DACs received training and can now do these tasks. Additional support is in the Colorado section of pearsonaccess.com.

Accessibility Features and Accommodations Requiring Ordering and/or Online Form Assignment	Available through Additional Orders	Requires 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, for translation)	X	X
Accommodated paper form	X	
Paper form: Braille	X	
Paper form: Paper large print	X	
Oral script for paper form (English, Spanish, for translation)	X	

**PARCC Field Testing**

PARCC field testing is underway and pre-selected schools are participating. 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 – are taking the field test this spring. All students in the PARCC states have access to practice tests (<http://www.parcconline.org/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.

**Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Field Testing**

Colorado is part of a multi-state consortium, DLM, developing English language arts and math assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. DLM will be field testing May 1 through the end of this school year. The DLM English language arts and mathematics assessments are expected to replace the current CoAlt: reading, writing and mathematics

assessments. The DLM assessments will not replace the CoAlt: science and social studies assessments. If your district is interested in participating, superintendents must contact Margo Allen at [allen\\_m@cde.state.co.us](mailto:allen_m@cde.state.co.us). For more, visit [http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/moreinfo/field\\_testing/index.html](http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/moreinfo/field_testing/index.html).

**CDE Assessment Resource Bank**

New performance assessments created by the Colorado Content Collaboratives are available in the CDE Resource Bank at: <http://www.coloradopl.org/node/12765>.

**What’s on the Horizon:**

**Standard Setting for CMAS and CoAlt Science and Social Studies**

Standard setting will be held this summer for CMAS and CoAlt science and social studies. This process will generate cut-score recommendations for each of the performance levels. Participants will be selected from educator names submitted to the educator database at <http://educator.force.com/CO> as well as nominations to be solicited this spring.

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

Assessment	Assessment Window
TCAP	Closes <b>April 11</b>
PARCC Field Test	<b>March 24 – April 11</b> , (performance-based assessment) <b>May 5 – June 6</b> , (end-of-year)
CMAS and CoAlt Elementary and Middle School Science and Social Studies	<b>April 14 – May 2</b>
CO ACT	<b>April 23</b> <b>May 7</b> <b>(mid-March – April 22:</b> supervised pre-test sessions for all students)

- **April 1 – 29:** Additional orders window for CMAS accommodated materials
- **April 18:** Last day TCAP and CoAlt materials (grades 4-10 all content areas and grade 3 writing and mathematics) will be picked up.
- **May 15 – 20:** TCAP and CoAlt N-count excluding grade 3 reading (expected)

For more information about assessments, contact Joyce Zurkowski, Executive Director of Assessment, 303-866-6760, [zurkowski\\_j@cde.state.co.us](mailto: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:**

**April Needs Assessment Survey**

Superintendents and accountability contacts will be requested via email to participate in the annual Accountability and UIP Needs Assessment survey which will ask about the UIP process and the School and District Performance Frameworks. Participants can share opinions on enhancements to the next iteration of the frameworks slated for release in fall 2016.

**UIP Feedback Work Sessions**

Two workshops are slated for school and district staff to understand and respond to feedback

from the CDE review of UIPs. Teams will address required changes and recommendations to strengthen the plan. These optional sessions will be in Denver North Metro on **April 8** and in Pueblo on **April 11**. Sessions are from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Lunch is provided. Registration is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/UIPFeedbackWorksession2014>.

### **Updated Accountability Rules**

In March the state board of education approved revised rules about accountability for districts and schools (S.B. 163 rules). The updated rules are posted at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/stateaccountabilityregulations>.

### **UIPs for Public Posting**

Schools and districts should submit UIPs by **April 15** through the online Tracker system. For more information on how to submit the plans, visit:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/uiip\\_trainingandsupport\\_tracker](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/uiip_trainingandsupport_tracker).

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

## **Postsecondary Readiness**

### **Overview:**

CDE supports the various ways students can enter postsecondary education by working with districts and schools in thinking through the personalization of a pathway through high school and on to college and career for every student.

### **What's Happening Now:**

#### **Support around School Closure**

As districts make decisions to close schools, it's important to understand how school closure affects students and families. A new report looks at a pilot project coordinated by CDE regarding student and family support during a high school closure. View the report at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/SchoolClosureSupport%20Final.pdf>.

#### **ASCENT Deadline for 2014-15 Participation**

If your district plans to have students participate in ASCENT for the 2014-15 academic year, please submit an affidavit (available at the link below) to CDE with final numbers of students participating by **May 1**. CDE will host a webinar in April for districts that submitted their initial requests to provide information and answer questions about the final **May 1** affidavit submission. After **June 1** or as soon as the final number of slots are determined by passage of the Long Bill, districts will receive notification of the number of ASCENT slots that have been allocated to their district. For more information, visit [http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ce\\_ascent](http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ce_ascent).

#### **Colorado School Counselor Corps Grant Program**

The School Counselor Corps Grant Program is releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2014-15 school year to increase the availability and implementation of effective school-based counseling in middle and high schools. The RFP is contingent upon enacting pending legislation (S.B.14-150). If legislation is not signed into law, no award will be made for the 2014-15 school year.

The anticipated level of funding available for the 2014-15 school year is about \$750,000, for roughly 20 grants. Within the first year of the 4-year grant cycle individual awards will range between \$25,000 and \$50,000. The first year of the grant will focus on program development, needs assessment and direct services. In the second, third, and fourth years of the grant, successful grantees will receive up to \$80,000 per funded school. For more information on the RFP, visit [http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/scc\\_importantdates](http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/scc_importantdates).



## Concurrent Enrollment Report

The 2012-2013 concurrent enrollment report finds participation in Concurrent Enrollment grew by 28 percent – or 3,945 students – over the previous year. To read the entire report, visit <http://1.usa.gov/1I8kWi5>.

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 Organizational Effectiveness update focuses on **Data Pipeline**.*

### **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 READ and Math Science Partnerships open. Other open collections are 11th-Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT and Directory. Local education agencies are encouraged to begin file creation and submission for Student End of Year, Special Education Discipline and Special Education End of Year.

### **What's Happening Now:**

Local education agencies should be submitting and cleaning files for:

- **READ** - Collection opens **April 1** and closes **July 1**.
- **Math Science Partnerships** - This collection opens **April 30** and closes **Sept. 30**.
- **11th-Grade Alternate Assessment** - The test administration window is **April 1-25**. Sign-off forms verifying the accuracy of entered student scores are due **May 8**.
- **Directory** - The **4-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 due date is **June 30**.
- **Student End of Year** - This collection is now open within production for piloting purposes.
- **Special Education Discipline** - The discipline interchange continues to be open for submissions. Both incident and action files should be included. The snapshot will open in May.
- **Special Education End of Year** - Data may be submitted and snapshots created as part of the mock special education end of year process in April.

### **What's on the Horizon:**

TCAP/CoAlt: Reading, Writing and Mathematics Student Biographical Data Review and CMAS/CoAlt: Science and Social Studies Student Biographical Data Review will be coming in May. The Safety and Discipline Indicators collection (including the annual safe schools checklist) will open in May, but will be within the Automated Data Exchange for one final cycle.

### **Important Upcoming Deadlines:**

- **April 2** – Report Card March submissions due.
- **April 25** – Last day of the 11th-Grade Alternate Assessment testing window.

Submit questions and suggestions to [datapipeline.support@cde.state.co.us](mailto:datapipeline.support@cde.state.co.us).

For more information, contact Jan Rose Petro, director of data services, [Petro\\_J@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Petro_J@cde.state.co.us), 303-866-6838.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:goar_t@cde.state.co.us).

To access CDE fact sheets visit:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfags>. Access superintendent and principal tools at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/superintendentandprincipaltools>.

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