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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:

Senate Bill 14-165's Impact on Educator Evaluation Requirements

This past legislative session, additional flexibility was passed for districts/BOCES regarding the 50 percent multiple measures of student learning (for teachers and principals) or student outcomes (for specialized service professionals) portion of the evaluation for the 2014-15 school year only. During the 2014-15 school year, all districts/BOCES will continue to evaluate every teacher, principal and specialized service professional on all Quality Standards including measures of student learning/outcomes. District flexibility comes in the final step of the evaluation process when determining how much weight the measures of student learning/outcomes standard counts in the educator's final evaluation rating. This flexibility provides districts with another year to refine existing measures and identify or create new measures. Teachers' final evaluation rating for the 2014-2015 school year will count towards earning/loss of non-probationary status. To learn more, download the fact sheet: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/SB14165FactSheet%20051314%20FINAL.pdf>

Evaluation Process Webinars

CDE is offering a series of monthly webinars with topics following the part of the evaluation process districts are working through. This month's webinar is on **Wednesday, June 25** from 4-5:30 p.m. and focuses on continuously improving your district's educator evaluation system. 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/1iOi6Jm>. This is recommended viewing for participants prior to the webinar.*

New Tool Available: Resource Guide for Deepening the Understanding of Teacher's Professional Practices

To help educators better understand the Colorado State Model Evaluation System Teacher

Rubric, CDE released a new tool called the Resource Guide for Deepening the Understanding of Teacher's Professional Practices.

(<http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/ResourceGuideTeacherPP>). As educators apply the rubric to their own teaching and to that of others, the resource guide can support observers and coaches to accurately identify evidence for the professional practices. The research, examples and glossary can support the development of a common language for school district employees to analyze, reflect and plan instruction. As with all new tools, the resource guide will continue to be updated. Eventually, this resource guide will be in an online, interactive format. But to give educators earlier access, CDE released it in a PDF version. To learn more, watch this short video: <http://connect.enetcolorado.org/p2yp1kp2sxf/>.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

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

CDE is working in partnership with RANDA Solutions, Inc. to create an online performance management system to support districts in the implementation, data collection and effective use of the Colorado State Model Evaluation System. The Colorado State Model Performance Management System will be ready for the 2014-2015 school year. In late May, a letter was sent to all superintendents inviting them to sign up for this the performance management system at no cost. As a reminder, please indicate your interest in using the system by completing the Intent to Implement form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RSDQG66>) by **July 1**. The Educator Effectiveness team will train interested districts in July and August. Training will include bringing districts on board the system and "train the trainer" professional development for district/BOCES technology support staff as well as principals and teachers.

If your district will not be ready to use the performance management system this school year, the Educator Effectiveness team can train districts at any time throughout the next year in preparation for use in the 2015-16 school year. If this is the case for your district, please note this in the Intent to Implement form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RSDQG66>).

To learn more about the Colorado Performance Management System, view the fact sheet <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/RANDA%20FactSheet%20April%202014%20-%20FINAL.pdf> or visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/copms> for an in-depth demonstration. To answer more questions regarding the Colorado State Model Performance Management System, contact Joslyn Robich at robich_joslyn2@cde.state.co.us.

Assurances for Educator Evaluation Systems

By **July 1** of each year, all districts and BOCES must 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 or 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. The Teaching and Learning Unit offers schools and districts resources and supports

to enhance student learning and achievement.

What's Happening Now:

Standards

The Standards and Instructional Support Office has posted Literacy Design Collaborative Modules for instructional units in reading, writing and communicating, comprehensive health, science and social studies. Written by Colorado educators, these modules complement instructional units created in the District Sample Curriculum Project and reflect the goals of the Literacy Design Collaborative: to develop literacy skills across content areas that will prepare all students for the demands of college and careers. The units and associated modules can be accessed here:

Reading, Writing and Communicating

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-rwc>

Comprehensive Health

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-comphealth>

Social Studies

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-socialstudies>

Science

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-science>

Additional modules are currently under development for grades 6 through high school for each of these content areas and will be available in late summer.

Early Learning and School Readiness

School Readiness Summer Training Opportunities for Kindergarten: CDE is hosting summer training events in support of the school readiness initiative. Workshops for kindergarten teachers and principals are open for registration. Workshop topics include formative assessment and best practices for kindergarten as well as training for districts implementing *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Workshop locations and dates are as follows: **Sterling, June 17; Centennial, June 19; Grand Junction, June 24; Steamboat Springs, June 26; La Junta, July 22; Alamosa, July 29; Durango, July 31; Aurora, Aug. 4; Denver, Aug. 5; Greeley, Aug. 6; Pueblo, Aug. 7; and Colorado Springs, Aug. 8.**

Results Matter Summer Training Opportunities for Preschool: CDE is hosting three professional development events for preschool teachers and directors on the *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* Assessment system. There are three sessions to choose from: Introduction to TS GOLD for Preschool Administrators on **June 20**, Analyzing and Responding to Preschool Assessment Results for Preschool Teachers on **June 26**, and Using Assessment Results for Short and Long Term Planning – Advanced Preschool Teacher Training on **June 27**. All events will be held in the Denver metro area. More information is available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter>.

CDE Seeks Reviewers for School Readiness Assessment Menu: CDE initiated a request for information to solicit additional assessments for the school readiness assessment menu. The department is seeking qualified early childhood educators to participate in the review process. Reviewers will assist the department in identifying appropriate school readiness assessments for implementation of the school readiness initiative as outlined in CAP4K. All interested early childhood educators are encouraged to apply and are advised to read the evaluation rubrics within the RFI before initiating an application at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness>. Recommendations from reviewers will be brought to the state board for discussion in September with a vote anticipated in October. Following the adoption of approved school readiness assessments, districts will have until **August 2015** to fully implement the approved assessments and provisions outlined in CAP4K.

Colorado Preschool Program Expansion – Preschool and Kindergarten Slots Available: During the 2014 legislative session, the General Assembly approved funding for a major expansion of the Colorado Preschool Program through the Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) program. Five thousand additional ECARE slots were authorized under the Public School Finance Act bringing the total number of children who can be served through CPP to 28,360. CDE has initiated a process for districts to apply for ECARE slots. The deadline for submission is **June 5** at 5 p.m. Districts will be notified by **June 23**. Program requirements and the application are available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/ecare>.

The READ Act

Additions to the READ Resource Bank Coming Soon: The Office of Literacy completed another review of instructional programs for supporting students' reading development. New additions to the advisory list of instructional programs are slated to be posted to the READ Resource Bank in early June. View the READ Resource Bank at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/programming>.

READ Data Collection: The READ collection opened 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:

Assessment Implementation Study Results

CDE partnered with WestEd to gather data from districts, teachers, parents and charter schools to discover the implications of recent assessment changes. To view the phase I findings, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/implementationstudy>.

PARCC English Language Arts and Mathematics Field Testing

The PARCC End-of-Year Assessment Field Test ended at the beginning of June. Online and paper versions of the assessments were given to students from districts that volunteered for participation. Results from the PARCC field tests will be used to evaluate item quality and to refine timing and logistical information for future assessments. For more information about the PARCC assessments, contact Stephanie Boyd at boyd_s@cde.state.co.us.

CMAS: Science and Social Studies Educator Meetings

Educator involvement in the development and review of state assessments is essential to ensuring that the content of items is appropriate for Colorado students and that the items are not unfairly advantageous or disadvantageous to a particular group of students. Assessment development provides a unique professional development opportunity for participating educators. Colorado educators will participate in the following meetings in June:

- Elementary and Middle School Item Writing Workshop: **June 10-11**
- Range-finding (educators define the rubric score point ranges that will be used to score student responses to open-ended items): **June 16-20**

- High School Content, Bias and Sensitivity Review: **June 24-27**

Educators selected from the educator database will be invited to participate in assessment development activities. **Please direct interested educators from your district to the following link to include their information in the database:**

<http://educator.force.com/CO>. For more information about science and social studies educator meetings, contact Jason Clymer at clymer_j@cde.state.co.us.

Colorado ACT Student Biographical Data Review

Districts will review and verify student demographic data for the Colorado ACT from **June 17 through June 24**.

What's on the Horizon:

Standard Setting for CMAS and CoAlt Science and Social Studies

Standard setting will be held this summer during the week of **July 14** for CMAS and CoAlt Science and Social Studies. This process will generate cutscore recommendations for each of the performance levels. CDE is seeking science content specialists who have worked with students in grades 5, 6, 8 and 9, social studies content specialists who have worked with students in grades 4, 5, 7 and 8 and individuals who are experienced in working with English learners and special education students. Superintendents are also encouraged to participate. Participants will be selected from educator names submitted to the educator database at <http://educator.force.com/CO> as well as from nominations. Nominations should be sent to Margo Allen at allen_m@cde.state.co.us with "CMAS Standard Setting Nomination" in the subject line.

For more information about assessments, contact Joyce Zurkowski, Executive Director of Assessment, 303-866-6760, zurkowski_j@cde.state.co.us, or 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:

Requests for New School Codes

Requests for new school codes, school closures, name changes and grade changes for the 2013-14 school year are due to CDE by **June 30**. This information is crucial for ensuring accurate Title IA funding, NCLB ESEA waiver implementation, on-time and accurate release of the School Performance Frameworks and the pre-populated Unified Improvement Plans. To submit school changes, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/datapipeline/snap_studentoctober and locate the section called school code changes.

Accountability and UIP Tracker Contacts

Superintendents should confirm or update district accountability and UIP tracker contact information for the upcoming school year. Links to the contacts were sent via email at the end of May. The tracker contact receives all improvement planning-related communications and is responsible for submitting improvement plans to CDE. This year, improvement plans will be submitted to CDE via the C-FIRS Tracker system, or within the new UIP Online System, depending on which system the district chooses to use. Contact Lisa Steffen with questions at steffen_l@cde.state.co.us.

Accountability for Alternative Education Campuses

By July 1, all AECs (both those seeking designation for the first-time and those seeking renewal) need to submit a Selection of Accountability Measures form <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/StateAccountabilityAECs.asp>. The form should be submitted with the district or authorizer's approval, indicating any optional supplemental accountability measures, metrics, and cut-points they are requesting to be used in their AEC School Performance Framework report to be released in October 2014.

What's on the Horizon:

English Language Proficiency Growth

Along with technical measurement and language experts, CDE is determining the appropriate adequate growth targets and timelines for students to show growth on the ACCESS for English learners language proficiency assessment. The definition will be shared with the field in June and data will be available to districts this summer.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **June 2:** Signed accreditation contracts for district Accredited with Turnaround, Priority Improvement and Improvement plans due to CDE
- **June 5:** What You Need to Know about UIP for the 2014-15 School Year 8:30 a.m. to noon; Discussion on UIP during the State Assessment Transition 1 to 4 p.m. – Denver Metro
- **June 10:** Facilitating Root Cause Analysis Training: (Metro Area) 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **June 12:** What You Need to Know about UIP for the 2014-15 School Year 8:30 a.m. to noon; Discussion on UIP during the State Assessment Transition 1 to 4 p.m. – Pueblo
- **June 27:** Safety accreditation report due
- **June 30:** Deadline for districts to submit requests to CDE for new school codes, school closures, name changes, and grade changes for the 2013-14 school year.
- **July 1:** Deadline for districts to submit the Selection of Accountability Measures for AECs Form.

For more information on trainings, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/uiip_trainingandsupport.

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

Organizational Effectiveness

*This month's Organizational Effectiveness update focuses on Colorado's **Race to the Top grant**.*

Overview:

In December 2011, Colorado was awarded a \$17.9 million Race to the Top Phase 3 grant. The four-year grant is split evenly between the state and local education agencies, with each receiving \$8.9 million. The Race to the Top grant program is focused on four key areas: 1) building capacity to implement the state's education reforms; 2) implementing the Colorado Academic Standards; 3) designing the state's educator evaluation system; and 4) advancing science, technology, education, and math (STEM) education. Colorado will enter the final grant period (18 months) in July 2014 with the grant ending in December 2015.

What's Happening Now:

Assessment Supports

Assessment Literacy Program: CDE is partnering with the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing at the University of California, Los Angeles on the development and implementation of assessment literacy programs and resources for

classroom educators and school and district administrators. The Assessment Literacy Program will be focused on the assessment knowledge and skills educators need to cultivate in order to effectively and strategically use assessment information to support student learning. The work is currently underway and will engage Colorado educators, administrators, and the Colorado Content Collaboratives.

Colorado Content Collaboratives

Members of the Colorado Content Collaboratives will meet **June 3-4**, to develop performance assessments that align to and support the CDE Teacher-Authored Instructional Unit Samples. Existing performance assessments, created by the Colorado Content Collaboratives, are available in the CDE Resource Bank at: <http://www.coloradopl.org/node/12765>. The CDE Teacher-Authored Instructional Unit Samples are available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples>.

CDE Resource Bank: Assessments

The CDE Resource Bank contains assessments and assessment review and development tools to support educators in the evaluation of student learning. The assessments included in the CDE Resource Bank are *examples* of high-quality assessments aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards, for all grades and content areas. These assessments are intended to serve as models for local assessment selection and development that more directly measure student learning as aligned to local curriculum. The CDE Resource Bank of Assessments is available at: <http://www.coloradopl.org/assessment>.

Annual Survey to Participating LEAs

As part of CDE's Race to the Top efforts CDE sends out a short survey to gather information required for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. All districts participating in Race to the Top are required to complete this survey. Non-participating districts are also encouraged to complete the survey. Because the survey pertains to district practices, all districts – including those served by BOCES – need to complete the survey individually. This year CDE has reduced the survey to five questions by leveraging other data collection. A link to the survey was sent to districts via email. For more, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rttt>.

What's on the Horizon:

Colorado is entering the final phase of the Race to the Top grant, with the grant period ending in December 2015. The Race to the Top director and project manager are completing site visits of participating districts with remaining unspent funds. The purpose of these visits is to find out how the district is progressing in their activities and to determine support CDE might be able to offer. The project manager is contacting districts to schedule these visits.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **June 30:** Annual LEA survey due
- **July 10:** RTTT progress update/annual reports are due. All participating districts must submit these reports, including districts who have expended their funding.
- **October 2014:** District amendments for year 4 of the grant are due. Amendments will also be accepted in April 2015.

For more information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rttt> or contact Tricia Miller, Race to the Top director at 303-866-5735 or miller_t@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/factsheetsandfags>. Access superintendent and principal tools at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/superintendentandprincipaltools>.

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