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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:

Action May Be Required Before Calculating Final Educator Effectiveness Scores

Are you using Excel evaluation rubrics and weighting measures of student learning/measures of student outcomes (MSL/MSO) less than 50 percent this year? If so, reference the chart below to determine if action must be taken before final educator effectiveness scores are calculated.

Tool used to conduct evaluations	Action to be taken
Colorado Performance Management System (COPMS)	None
BloomBoard	None
Excel files weighting the professional practices and MSL/MSO at 50/50	None

<p>Excel files weighting the professional practices >50 percent and MSL/MSO < 50 percent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide educators with an amended final evaluation report based on a dynamic scoring methodology. • CDE has created simple tools (below) to quickly determine final effectiveness ratings based on weights other than 50/50 and create a final effectiveness report addendum reflecting the changes. • Teacher /SSP Final Effectiveness Rating Scoring Addendum Tool (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/addendumd) • Principal Final Effectiveness Rating Scoring Addendum Tool (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/addendumdprincipal)
<p>Other Vendor or Local Solution</p>	<p>Call Toby King @ 303.866.6964</p>
<p>Note: CDE has created tools to support districts/BOCES with this process, including calculators and excel tools. If districts are using the Colorado Performance Management System (COPMS) or BloomBoard, these changes have already been made for you.</p>	
<p>S.B. 14-165’s Impact on Educator Evaluation Requirements for the 2014-15 School Year As we look toward completing educator evaluation final ratings, remember additional flexibility was passed by the legislature for this school year regarding the 50 percent multiple measures of student learning (for teachers and principals) or student outcomes (for specialized service professionals). District flexibility comes in the final step of the evaluation process when determining how much weight the measures of student learning/outcomes standard count in the educator’s final evaluation rating. To learn more, download this fact sheet: www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb14165factsheet.</p> <p>Specialized Service Professionals Pilot Reports The new evaluations for specialized service professionals (SSPs) took effect in the 2014-15 school year, one year after the teacher and principal evaluations were implemented. By providing a new statewide model of evaluation for all licensed educators, SSPs are able to receive consistent, timely and actionable feedback to improve their professional practice. As a reminder, this first year for SSPs is a hold harmless year meaning that a final rating of partially effective or ineffective will not count toward the loss of non-probationary status.</p> <p>Recently, reports on the SSP pilot were released and provide insight on the implementation of the Colorado State Model Evaluation System and initial evaluation scores reported by SSPs (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smes-pilot).</p>	

Practical Ideas for Evaluating Educators with the State Model Evaluation System

Earlier this year, four guides were released on using the State Model Teacher Rubric for evaluations of different groups of teachers. To access these guides, visit: <http://bit.ly/1zTQG24>. Recently, CDE released the last in this series of guides – Practical Ideas for Evaluating Special Education Teachers. To view this guide, please visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/practicalideassped>.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

Sign-up to Use the Colorado State Model Performance Management System

In the past year, CDE, in partnership with RANDA Solutions, Inc., has moved very quickly with the development of the Colorado State Model Performance Management System. If your district/BOCES isn't using the system, but is interested in using it for the 2015-16 school year, fill out the short survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COPMS_Intentions. If your district would like to begin using the system for an August/September rollout, the deadline to complete the survey is **April 24**. For a September/October rollout, the deadline is **May 25**. If your district/BOCES/charter school is already using the system, you do not need to fill out the survey. For those that have already completed the survey, we'll be sending more information regarding on-boarding in the coming weeks. Please remember that the Excel system for managing the evaluation process will not be supported by CDE in the 2015-16 school year.

For more information about educator effectiveness, visit:

www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/ or contact Katy Anthes, executive director of Educator Effectiveness, anthes_k@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6654.

Standards

Overview:

The 2014-15 school year provides an opportunity for educators across the state to refocus on the opportunity high quality standards provides for Colorado's children. Student learning is at the heart of Colorado's education reform initiatives. The Teaching and Learning Unit offers schools and districts resources and supports to enhance student learning and achievement.

What's Happening Now:

Coming Soon: Instruction Units Based on Physical Education Standards

Thirteen full instructional units based on the Colorado Academic Standards in Physical Education will be posted on April 30 to the Standards and Instructional Support website. These units, authored by teams of educators representing 13 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, has been created for each grade by the teacher-author teams. Currently, one high-school-level example unit is accessible on the Standards and Instructional Support page by scrolling down to the Physical Education heading:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-highschool>. The instructional units will be posted here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-physicaled>.

Funding and Supports are Available for Early Learning and School Readiness

School Readiness Assessment Funding: The application for kindergarten school readiness assessment funding for the 2015-16 school year closed in March, but districts still interested in accessing funds

can contact the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness. Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant provides districts with resources and supports for implementing school readiness plans and assessments in kindergarten, including subscription costs for kindergarten assessments. Questions about the school readiness initiative can be directed to Daryl Gagliano, Kindergarten Readiness Program Manager, at 303-866-6971 or gagliano_d@cde.state.co.us; or Sharon Triolo-Moloney, Director of Office of Early Learning at (303) 866-6781 or triolo-moloney_s@cde.state.co.us.

Also, Information on training and technical assistance opportunities is updated often and can be found on the school readiness web page <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness>.

Colorado Preschool Program: The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) Coordinator annual regional meetings will continue through April. The purpose of the regional meetings is to provide CPP Coordinators with opportunities to share ideas, hear updates about the program and receive resources and technical assistance that support high quality preschool programming. Information about how the state's new Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) will apply to district-based preschool programs will also be shared. To register, please go to: www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/2015regionalmeetings. Questions about the Colorado Preschool Program may be directed to Nan Vendegna, CPP Program Director, at 303-866-6602 and vendegna_n@cde.state.co.us.

The READ Act Rules Set to be Revised

English Learners and the READ Act: At the February State Board of Education meeting the department noticed the rulemaking process to revise the READ Act rules. The rulemaking process is in response to a recent [opinion](#) by the Attorney General's Office to allow for the use of Spanish assessments in the determination of a significant reading deficiency for students who receive literacy instruction in Spanish and English. The rulemaking hearing is scheduled for April 8 at 2 p.m. in the State Board of Education Room. Written comments may be submitted up to the hearing date, although early submittal is encouraged. Additional information can be found on the READ Act webpage: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>. Also, resources for English Learners in relation to the READ Act can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ellandread>.

READING Foundations Academy: The Office of Literacy is offering no-cost professional development focused on high quality K - 3 reading instruction with an emphasis on foundational reading skills based in the Colorado Academic Standards. Any district or schools interested in hosting a session or those who want to connect with an existing Academy should contact Donna Bright at 303-866-6002 or bright_d@cde.state.co.us. For more information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readingfoundationsacademyflyer>.

READ Collection: The READ Collection in the CDE Data Pipeline opens from April 1 to July 1. The Office of Literacy has posted an informational webinar on the READ Act webpage, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readdatapipeline>. Additionally, the Office of Literacy will participate in the regularly scheduled Data Pipeline Town Hall meetings http://www.cde.state.co.us/datapipeline/train_schedule. Please contact Whitney Westgaard at westgaard_w@cde.state.co.us with questions.

Assessments

Overview:

Assessments administered by CDE 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:

CMAS and CoAlt: Science and Social Studies Window Opens April 13

The Colorado-developed CMAS and CoAlt: Science and Social Studies assessment window is open from **April 13 to May 1**. Social studies assessments will be taken by students in 4th and 7th grades; science assessments will be taken by 5th and 8th grade students. For more information, contact Sara Loerzel at 303-866-3266 or loerzel@cde.state.co.us.

CMAS: English Language Arts and Mathematics End of Year Window Opens April 27

The PARCC-developed English language arts and math assessments consist of two components: the Performance Based Assessment Component (PBA) and the End of Year component (EOY). Districts have completed the PBA component, and the official EOY window is open from **April 27 to May 22**. As a reminder, districts should use the same **Test Administration and Test Coordinator Manuals for the PBA and EOY** components. For more information, contact Stephanie Boyd at 303-866-6849 or boyd@cde.state.co.us.

Steps to Protect CMAS Test Security

Protecting the security of test items is important to creating a fair and reliable testing experience for all students. When a student posts a photo of a test item, it is a test security breach and has the potential to cause an invalidation. As described in the Test Coordinator Manual, all cell phones are prohibited from the testing environment (including camera phones and smartphones), including after students have completed testing and during breaks. Test Administrators should ensure that students are not in the possession of cell phones and any other prohibited materials during testing. If a student is found to be in possession of a cell phone or any other prohibited material, the student should be dismissed from the testing environment and the test may be invalidated.

CoAlt Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM): English Language Arts and Math

Some districts have already begun administering the DLM-developed English language arts and mathematics assessments to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The CoAlt DLM assessments are administered to students in grades 3 through 11. The recommended window opens on **April 13** and closes on **May 15**. For more information, contact Mira Monroe at 303-866-6709 or monroe_m@cde.state.co.us.

Colorado ACT

Students in grade 11 will take the Colorado ACT on **April 28**. Students who miss the official test day may take the make-up test on **May 12**.

What's on the Horizon:

CMAS: Science and Social Studies High School Reports Delayed

The State Board of Education did not approve the high school science and social studies cut scores recommended by educators during the March board meeting. Therefore, the release of results to districts and students will be delayed until the board takes additional action.

CMAS Data Clean-Up

This summer, districts will have opportunities to participate in Student Biographical Data (SBD) clean-up processes for assessments in English language arts, math, science and social studies. Specific

information about SBD windows will be distributed to District Assessment Coordinators and data respondents.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **April 9:** PARCC PBA – Deadline to schedule UPS pickups
- **April 10:** PARCC PBA – Purge cached test items
- **Prior to Testing:** CMAS/CoAlt – Science and Social Studies; PARCC EOY: Verify and finalize assessment preparation activities (i.e., district and school trainings, order materials, online test setup, proctor cache test content, send appropriate forms to CDE, confirm proper accommodated form assignments (and TTS) for individual students in test sessions)
- **April 13 – May 1:** CMAS and CoAlt – Science and Social Studies Elementary and Middle School Assessment Window
- **April 13 – May 15:** CoAlt DLM-developed English language arts and math assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities recommended assessment window
- **April 17:** PARCC PBA – Return Post Test Compliance Report, upload into PearsonAccessnext
- **April 20-24:** ACT – District receives secure standard time and accommodations shipment(s)
- **April 27- May 22:** CMAS – PARCC-developed End-of-Year Component (EOY) regular assessment window
- **April 28:** ACT Official test date
- **April 28-29:** ACT – Window for districts to submit online makeup order for standard time materials
- **April 29:** ACT – Districts return all initial test date materials to ACT via the prescheduled pickup
- **May 4:** CMAS/CoAlt – Science and Social Studies deadline to schedule UPS scorable pickups
- **May 4-7:** ACT – Districts receive secure standard time shipment(s) for makeup testing
- **May 6:** CMAS – Science and Social Studies – Return assessment materials to Pearson
- **May 6:** CoAlt – Science and Social Studies – Score Entry Deadline
- **May 8:** CMAS – Science and Social Studies – Send Post Test Compliance Report to CDE
- **May 12:** ACT – Make-up test date
- **May 13:** ACT – Districts return all makeup and accommodations test date materials to ACT via the prescheduled pickup
- **May 22:** ACT– Deadline for ACT to receive all answer documents from schools. Late arriving documents will not be scored
- **May 28:** PARCC EOY – Deadline to schedule UPS pickups
- **May 29:** PARCC EOY – Purge cached test items
- **Jun. 5:** PARCC EOY – Return Post Test Compliance Report- upload into PearsonAccessnext
- **After Testing:** CMAS/CoAlt: Science and Social Studies/English Language Arts and Math PearsonAccess/PearsonAccessnext clean-up activities

Accountability, Performance & Support

Overview:

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

What's Happening Now:

Accountability Work Group Agrees on Goals for 2016 Performance Frameworks

The Accountability Work Group – consisting of regional superintendent representatives, school and district leadership and CASE, CASB, and CEA leadership – reached agreement on the goals of the 2.0 system during its third meeting on March 16. The group is tasked with making recommendations to CDE on how to enhance School and District Performance Frameworks for 2016. At the meeting, the group:

- Reached general agreement on the goals of the 2.0 system; language is being finalized.
- Met in small work groups around the following topics: growth/improvement, equity/disaggregation, communication and purpose, design, post-secondary and workforce readiness, and accountability pilot. These smaller work groups will dig into their specific topics over the next few months in preparation for making recommendations.
- Acknowledged the current assessment context in Colorado and discussed how that may impact accountability.
- Reviewed the timeline for recommendations for the SPF/DPF 2.0 this summer.

More information about the meetings and work of the group, including recommendation topics, is available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/accountabilityworkgroup>. The next meeting will be **April 27**.

Important Upcoming Deadlines

- **April 15:** Schools and districts should submit UIPs through Tracker or the UIP online system. Small Rural schools and districts may qualify for biennial submission through added flexibility provided by HB12-1204. To see if your school and district qualify, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_resources. Updated plans will be posted on SchoolView by the end of May. For more information on how to submit the plans, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_tracker.
- **April 24:** Applications for schools to be qualified as Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) are due. Pre-populated applications were sent on March 3 to existing AECs or newly applying AECs for which districts requested an application. If you need assistance with this process or have any questions, please contact Jessica Knevals at 303-866-6778 or Knevals_j@cde.state.co.us.

For more information on accountability and improvement, contact Keith Owen, Deputy Commissioner, owen_k@cde.state.co.us, 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:

School Counselor Corps Grant RFP Available

The 2015-2016 School Counselor Corps Grant request for proposal is available to local education agencies for funding to increase effective school-based counseling within secondary schools. The due date is May 1, 2015. This request for proposal is released, but is contingent upon pending additional appropriations to the School Counselor Corps program for the 2015-16 school year. Note: If the

additional funding is not appropriated to the program, new grant awards will not be made for the 2015-16 school year. Please see website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/schoolcounselorcorps> For more information, contact Eve Pugh at pugh_e@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-4123.

What's on the Horizon:

CDE and CEI host Demo Day on Student Learning Platforms

CDE and the Colorado Education Initiative will host a Student Learning Platform Demo Day on April 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at History Colorado in Denver. The event will provide an opportunity for local district leaders and vendors to demonstrate software options for tracking student progress and providing online access to content and assessments that are available to Colorado schools and districts. In the afternoon participants will discuss the utility, strengths and weaknesses of current student learning platform solutions, and how they might implement software to help personalize learning for students.

Districts will share their experiences using these tools, and discuss using them in different situations and for different student needs. Vendors have the opportunity to hear from K-12 educators and leaders about the services and features they want to see in future designs of student learning platforms.

For more information contact Christina Jean (jean_c@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6897)

CDE does not endorse any vendors. All participating vendors were selected based on criteria determined based on conversations with practitioners in the field.

For more information about postsecondary readiness, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/> or contact Rebecca Holmes, associate commissioner of innovation, choice and engagement, holmes_r@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6938.

Organizational Effectiveness

*This month's Organizational Effectiveness update focuses on **Data Pipeline**.*

Overview:

The 11th Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT testing window is this month. The READ collection opens in April. Both Access for ELLs SBD and Report Card March collections have finalization dates in early April.

What's Happening Now:

11th Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT

The testing window for the 11th Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT is **April 1 to 24**. Between **April 28 and May 8**, District Assessment Coordinators enter and verify the student scores for accuracy. Finally, the LEAAPPROVER is responsible to submit the snapshot collection to CDE by **5 p.m. on May 8**. All districts, including those which did not test any students this year, will make a submission to CDE. A webinar for LEAAPPROVERS is offered at **8 a.m. on April 21**. To register, visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/11th_gradealt_4_21.

READ Collection Begins

The Reading to Ensure Academic Development collection will be open from **April 1 to July 2**.

Directory submissions due

Four-day school week applications for the 2015-16 school year are due May 8.

School code change requests, as well as requests for new school codes, for 2015-16 will be accepted until June 30.

End of Year

The 2014-15 collection is currently open for data submission.

What's on the Horizon:

Special Education Discipline, Special Education End of Year, School Discipline and Attendance, and CMAS/CoAlt Spring 2015 Administration SBD collections are scheduled to open in May.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **April 1:** Access for ELLs SBD due date
- **April 1:** READ collection opens
- **April 3:** Report Card March close date
- **April 24:** End of the 11th Grade Alternate Assessment for Colorado ACT test window
- **May 1:** Special Education Discipline opens
- **May 1:** Special Education End of Year opens
- **May 8:** Four day school week applications due
- **May 8:** 11th Grade Alternate Assessment snapshot is finalized (submitted to CDE)
- **May 11:** School Discipline and Attendance opens

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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