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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 have gone into the policy development, we're now putting those policies into action. Here's a brief snapshot of implementation milestones, deadlines, supports 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:

Colorado State Model Evaluation Tools & Materials Guide

The Educator Effectiveness Unit has created a variety of tools and resources to support educators in implementing The Great Teachers and Leaders Bill (S.B. 191). This new document compiles and organizes these key resources to provide easy access. This "[one-stop](http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/ee_tools_resources)" document (http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/ee_tools_resources) provides a brief description of each resource and indicates the intended audience: superintendents/district administration, principals/assistant principals and teachers or specialized service professionals.

State Model Evaluation Users: Mid-Year Review

The [User's Guide for Evaluating Colorado's Educators](http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/usersguide) (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/usersguide>) recommends that mid-year reviews be completed prior to the beginning of the second semester. For districts/BOCES still on this step of the evaluation process, the mid-year review is an excellent opportunity to check on the status of student learning/outcomes with educators. Use this discussion with teachers to calibrate expectations and brainstorm instructional supports. These supports may be needed during the second semester to help educators in meeting the instructional goals set at the beginning of the year.

For district/BOCES leaders using the Colorado Performance Management System, this step in the evaluation process can be managed quickly and easily by reviewing the tools in the *Evaluation Tab*. Use these tools to check progress and plan accordingly.

Measures of Student Learning (MSL) Guidance for Principals and Specialized Service Professionals

Measures of Student Learning/Outcomes Guidance for Principals and Specialized Service Professionals have been updated to better align with the teacher guidance and to reflect current policy. The purpose of the guidance documents is to highlight possible approaches for districts and

BOCES to consider when constructing their approach to select measures of student learning for use in educator evaluations. CDE will collect ongoing feedback to improve these documents. Guidance will be revised annually with refined versions released each summer in order to reflect increased understanding and emerging best practices.

- Download the Measures of Student Learning in Principal Evaluation Guidance: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/mslguidanceprincipals>
- Download the Measures of Student Outcomes in Specialized Service Professionals Evaluations Guidance: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/mslguidancecssp>

Provide feedback to Britt Wilkenfeld at wilkenfeld_b@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6054.

State Tests Results and Educator Evaluations

Colorado is transitioning to new state assessments in English language arts, math, science and social studies known as the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS). District- and school-level results for the English language arts and math state tests are [available](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/20151211schoolistrictparccscores) (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/20151211schoolistrictparccscores>). During this transition, [see](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/cmasresultseefactsheet) (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/cmasresultseefactsheet>) how these new assessments can and cannot be used in educator evaluations.

What's on the Horizon:

Educator Effectiveness Leaders' Retreat on Measures of Student Learning

Join members of CDE's Educator Effectiveness team on Tuesday, Jan. 19 as educator effectiveness leaders from large and small districts share different approaches to implementing Measures of Student Learning. Work with others in similar roles to get feedback and fine-tune implementation. To register, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/january_eeleadersretreat_msl. Registration is limited, so please register early.

To sign up for the Educator Effectiveness newsletter, visit <http://bit.ly/1Bdfwgz>. For more information about educator effectiveness, visit www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/ or contact Toby King, director of educator effectiveness, king_t@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6964.

Standards

Overview:

Now is a good time for educators to refocus on the opportunity high-quality standards provide for Colorado's children. Student learning is at the heart of Colorado's education improvement initiatives. The Teaching and Learning Unit offers schools and districts resources and supports to enhance student learning and achievement.

What's Happening Now:

View a New PLC Byte that Gives an Overview of Standards Resources

A new PLC Byte is available that provides an overview of standards resources available on the website, including Community and Family Guides based on the Colorado Academic Standards. PLC Bytes are 7-10 minute segmented presentations designed to be used in professional learning communities (PLC) or faculty meetings. PLC Bytes can be found at http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/plc_bytes. For more information, contact Karol Gates, interim director of standards and instructional support, at gates_k@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6576.

Memorandum of Understanding with Teaching Strategies

In December, the State Board of Education approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Teaching Strategies, the developer of the GOLD assessment, regarding changes that will strengthen

data privacy and security and streamline the use of GOLD for kindergarten readiness assessment. The MOU outlines provisions that will be included in all contracts between Teaching Strategies and school districts for kindergarten subscriptions beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

Specifically, Teaching Strategies and CDE have agreed to:

- Provide the option of a shortened set of items for kindergarten assessment
- Require a parent opt-in process to enable use of the photo and video features for documentation purposes
- Ensure that data security practices meet strict state requirements

The measures intend to address privacy concerns, strengthen the security of information collected by Colorado educators as they use the GOLD assessment and save teachers time without compromising the integrity and validity of the instrument. CDE and Teaching Strategies are committed to ongoing review and refinement of this important and useful assessment process and look forward to partnering with educators on an ongoing basis to achieve the best results for Colorado's children.

[View the MOU.](http://bit.ly/1PljzxM) (<http://bit.ly/1PljzxM>)

Kindergarten School Readiness Training Available

Customized training and support is available for kindergarten teachers and elementary principals for the kindergarten school readiness initiative from CDE staff. The kindergarten school readiness team at CDE consists of experienced early childhood and early elementary educators who are available to provide support to teachers across the state through the duration of the state's Early Learning Challenge grant. For more information and to schedule a customized training or a school support visit, contact Daryl Gagliano, kindergarten readiness program manager at gagliano_d@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6971.

For more information on school readiness legislation and implementation, see:

- Kindergarten School Readiness Assessment Implementation Options: 2015-16:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/schoolreadinessassessmentimplementationoptions>
- Kindergarten School Readiness Initiative Guidance:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/srguidancedocument2015>

READ Act Rulemaking Process Update

In December, the State Board of Education voted to re-notice the rulemaking process for the Colorado READ Act. The rules are necessary to bring the READ Act into alignment with H.B. 15-1323. The board indicated that further discussion of the rules beyond the proposed changes are needed and will address additional considerations at their January meeting. The recommended rule revisions are posted at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy>. For more information, contact Alisa Dorman, executive director of literacy, at dorman_a@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6016.

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, colman_m@cde.state.co.us, 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.

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success are the state tests in English language arts, math,

science and social studies that will be given to Colorado students in the 2015-16 academic year. The science and social studies tests were developed for Colorado students, while the math and English language arts tests were developed in collaboration with other states through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for Colleges and Careers (PARCC).

What's Happening Now

ACCESS for ELLs 2016 Administration

The five week ACCESS for ELLs testing window opens on **Jan. 11** and closes on **Feb. 12**.

Grade 10 Exam and Grade 11 College Entrance Exam Selected

The College Board's revised SAT and PSAT exams have been recommended by an independent selection committee to serve as the new college entrance and 10th-grade exams for Colorado students. If awarded, the SAT exam will replace the ACT exam provided to all high school juniors since 2001. The SAT and PSAT will be given each spring for the next five years.

CDE is working with the vendors on a transition proposal that would allow 11th-grade students to take the ACT this year only, instead of the new SAT. This would not change the requirement for this year's 10th-graders to take the PSAT 10 in preparation for Colorado's full transition to the SAT in spring 2017. More details on this proposal, as well as implementation of the PSAT, are being provided to district assessment coordinators. To read the commissioner's letters, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdecomm>. For further information, please contact Will Morton, 303-866-6997, or Morton_w@cde.state.co.us.

January Preparation Activities for Spring 2016 Assessment Administrations

Update information in PearsonAccess^{next} for CMAS assessments:

CDE loaded initial student registration information into PearsonAccess^{next} based on information in CDE's Data Pipeline as of Dec. 18. Districts will have the opportunity to update CMAS assessment administration mode (online or paper) at the student level, confirm student registration information, and make initial material orders in PearsonAccess^{next} from **Jan. 11-22**. Districts can also begin to update student registrations and indicate testing accommodations and accessibility features for students, as appropriate, for all CMAS assessments on **Jan. 11**.

At the district level and school levels, the indicated administration mode (online or paper) reflects the information that was communicated by each district to CDE. Districts that did not inform CDE about their intentions to deliver CMAS assessments via paper must update assessment delivery mode to paper in PearsonAccess^{next} by **Jan. 22**. Otherwise vendors will proceed with plans to administer online.

Train District Personnel for Administration of all State Assessments:

Training for all school personnel involved in any aspect of Colorado's state assessments is required on an annual basis. In-person district assessment coordinator trainings were held across Colorado from September through November. Recorded trainings are available for those who were unable to attend. Before testing, district assessment coordinators are responsible for providing assessment administration training to all district and school employees involved in administration activities. A state assessment training fact sheet is available at

http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/annual_trng_requirements.

View recorded trainings below:

- ACCESS for ELLs: <http://connect.enetcolorado.org/p2zrbsmzl3v/>
- CMAS PARCC English language arts/mathematics and science/social studies (do not use Internet Explorer): <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/trainings>
- CoAlt (DLM: English language arts and mathematics):

<http://training.dynamiclearningmaps.org/>

- CoAlt (Science and Social Studies): <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/trainings>

What's on the Horizon:

February/March Preparation Activities for Spring 2016 CMAS Administration

Technology Preparation:

District technology coordinators should engage in technology preparation activities with local technology coordinators and district assessment coordinators to ensure that technology environments are ready for testing.

Set-Up Online Test Sessions:

District and school personnel can begin to set up CMAS test sessions in PearsonAccess^{next} on **Feb. 1**. This activity should be completed before students begin testing.

ACCESS for ELLs Student Biographical Data

The ACCESS for ELLs Student Biographical Data Review (SBD) window is **March 14-25**. During the SBD window, districts have the opportunity to download, review and update demographic information associated with the 2016 ACCESS administration. Local Access Managers (LAMS) must use the "ACC" collection identifier to assign district access for this collection. This is not a mandatory data collection.

Important Upcoming Deadlines

- **Jan. 11 - Feb. 12:** ACCESS for ELLs testing window
- **Jan. 11 - 22:** The initial materials order window is open in PearsonAccess^{next} for CMAS: English language arts/literacy, Colorado Spanish language arts, math, science and social studies. CoAlt science and social studies initial material order updates should also be made. Initial orders for accommodated assessment materials may be placed by updating Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile information in PearsonAccess^{next}. After **Jan. 22**, updates to the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile will not drive material orders for students and districts may order accommodated assessment materials during the additional orders window.
- **Feb. 1 through Start of Testing:** Online CMAS test sessions can be set-up
- **Feb. 29 – Apr. 28:** CMAS: PARCC additional orders window for secure materials
- **Feb. 29 – May 4:** CMAS: PARCC additional orders window for non-secure materials
- **March 29 – April 28:** CMAS science and social studies additional orders window for secure materials
- **March 29 – May 4:** CMAS science and social studies additional orders window for non-secure materials
- **Prior to CMAS Testing:** district assessment coordinators send the Verification of District Training form to CDE prior to testing (signed by superintendent).

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 school and district support systems, accountability measures, improvement plans, federal programs and data analysis.

What's Happening Now:

Accountability Work Group

The Accountability Work Group meets Jan. 25. Information about the work group can be found here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/accountabilityworkgroup>.

UIP Winter Submission Cycle - Required Plans Due Jan. 15

Schools and districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type on the 2014 SPF or DPF are required to submit UIPs to CDE for review by **Jan. 15**. Plans must be submitted through the online Tracker system or the UIP online system. Resources for UIP submissions are available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Tracker.asp.

Optional Submission of UIPs for SchoolView

CDE is offering an optional submission window this winter for any district and/or school to submit revised UIPs for posting on SchoolView. The submission window is open from **Dec. 16** through **Jan. 15**. Plans submitted during this cycle will replace the currently posted plans in February. Resources for UIP submissions are available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Tracker.asp.

UIP Winter Review Process

CDE will review just over 200 Unified Improvement Plans in January and February for districts and schools required to submit their plans as outlined above. CDE reviews the plans against the UIP Quality Criteria (http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/UIP_TrainingAndSupport_Resources.asp). Feedback based on the UIP Quality Criteria (including program specific requirements) will go back to districts and schools upon the completion of the reviews. The Quality Criteria is posted online in Word format so planning teams may format the criteria to perform their own internal reviews any time.

What's on the Horizon:

Unified Improvement Planning Submissions Dates

Every district and school must submit a revised/updated UIP by **April 15** (note: small, rural districts and schools with a Performance plan type may submit plans biennially). Schools and districts with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type (2014) must submit by **Jan. 15**. [View more information \(http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_tracker\)](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_tracker).

Important Upcoming Deadlines

- **Jan. 15** – Priority Improvement and Turnaround UIPs (districts and schools) are due to CDE for review
- **Jan. 25** – Accountability Work Group Meeting
- **April 15** – School and district UIPs must be submitted for public posting on SchoolView

For more information on accountability and improvement, contact Alyssa Pearson, interim associate commissioner of accountability, performance and support, 303-866-6855, pearson_a@cde.state.co.us, or visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability>.

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:

Submit ASCENT Requests by Feb. 1

Annual ASCENT requests for the number of students your district anticipates participating for the 2016-17 school year are due **Feb. 1**. View more information and submission instructions at http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ascent_requests. Districts have until **May 1** to submit an affidavit with final ASCENT participant numbers, along with a list of participating students. Final notifications for the number of ASCENT slots that have been allocated to your district will be made no later than **June 1**.

2016-17 School Counselor Corps Grant Request for Proposal and Grant Training Webinar

The 2016-17 School Counselor Corps Grant Request for Proposal (RFP) will be available **Jan. 21** to local education agencies (LEAs) for competitive funding to increase the availability and implementation of effective school-based counseling within secondary schools.

A grant training webinar will be held **Jan. 27**, from 1 to 2 p.m. To register, visit <https://sccapp2016.eventbrite.com>. For program information, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/schoolcounselorcorps> or contact Eve Pugh, 303-866-4123, pugh_e@cde.state.co.us.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

Multi-District Online Schools Application Deadline and Amendment Window Open

The application for certification deadline for new multi-district online schools is **Jan. 4, by 4 p.m.** The next opportunity for submission is **April 1**.

The amendment application window is **Jan. 4 through April 1**. Change in authorizer, education service provider (ESP) or grade level changes require an amendment to the original certification. If you have questions about the process or would like technical assistance in the development of your amendment(s), please contact Renee Martinez, Office of Online and Blended Learning at martinez_r@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6864. The application and review rubric can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/events>.

For more information about postsecondary readiness, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/> or contact Gretchen Morgan, interim associate commissioner of innovation, choice and engagement, morgan_g@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6740.

Organizational Effectiveness

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

Overview:

Student October and End of Year data will be released **Jan. 14**. There are also January target dates for the aligned Human Resources and December Count collections.

What's Happening Now:

Student October

Pupil membership information for 2015-2016 will be released **Jan. 14**.

End of Year

Graduation, dropout and related end of year data for 2014-15 will be released **Jan. 21**. At the request of districts, 2015-16 snapshots may be taken beginning **Feb. 1**; however, not all edits will be updated and finalized until **May 5**.

Migrant Data

Migrant regions may resume entering student information into New Generation System on **Jan. 11**.

Human Resources

By **Jan. 13**, local education agencies must have generated complete Human Resources Snapshot datasets by passing all Interchange and Snapshot validations in preparation for report review.

December Count

Administrative Units must generate complete Special Education December Count Snapshot datasets by passing all Interchange and Snapshot validations in preparation for report review by **Jan. 13**. By **Jan. 21**, administrative units must electronically verify that the staff and student data submitted are valid and reliable by submitting a signed faxed/emailed report.

Directory

The four-day school week collection opens **Feb. 1** and closes **May 13**.

Statewide Standard Course Codes

Courses should be updated by **Feb. 12**.

Teacher Student Data Link

The TSDL interchange is open. Continue to submit files until the snapshot opens **Feb. 29**.

What's on the Horizon:

Statewide standard course codes will need to be updated by February. Both the four-day school week collection and 2015-16 end of year collections open **Feb. 1**.

Important Upcoming Deadlines:

- **Jan. 11** – Migrant regions may resume entering student data into NGS
- **Jan. 13** – LEAs must have generated complete Human Resources Snapshot datasets
- **Jan. 13** – AUs must have generated complete Special Education December Count Snapshot datasets
- **Jan. 14** – 2015-16 Student October results released
- **Jan. 21** – 2014-15 Student End of Year results released
- **Jan. 21**– AUs must electronically verify that staff and student data submitted are valid and reliable

For more information, contact Jan Rose Petro, director of data services, petro_j@cde.state.co.us, 303-866-6838. Submit questions and suggestions 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 Education 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>

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