

**Colorado's Preschool to Postsecondary Alignment Act, SB08-212 (CAP4K)
Colorado Department of Education & Colorado Education Association
Teacher Tour**

Today's Agenda

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 4:30 – 4:40 | Welcome and introductions |
| 4:40 – 5:10 | Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To understand...<ul style="list-style-type: none">ii. What is SB 212 and why are we here?iii. What will the impact on teaching and learning be?- To learn from you...<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. What support can CDE provide to ensure success for teachers and students in the classroom? <p>CAP4K overview</p> |
| 5:10 – 5:50 | Standards reform in CO |
| 5:50 – 6:00 | Additional Q&A, next steps and closure |

Colorado's Preschool to Postsecondary Alignment Act, SB08-212 (CAP4K)
Bill Summary
Colorado Department of Education

Purpose: Improve Colorado's public education through alignment of preschool through postsecondary expectations.

Step 1: Create descriptions for "school readiness," "21st century skills" and "postsecondary and workforce readiness".

- Shaping descriptions:
 - West Ed
 - National dialogue
 - Online Survey
 - Regional tour (13 Colorado cities in Nov. 08)
 - CDE and DHE 212 regional town hall meetings (12 Colorado cities from Nov. 08 through May 09)
- Deadlines:
 - 12.15.08 – State Board of Education adopts "school readiness" description
 - 12.15.09 – State Board of Education and Colorado Commission of Higher Education adopt "postsecondary and workforce readiness" description

Step 2: Expand and refine model content standards from preschool through high school.

- Assumptions:
 - Begin with the end in mind
 - Status quo not good enough (change is needed)
 - Aim is to create healthy tension
 - Design features = fewer, clearer, higher
 - The focus is standards, not curriculum
 - 21st century skills are essential
 - Competency based matters more than seat time
- 13 subjects, three phases:
 - Phase I – Reading & Writing, Math, Science, Financial Literacy and Music, January 10 – March 28
 - Phase II – History, Economics, Geography and Civics, March 28 – May 16
 - Phase III - World Language, Physical Education, Dance, Theatre and Visual Arts, June 20 – August 22
- Deadlines:
 - 12.15.09 – State Board of Education adopts revised preschool through postsecondary standards.

Step 3: Realign assessments with those standards.

- Postsecondary and workforce readiness assessment pilot:
 - Launch a high school assessment pilot in the spring of 2009 to inform the state about which tools signal student readiness for postsecondary success.
- Deadlines:
 - 12.15.10 – State Board of Education adopts reviews assessment system.

Step 4: Local school boards assure that local standards meet or exceed state standards.

- Deadlines:
 - 12.15.11 – Local school boards revise local standards and curricula to align with state standards.

Step 5: Recognize that earning a diploma based on demonstration of mastering the new standards means a student is college ready.

- Deadlines:
 - 7.1.11 – State Board of Education adopts high school diploma endorsement criteria.

Input sought on high school standards

The public hearing is part of a state effort to reform content for college and the workforce.

By Jeremy P. Meyer

The Denver Post

Posted: 01/27/2009 12:30:00 AM MST

State education leaders will host a town-hall meeting today in Denver, trying to decide what a high schooler should know upon entering college or the workforce.

It's part of the ongoing Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids, or CAP4K — a multiyear initiative seeking to revamp the standards for students at each grade from preschool through high school.

The 5 p.m. meeting at the Turnhalle Ballroom in the Tivoli Student Union on the Auraria campus is the third of 12 planned across the state.

The State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education are mandated to adopt a description of "postsecondary and workforce readiness" by Dec. 15.

"The picture in Colorado isn't pretty," said Samantha Long of the Office of Learning and Results in the Colorado Department of Education. "High school graduation rates are declining. Colorado has the largest achievement gap in the country. Students aren't prepared to succeed."

Colorado ranks 46th in the nation in the rate of high school completion — 82 percent for whites, 66 percent for African-Americans and 57 percent for Latinos.

For the first time in history, students are less likely to graduate high school than their parents, according to state education officials.

Once they get to college, 30 percent of Colorado high schoolers must receive remedial help. It's worse at community colleges, where 56 percent must receive assistance.

Many of those students who go to college fail to stay — only 21 percent of those who enrolled in two-year colleges graduated and 56 percent of those who enrolled in four-year schools graduated.

Curiously, Colorado is one of the most educated states in the country, fourth in the United States in the percentage of college-educated citizens.

"We are bringing them in, but we aren't growing our own," Long said. "We don't have a pipeline of students who stay and succeed."

Last month, the State Board of Education adopted a description of school readiness for 5-year-olds. The emphasis now is to figure out what teens should know when they leave 12th grade.

Officials from the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Higher Education will be on hand, seeking input.

People at the meeting will be asked to address: "What do students need to be workforce ready, what do students need to be postsecondary ready, and are there special considerations for the workforce or higher education in your region of the state?"

A new state assessment system is expected to be implemented by 2012, applying the new content standards for all grades.

Jeremy P. Meyer: 303-954-1367 or jpmeyer@denverpost.com

Postsecondary, workforce readiness debated

Written by Alan Gottlieb and Todd Engdahl
Tuesday, January 27 2009

About 150 people turned out on a cold and icy Tuesday evening in Denver to help state education officials continue crafting descriptions of postsecondary and workforce readiness.

This, the third in a series of 12 meetings across Colorado to develop the descriptions, drew mostly people from the worlds of primary, secondary and higher education, though a significant contingent of businesspeople turned out as well. A smattering of college students, policy wonks and elected officials also attended.

It's all part of the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), which requires that the State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education adopt the descriptions by next Dec. 15, although the two bodies are hoping to have them drafted by June.

Generally, there was significant overlap between what participants described as workforce and postsecondary readiness. Among the skills and attributes high school graduates need to be ready for the working world or higher education:

- Soft skills, which include being comfortable working in teams, dependability, respect for others, comfort with a diverse pool of colleagues;
- The ability to communicate well, verbally and in writing;
- Critical thinking and “higher-order learning” skills;
- Perseverance and self-discipline;
- Creativity and problem-solving abilities;
- Specific technical skills, which can be honed and deepened over time.

In addition, participants said that to be ready for post-secondary education, high graduates need to be able to:

- Read, write and do college-level math without remediation;
- Demonstrate motivation, perseverance and stamina;
- Know how to advocate for themselves in the “education game;”
- Develop “analog” research skills – meaning book research, not just Google searches;

One table of college students said that to be successful in college, young people also need some basic life-skills training, including money management, personal responsibility, how to navigate the financial aid thicket, and how to do their own laundry.

Representatives of the state education and higher education departments have the unenviable task of taking this broad and general input and turning it into a measurable, comprehensible set of standards. But this is vitally important work, speakers told Tuesday's crowd.

"That's your job tonight: imagine a great community, that imagines greatness for every child," said Jefferson County Schools Supt. Cindy Stevenson.

And Rollie Heath, a newly minted state senator from Boulder, said his career in business convinced him that in some key ways, the education system is off track. "What we're doing here is not either or," Heath said. "We're presenting it as all or nothing. Go to college or you fail. There are lots of ways to be successful, but it all starts with that high school diploma."

The description of postsecondary and workforce readiness is one of the central elements of CAP4K (The state board already has adopted [a school readiness description](#).)

While the school readiness description is more of a goal – there won't be entrance requirements for kindergarten – CAP4K's other reforms are supposed to align with the postsecondary and workforce description ("PWR" in educator jargon).

So, revised state content standards, new tests, updated high school graduation requirements and college admissions standards all are supposed to be driven by the PWR description.

The CAP4K law also envisions that readiness will include not only academic proficiency but also the "21st century skills" that educators are talking about these days. And, crafting the description requires the cooperation of K-12 education and the state colleges and universities, two realms that historically have followed their own, separate agendas in Colorado.

The Colorado Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education are following separate but regularly intersecting paths to draft recommendations for their respective boards.

Research has been done, memos have been written and circulated, meetings have been held and many more meetings are scheduled.

The CDE has rolled PWR, school readiness, 21st century skills and new content standards into a single "scoping" process that involves an outside consultant, reassigned staffers, an online survey, public meetings around the state, outreach to constituent groups like superintendents, teachers and school board members and a 25-member "stakeholder" group of educators, business leaders and others. CDE executives also are meeting regularly with higher ed officials.

Last fall CDE held a series of meetings around the state and tabulated responses from those along with those from an online survey that gathered opinions about school readiness, postsecondary and workforce readiness and 21st century skills.

The survey produced some interesting results. Respondents by far rated critical thinking as the most important 21st century skill students need to acquire, well above the rankings given 11 other skills. When asked what constitutes postsecondary readiness, about 63 percent of respondents said it includes not only being accepted to a postsecondary institution but also successfully completing a degree or certificate.

The respondents also provided a surprise when about 61 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that the knowledge and skills needed to enter the workforce from high school are the same as those needed for college. But Tuesday's metro-area crowd clearly felt the two overlapped in significant ways.

More recently, a dozen content subcommittees selected by CDE have begun working on detailed new content standards in various academic subjects. The state board is supposed to adopt the new standards by Dec. 15.

The CDE's fall meetings are being followed up by the joint CDE-DHE meetings, which are supposed to gather public comment on such questions as: What do students need to be workforce ready? What do students need to be postsecondary ready? Are there special consideration for the workforce or higher education in your region of the state?

Tuesday evening's session at Auraria was the third such meeting. Previous gatherings were Nov. 10 in Gunnison and Dec. 3 in Colorado Springs. Education officials have been concerned that they're not getting enough participation by business leaders and are working to attract more businesspeople to the regional meetings.

Future community meetings are scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 12, in Fort Collins at the Colorado State University's Lory Student Center (4-6 p.m.) and Wednesday, March 4, in Grand Junction at the DoubleTree Hotel.

Additional meetings are tentatively planned on Thursday, March 26 in northeastern Colorado; Wednesday, April 15 in Alamosa; Thursday, April 16 in Pueblo; Wednesday, April 22, in Sterling; Tuesday, May 5 in Steamboat Springs; Thursday, May 14, in Glenwood Springs; and Tuesday, May 19, in Durango. Locations and times are to be announced.

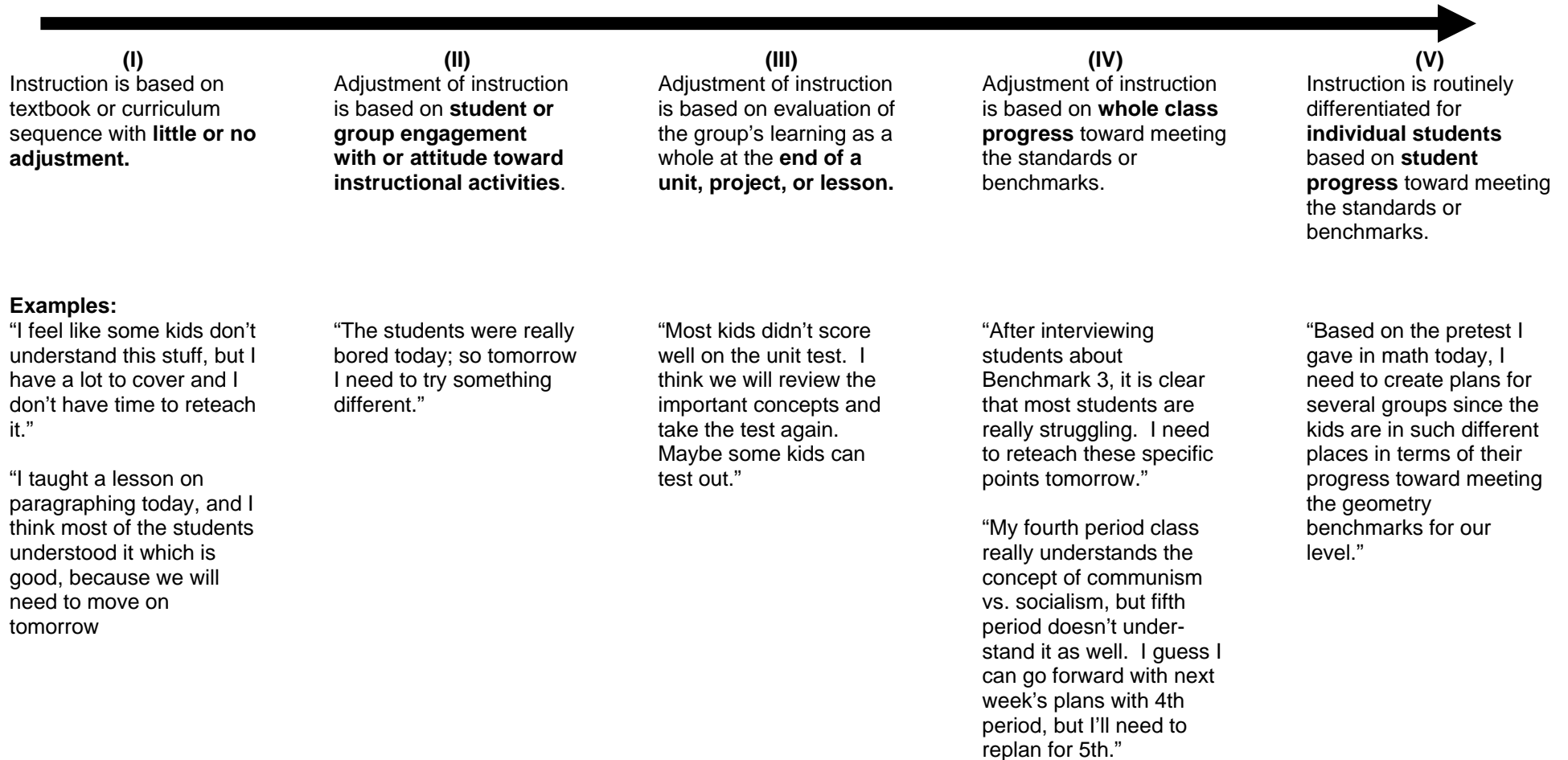
Do your homework:

CDE resources, background and links
DHE CAP4K resources

Standards Centered	Standards Referenced	Standards Based
Are we teaching to the standards?	Are students meeting the standards?	How do we modify the system so that all students meet the standards?
Instructional Program is aligned with the standards.	Student progress in meeting the standards is assessed at the school and district levels.	Instruction is routinely modified based on student progress in meeting standards.
Classroom/school accountability	System accountability	Student accountability

Standards-Based Education - Configuration Map

Component #1 - Adjustment of Instruction: (adjusts instruction, basis for adjustment)



The price of accountability

Want to improve schools? Invest in the people who work in them

By Richard Elmore

Results, November 2002

This article is excerpted from *Bridging the Gap Between Standards and Achievement: The Imperative for Professional Development in Education* by Richard Elmore. Reprinted with permission, Richard F. Elmore, professor, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University and senior research fellow, Consortium for Policy Research in Education, and The Albert Shanker Institute. The entire publication is available at www.ashankerinst.org or for \$10 each from the Albert Shanker Institute, (202) 879-4401.

The work of schools is becoming more complex and demanding while the organization of schools remains, for the most part, static and rigid. If you push hard enough on a rigid structure, eventually it will break and hurt the people in it. This is the perilous state of American public education.

The immediate cause of this situation is a simple, powerful idea dominating policy discourse about schools: That students should be held to high, common standards for academic performance and that schools and the people who work in them should be held accountable for ensuring that students--all students--are able to meet these standards. Accountability schemes come in many forms, including high-stakes student testing, district-led closure or restructuring of low-performing schools, and state takeovers of low-performing schools and districts. ...

Unfortunately, schools and school systems were not designed to respond to the pressure for performance that standards and accountability bring, and their failure to translate this pressure into useful and fulfilling work for students and adults is dangerous to the future of public education. ...

With increased accountability, American schools and those who work in them are being asked to do something new--to engage in systematic, continuous improvement in the quality of the educational experience of students and to subject themselves to the discipline of measuring their success by the metric of students' academic performance. Most people who currently work in public schools weren't hired to do this work, nor have they been adequately prepared to do it either by their professional education or by their prior experience in schools.

Schools, as organizations, aren't designed as places where people are expected to engage in sustained improvement of their practice, where they are supported in this improvement, or where they are expected to subject their practice to the scrutiny of peers

or the discipline of evaluations based on student achievement. Educators in schools with the most severe performance problems face truly challenging conditions, for which their prior training and experience have not prepared them--extreme poverty, unprecedented cultural and language diversity and unstable family and community patterns. To work effectively under these conditions requires a level of knowledge and skill not required of teachers and administrators who work in less demanding situations, yet accountability systems expect the same level of performance of all students, regardless of social background. Hence, given the conditions of their work, some school people regard demands for performance-based accountability as unreasonable.

The organization and culture of American schools is, in most important respects, the same as it was in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Teachers are still, for the most part, treated as solo practitioners operating in isolation from one another under conditions of work that severely limit their exposure to other adults doing the same work. The work day of teachers is still designed around the expectation that teachers' work is composed exclusively of delivering content to students not, among other things, to cultivate knowledge and skill about how to improve their work.

The prevailing assumption is that teachers learn most of what they need to know about how to teach before they enter the classroom--despite massive evidence to the contrary--and that most of what they learn after they begin teaching falls into the amorphous category of "experience," which usually means lowering their expectations for what they can accomplish with students and learning to adjust to an organization that is either hostile to or unsupportive of their work. This limited view of what teachers need to know and do demands little educational leadership from administrators. And, since administrative work currently has little to do with the content of teaching, much less its improvement, it may actually act to protect teachers from various external intrusions on their isolated work.

The learning that is expected of teachers and administrators as a condition of their work also tends to be predicated on the model of solo practice. In order to advance in rank and salary, individual teachers and administrators are expected to accumulate academic credit for the university courses they take, any or all of which may be totally unconnected to their daily work. Most workplace learning also mirrors the norms of the organization--it takes the form of information about policies and practices delivered in settings disconnected from where the work of the organization is actually done.

It would be difficult to invent a more dysfunctional organization for a performance-based accountability system. In fact, the existing structure and culture of schools seems better designed to resist learning and improvement than to enable it. As expectations for increased student performance mount and the measurement and publication of evidence about performance becomes part of the public discourse about schools, there are few portals through which new knowledge about teaching and learning can enter schools; few structures or processes in which teachers and administrators can assimilate, adapt and polish new ideas and practices; and few sources of assistance for those who are struggling

to understand the connection between the academic performance of their students and the practices in which they engage.

So the brutal irony of our present circumstance is that schools are hostile and inhospitable places for learning. They are hostile to the learning of adults and, because of this, they are necessarily hostile to the learning of students. They have been this way for some time. What's new about the current situation is that the advent of performance-based accountability has made the irony more visible-and may ultimately undermine the legitimacy of public education if something isn't done to change the way schools work.

Accountability must be a reciprocal process. For every increment of performance I demand from you, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to meet that expectation. Likewise, for every investment you make in my skill and knowledge, I have a reciprocal responsibility to demonstrate some new increment in performance. This is the principle of "reciprocity of accountability for capacity." It is the glue that, in the final analysis, will hold accountability systems together (Elmore, 2000). At the moment, schools and school systems are not designed to provide support or capacity in response to demands for accountability.

The imperative here is for professionals, policy makers and the public at large to recognize that performance-based accountability, if it is to do what it was intended to do-improve the quality of the educational experience for all students and increase the performance of schools-requires a strategy for investing in the knowledge and skill of educators. In order for people in schools to respond to external pressure for accountability, they have to learn to do their work differently and to rebuild the organization of schooling around a different way of doing the work. If the public and policy makers want increased attention to academic quality and performance, the quid pro quo is investing in the knowledge and skill necessary to produce it. If educators want legitimacy, purpose and credibility for their work, the quid pro quo is learning to do their work differently and accepting a new model of accountability.

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Leave behind questionnaire

1. What additional advice do you have for us on:
 - a. Working together

 - b. On support for implementation

2. If you had what you wanted in a state-wide system of support, what would it look like?

3. If you had what you wanted in a state-wide system of accountability, what would it look like?

4. What can the Colorado Department of Education do to help you?

5. Assuming CDE uses the advice gathered here, I believe this has been a worthwhile use of our time.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree