

Supporting Success for All Students

Colorado's Education Improvement Efforts "101"



COLORADO
Department of Education



Since 2008, Colorado has been implementing strategic, integrated educational improvements with a singular purpose: to ensure that all students are prepared for success in a globally competitive world. Students need a high-quality education that prepares them to succeed in college and the workforce. Colorado is improving learning for all students through comprehensive efforts targeted at the student, educator, school/district and state levels.

OVERVIEW OF REFORM EFFORTS

Broadly owned by policymakers of different political parties and education organizations across the state, Colorado's improvement efforts are encoded in state law, including:

Senate Bill 08-212: Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K)

- Focused, coherent and rigorous academic standards for PreK-12 students
- Engaging assessments aligned to the new standards
- School readiness definition, assessments and plans
- Common definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness

Senate Bill 09-163: The Education Accountability Act

- Shared accountability measures for districts and schools
- Value placed on growth and postsecondary readiness
- Clear cycle of support and intervention for struggling schools and districts
- Strong emphasis on school and district improvement efforts

Senate Bill 10-191: The Great Teachers and Great Leaders Act

- Annual performance evaluations for all educators based on statewide Quality Standards (50 percent based on professional practices and 50 percent based on multiple measures of student learning)
- Evaluations focused on meaningful feedback and continuous professional growth
- Non-probationary status earned and retained based on demonstrated effectiveness

The power of these education improvement efforts lies in their integration: in the intersection of rigorous academic standards, informative assessments, outstanding educators, and high-performing schools all committed to continuously improving and preparing students for success in a globally competitive world.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Collaborating closely with districts, schools, state education organizations and other strategic partners, Colorado has:

Senate Bill 08-212:

- **Adopted** the new Colorado Academic Standards which incorporate the Common Core State Standards in mathematics, reading, writing and communicating;

Driving Questions

What do students need to learn to be college and career ready?

- Colorado Academic Standards

How will we know if students are meeting learning expectations?

- Aligned assessments

How will we know if instruction is impacting student learning?

- Educator evaluations

How will we know if schools/districts are performing?

- Performance frameworks



- provided training to districts on the new standards;
- developed a dynamic standards implementation tool kit;
- coordinated a teacher-led project, Colorado’s District Sample Curriculum Project, involving hundreds of educators across the state in the creation and refinement of standards based curriculum overviews (sequences) and instructional units based on the standards for all 10 content areas grades k-12;
- adopted school readiness assessment requirements;
- developed and implemented the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments which includes new Colorado-developed online science and social studies assessments and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)-developed English language arts and mathematics assessments; and
- with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, adopted a shared, statewide definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness.

Senate Bill 09-163:

- Launched new School and District Performance Frameworks (SPF/DPF) holding schools/districts accountable for academic achievement, growth, growth gaps and postsecondary and workforce readiness;
- implemented a system of Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) that builds from the data in the performance frameworks and aligns state, federal and grant expectations into a single improvement plan for schools/districts; and
- enacted a tiered system of support giving higher-performing districts greater autonomy and lower-performing districts more support and intervention.

Senate Bill 10-191:

- Adopted statewide teacher, principal and specialized service professional Quality Standards defining effectiveness and S.B. 10-191 rules;
- developed, piloted and implemented the Colorado State Model Evaluation System for teachers,
- supported all districts with implementation guidance and training.

NEXT STEPS

The state’s education improvement work has great momentum; however, continued support is needed to ensure that the goal of increased success for all students is achieved.

- CAP4K requires a review and revision of the Colorado Academic Standards by July 2018 and every six years thereafter. Assessments will be realigned to the standards following the revision process.
- The Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers that is part of the state model evaluation system required by S.B. 10-191 will undergo a review process to streamline the rubric and strengthen coaching and feedback conversations for teachers.

Where can I learn more?

- Standards Resources: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/standardsresourcesk12>
- Assessment Resources: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/resources>
- Educator Effectiveness Resources: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/resources>