

Public Comments and CDE Responses
Additional Comments Regarding the Standards Section of the Draft ESSA Plan

Public Comments	CDE Response
<p>It is touted in my school district that we are fortunate to have 1/2 time gifted teachers in every school building. However, if you ask myself or ANY of my colleagues you will hear the following: 1) I've been at school conferences for years, but in 4 years have not attended my own children's conferences, 2) I work on ALPs over the summer, 3) I worked on ALPs over Thanksgiving break, 4) I wake up at 3 or 4 in the morning to manage all my teaching & specific gifted teacher obligations, etc. These are all true statements from 3 different gifted teachers who are dedicated, skilled, & lifelong learners who are already wise to begin with. I just invested over \$20K in a master's in gifted education (& w/my new Gifted Specialist state endorsement it should also be noted that this did not influence an increase in salary). I volunteer on a district gifted advisory committee. I present at state & national gifted conferences. However, it is reported to the board in my district that a lot of the problem is the gifted teaching personnel's lack of professionalism. I beg to differ. The problem is the lack of gifted educator staffing. I dare someone to compare the performance of increased site-based gifted specialist personnel per building (half-time) as compared to district level content based instructional coaches (full-time). If federal government is going to advocate for gifted achievement finally, they need to put the money where the legislation is & make sure it goes into increased gifted specialist personnel as a top-five priority. Otherwise, you'll be looking at a lot less gifted personnel to choose from in an applicant pool. Case in point: I just applied for another job this week.</p>	<p>Thank you for these comments. Your comments demonstrate your commitment to gifted education and passion for the profession.</p> <p>ESSA opens for consideration the use of funds to identify and serve gifted students. This is a hopeful provision but not a requirement of ESSA. It is a local decision about funding and resources that potentially could impact an increase in staffing.</p> <p>The state law addresses the consideration of administrative units to employ sufficient personnel for advanced learning plan (ALP) writing and ALP monitoring, and differentiated instruction for gifted students. This provision is sensitive toward the limited state resources, but highly encouraging for increasing dedicated personnel.</p> <p>The Colorado Department of Education through its regional assistance network collaborates with district leaders to provide professional development and consultation. However, the increase in personnel remains a local decision about resources and use of funds.</p>

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<p>What about the other parts of CAP4K that are so damaging to educators? For instance the kindergarten readiness plans that make no sense at all, this is a real workload issue for kindergarten teachers and serves no purpose at all. Why do kindergarten teachers need to do a readiness plan for each student well into the school year that cannot deny a child access from school? The amount of time that kindergarten teachers spend on completing this requirement is time that could be used for early interventions to target skills that are needed to be successful in the future. If we are going to utilize the CAP4K standards alignment, I would like to see some revisions made so that we only keep the parts of the law that serves us (and most importantly our students) well.</p>	<p>ESSA does not have any impact on CAP4K (Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids, Senate Bill 08-212). ESSA does not contain any provisions related to kindergarten school readiness assessments and the requirement for individual school readiness plans for preschool and kindergarten children in Colorado. Concerns regarding this state requirement would be best delivered to your state senator and representative: http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/cslFrontPages.nsf/HomeSplash?OpenForm. These comments will be shared with the staff in the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at the Colorado Department of Education.</p>
<p>Address early entrance to school, early graduation, acceleration and concurrent enrollment for learners who need a significantly different pace, environment and content.</p>	<p>Thank you for these suggestions. These are important aspects of education policy that are addressed through state statutes and policies, not within ESSA. Local school district boards establish graduation requirements, including participation in concurrent enrollment and other early postsecondary credential attainment options. Information on these programs may be found at www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary.</p>
<p>general comments - http://anotherviewphj.blogspot.com/ - my newsletter on Common Core and flexibility</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this link.</p>