

SUPPORTING School and District Accountability during the 2015 Assessment Transition: Overview of HB 14-1182

As Colorado implements new standards and assessments, some adjustments will need to be made to the state's accountability system. The greatest impact will come in the spring of 2015 with the transition from the reading, writing and mathematics Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) assessments to the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments that include the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments in English language arts and mathematics.

[House Bill 14-1182](#) was passed in 2014 to address the impact of the 2015 assessment transition on school and district accountability.

Background

New, rigorous learning expectations, the Colorado Academic Standards, are now in place in all Colorado classrooms. The goal of the new standards is to prepare all students for success in college and careers. New state assessments are needed to measure student progress towards meeting the new expectations: new standards require new assessments.

These new assessments provide feedback on student performance in relation to the new expectations. The CMAS assessments include Colorado-developed science and social studies assessments and PARCC-developed English language arts and mathematics assessments. In addition, there will be new alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These new assessments introduce a higher baseline for student learning: new assessments bring new student scores.

A large part of Colorado's educational accountability system is based on the results from state assessments; implementing new state assessments has an impact on district and school accountability. To ensure the validity and fairness of our accountability frameworks (the District and School Performance Frameworks (DPF/SPF)), HB 14-1182 outlines adjustments to the education accountability system during the assessment transition period.

Accountability Timeline 2014-2016*

- August 2014: Preliminary 2014 SPF/DPF reports shared with districts
- September - November 2014: Districts submit requests to reconsider for 2014 plan types
- December 2014: Final 2014 SPF/DPF reports public
- Spring 2015: New CMAS PARCC assessments administered
- Summer/fall 2015: PARCC standard setting process
- Fall 2015: Preliminary 2015 school and district plan types released to districts (based on 2014 ratings, participation and assurances)
- October 2015: PARCC achievement results released to districts and public
- October - December 2015: Requests to reconsider for 2015 plan types
- February/March 2016: Final 2015 plan types and accreditation ratings made public
- Spring 2016: Informational SPF/DPF reports shared with districts and schools, using PARCC results and enhanced frameworks
- September 2016: Preliminary 2016 SPF/DPF 2.0 framework reports released to districts

* Timeline and dates are based on the best understanding of the assessment timelines, to date. Please note that they are subject to change.

HB 14-1182

Per the new legislation, 2015 school plan type assignments and district accreditation ratings will be based on:

- 2014 school plan type assignments and district accreditation ratings¹
- 2015 assessment participation rates
- Accreditation assurances (for districts)
- Optional: 2014-15 student performance data (aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards) or postsecondary workforce data that districts may optionally submit through the request to reconsider process

The legislation also allows more flexibility for the State Board of Education to identify additional options for schools entering Year 5 of the accountability clock during 2015-16.

2015 School and District Performance Frameworks

Because of the state assessment transition, CDE will not produce official 2015 School and District Performance Frameworks. Instead, preliminary school plan types and district accreditation ratings will be assigned in the fall of 2015 using the criteria listed above. After a more in-depth request to reconsider process during the fall and winter, school plan types and district accreditation ratings will be finalized and publicized in the late winter of 2016.

Informational framework reports incorporating results from CMAS assessments (both PARCC-developed English language arts and math and Colorado-developed science and social studies) will be provided for educator use in the spring of 2016. This will help districts and schools better understand their performance on the new assessments. Additionally, these informational reports will provide a preview of other adjustments the department is making to improve the frameworks (SPF/DPF 2.0) based upon feedback from the field.

Request to Reconsider Process

For 2015 ratings, the request to reconsider process will be an opportunity to share more recent and aligned performance data with the state. As less state performance data will be available in August 2015 than in prior years, the 2014 ratings will serve as the basis for the 2015 ratings. However, districts and schools may have more recent local student performance data to share with the state. This additional data will help the state to determine the most appropriate plan types for schools and districts.

¹ 2014 ratings will use elementary and middle level CMAS science and social studies results for participation only and not achievement.

In submitting a request to reconsider for a different school plan type or district accreditation rating, districts will be able to submit results on local assessments (aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards). Templates for submitting local data and guidelines for performance expectations will be available for this process by the fall of 2015. Districts may also submit more recent postsecondary and workforce readiness data.

The reconsideration process is expected to begin in October 2015 and end in January 2016. Districts may begin working with CDE earlier in the school year to receive help in preparing data for a submission. The department will wait to make decisions on requests and assignment of final district accreditation ratings and recommendations for school plan types until the CMAS PARCC assessment results are available.

Accountability Clock

HB 14-1182 does not pause or stop the accountability clock for schools or districts during the assessment transition period. The assessment transition will affect schools and districts identified for Priority Improvement and Turnaround in different ways, based on the year they are entering on the clock.

- Schools and districts entering Year 5 of the state accountability clock on July 1, 2015 will be subject to action by the State Board of Education on or before June 30, 2016. While this timeline will have been set prior to the 2015 ratings, the board will be able to consider the results of the 2015 transitional ratings prior to making a determination of recommended actions.
- School and districts entering Year 4 of the state accountability clock on July 1, 2015 may enter Year 5 based on the 2015 ratings. Thus, it is imperative that a careful review of 2015 student performance results be completed to determine if the 2014 rating is the most appropriate to use.

Colorado law requires that the State Board of Education recommends specific action for any school, institute or district remaining on a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan for five consecutive years. For the 2015-16 school year, and for ratings given in the 2015-16 school year, HB 14-1182 allows the State Board of Education to recommend an action NOT specified in statute but still having a “comparable significance and effect.”

Schools assigned and districts accredited with a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan will continue to receive differentiated support from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) during the transition year and beyond.

Unified Improvement Planning

To date, the current Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) timelines are scheduled to remain in place. Key deadlines include:

- Jan. 15, 2016 for the CDE review of Priority Improvement and Turnaround plans.
- April 15, 2016 for public posting of school and district plans.

In keeping with the UIP as a continuous improvement process, plans should continue to be implemented, monitored and adjusted based on the data that is available. During the transition year, it will be useful for schools and districts to use local assessments that are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards to update the data analysis and progress monitoring components (e.g., interim measures) of the plan. Target setting will also need some modifications. More guidance and trainings to support planning during the assessment transition will be available.

Educator Effectiveness

Additional legislation was passed during the 2014 legislative session addressing the impact of the assessment transition on educator evaluations. This legislation, Senate Bill 14-165, provides flexibility for districts/BOCES regarding the 50 percent measures of student learning/outcomes portion of the evaluation for the 2014-15 school year only. Teachers, principals and specialized service professionals will receive a rating/score for each standard, including the measures of student learning/outcomes standard. Districts have flexibility for the 2014-15 school year when determining how much weight the measures of student learning/outcomes standard counts in the educator's final evaluation rating. Districts can decide to weight the measures of student learning rating anywhere from 0-50 percent of the final rating. For more information, reference the Senate Bill 14-165 fact sheet listed below.

Where can I learn more?

- House Bill 14-1182: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/HB14-1182.pdf>
- Senate Bill 14-165: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb14165factsheet>
- Accountability website: www.cde.state.co.us/accountability
- Priority Improvement and Turnaround Support:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performance turnaround>
- Unified Improvement Planning website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip>

The Colorado Department of Education
201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203