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News Release

Schools Identified for Fall 2009 Pilot of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Assessments

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) today named the 35 middle and high schools that will participate in a statewide Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Assessment (PWRA) pilot this fall during the 2009-2010 school year. In all, the schools serve about 20,000 students.

This announcement follows action taken by the legislature earlier this year. House Bill 09-1046, signed by Gov. Bill Ritter on March 20, extended the pilot into the fall.

In February, CDE announced the 42 middle and high schools currently participating in this spring's pilot. An eighth-grade-only pilot already planned for this fall now is expanded to include high schools as well.

The PWRA pilot seeks to gauge the effectiveness and relevance of various assessment tools in evaluating student preparation.

The pilot will evaluate assessments that include postsecondary and workforce planning and preparation beginning in eighth grade.

Under CAP4K — Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (Senate Bill 08-212) — Colorado will revise its state assessment system in December 2010 through joint adoption by the State Board of Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Local school districts will be expected to implement the new assessment system by 2012.

In the meantime, Colorado continues to use the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) as its summative measure of student achievement relative to Colorado Model Content standards in grades three through 10. In grade 11, all students take the Colorado ACT.

The CAP4K legislation seeks to establish a seamless pathway for students from preschool into college or the workplace. Essential to that pathway is an understanding of what it means to be ready for education after high school or for the workforce, and a plan to ensure that students take the necessary courses and master the content.

The assessments to be evaluated in the fall pilot for grades eight through 11 include:

- NWEA's MAP assessments of reading, language usage, mathematics and science
- ACT's EXPLORE Assessment of English, reading, mathematics and science
- ACT Plan
- College Boards PSAT
- ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)

Student performance data will be provided to CDE directly from the vendors by Nov. 6, 2009, for the assessments being administered this fall.

In addition to the assessment results, schools, parents and teachers will have an opportunity to provide input and perspective about the effectiveness and relevance of the assessments.

The 35 schools: Cherokee Trail High School, Cherry Creek High School, Eaglecrest High School, Grandview High School, Overland High School and Smoky Hill High School (Cherry Creek Schools); Denver Venture School and RidgeView Academy (Denver Public Schools); La Junta High School (East Otero School District R-1); Grand Valley High School (Garfield County School District 16); Holyoke Junior/Senior High School (Holyoke School District RE-1J); Conifer High School (Jefferson County Schools); Lewis Palmer High School and Palmer Ridge High School (Lewis-Palmer School District 38); Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts and Skyview Academy (Mapleton Public Schools); Estes Park High School (Park School District R-3); Monte Vista High School (Monte Vista C-8 School District); Revere Junior-Senior High School (Platte Valley RE-3); Fort Collins High School, Fossil Ridge High School, Poudre High School and Rocky Mountain High School (Poudre

School District); Centennial High School, Central High School, East High School, Keating High School, South High School (Pueblo City Schools); Ridgway Secondary School (Ridgway School District RE-2); Summit High School (Summit School District); Swink Junior-Senior High School (Swink School District 33); and Hidden Lake High School, Scott Carpenter Middle School and Westminster High School (Westminster School District 50).

“We appreciate the willingness of all schools — those in the spring and fall efforts — to participate and help provide insight into which assessments generate the most useful information about postsecondary and workforce readiness,” said Holly Baker, principal consultant at CDE who is overseeing the pilot.

As an incentive for participation, costs of the assessment will, in part, be covered by the state; schools may receive up to \$8 per student for each assessment.

Questions about the assessment pilot may be directed to Holly Baker at 303-866-3266 or baker_h@cde.state.co.us.

For more information, contact Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications. To sign up for the CDE e-mail news service, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

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