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News Release

State Board of Education Invites Public Comment on Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Description Wednesday, June 10

The Colorado State Board of Education invites public comment on a description of “postsecondary and workforce readiness,” one of the fundamental concepts to be established as part of the ongoing reforms called for under Senate Bill 08-212.

An open discussion will take place between 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10 as part of the board’s monthly meeting. The two-hour time slot will also include discussion on the path ahead for public education in Colorado, including a vision statement from Commissioner Dwight Jones and board discussion on topics for the Public School Finance Interim Committee. The meeting will be held in the first-floor board room at the Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax Ave., in Denver. Citizens who are unable to attend the meeting may offer comments by e-mail to long_s@cde.state.co.us

Senate Bill 08-212 is also known as the “Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act” or more informally as the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids. The legislation requires that a description of “postsecondary and workforce readiness” be jointly adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education by December 15, 2009.

The state board has already adopted a parallel description for “school readiness.” Combined, the two descriptions will form expectations for schools and students during the entire arc of a student’s academic career,

beginning with preschool or kindergarten through postsecondary options. Public comment is welcomed only on the postsecondary and workforce readiness description.

The postsecondary and workforce readiness description is the product 13 regional town hall meetings with educators, citizens, business leaders, parents and other stakeholders jointly held by the Colorado Departments of Education and Higher Education around the state over the past several months.

“The perspective gained throughout this tour was engaging and powerful,” said Colorado Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones. “My appreciation goes out to everyone who contributed to this important work. We’re at a milestone for P-12 and higher education in Colorado that will guide critical standards and assessment reforms in the coming years to ensure all students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed after high school.”

The description of postsecondary and workforce readiness being considered by the Colorado State Board of Education is:

Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

“Postsecondary and workforce readiness” describes the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential for high school graduates to be prepared to enter college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy. The description assumes students have developed consistent intellectual growth throughout their high school career as a result of academic work that is increasingly challenging, engaging, and coherent.

Postsecondary education and workforce readiness assumes that students are ready and able to demonstrate the following without the need for remediation.

I. Content Knowledge

Literacy

- Read fiction and non-fiction, understanding conclusions reached and points of view expressed
- Write clearly and coherently for a variety of purposes and audiences
- Use logic and rhetoric to analyze and critique ideas
- Access and use primary and secondary sources to explain questions being researched
- Use standard language properly: correct grammar, usage and spelling

Mathematical Sciences

- Think critically, analyze evidence, read graphs, understand logical arguments, detect logical fallacies, test conjectures, evaluate risks, and appreciate the role mathematics plays in the modern world, i.e., be quantitatively literate
- Understand and apply algebraic and geometric concepts and techniques
- Use concepts and techniques of probability and statistics
- Apply knowledge of mathematics to problem-solve, analyze issues, and make critical decisions that arise in everyday life

Science

- Think scientifically and apply the scientific method to complex systems and phenomena
- Use empirical evidence to draw conclusions
- Recognize conclusions are subject to interpretation and can be challenged
- Understand the core scientific concepts, principles, laws, and vocabulary, and how scientific knowledge is extended, refined, and revised over time

Social Sciences

- Identify and describe historical, social, cultural, political, geographical, and economic concepts
- Interpret sources, and evaluate evidence and competing ideas
- Build conceptual frameworks based on understanding themes and the overall flow of events
- Understand civic responsibility, including how governments work in the United States and in other countries
- Interpret new information from a global and multicultural perspective

The Arts and Humanities

- Understand and appreciate how the arts and humanities (expressions of culture and identity through language, movement, sound, and visual representation) contribute to and shape culture and our understanding of culture
- Understand how the arts are used as an instrument of social and political thought

- Identify leading innovators in the arts and humanities and the contributions they have made to their respective genres
- Communicate and interact effectively with communicators of different languages
- Understand how communicating in another language can improve learning in other disciplines and expand professional, personal, and social opportunities

II. Learning and Life Skills

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

- Apply logical reasoning and analytical skills
- Evaluate the credibility and merit of information, ideas, and arguments
- Discern bias, pose questions, marshal evidence, and present solutions

Find and Use Information/Information Technology

- Assess the credibility and relevance of information
- Conduct research using acceptable research methods
- Apply different research paradigms, including the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data and research
- Select, integrate, and apply appropriate technology to expand information and knowledge

Creativity and Innovation

- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity
- Generate new ideas and novel approaches
- Develop new connections where none previously existed

Global and Cultural Awareness

- Appreciate the arts, culture, and humanities
- Interact effectively with and respect the diversity of different individuals, groups, and cultures
- Recognize the interdependent nature of our world

Civic Responsibility

- Practice civic responsibility and citizenship
- Balance personal freedom with the interests of a community

Work Ethic

- Set priorities and manage time
- Take initiative, and follow through
- Learn from instruction and criticism
- Take responsibility for actions and work
- Act with maturity, civility, and politeness

Personal Responsibility

- Act assertively
- Be a self-advocate
- Possess financial literacy and awareness of consumer economics
- Behave honestly and ethically

Communication

- Read, write, listen and speak effectively
- Construct clear, coherent, and persuasive arguments

Collaboration

- Be a team player
- Acknowledge authority and take direction
- Cooperate for a common purpose

To sign up for the public comment session, please look for a sign-up sheet on the table located outside the board room on Wednesday, June 10. Testimony will be taken in the order of the names listed. Depending on the number of those wishing to testify, the state board may limit testimony to three minutes per speaker.

The draft description will be revised based on the feedback received at the June 10 meeting. The Colorado State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education will hold a meeting on Tuesday, June 30 to review and approve the final draft.

The description of school readiness, 21st century skills and postsecondary and workforce readiness is part of ongoing effort to revise all of the Colorado Model Content Standards.

These standards are the expectations of what students in kindergarten through twelfth grade must know and be able to do. They were first created and adopted beginning in 1993. This work to modernize state standards will

review the current standards with an eye to incorporate 21st century skills, postsecondary readiness, career/workforce skills and early school readiness.

For more information on the CAP4K regional tours, visit
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB212.htm>

For more information on the standards review process, visit
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/index.html>

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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