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## **News Release**

### ***Standards Review Process Deemed “Most Inclusive” in the Nation***

Dr. Stanley Rabinowitz, Senior Program Director of Assessment and Standards Development Services at WestEd and consultant to CDE on the standards revision process, told the Colorado State Board of Education at its work session yesterday that the ongoing statewide discussion that will lead to updated model content standards involves the “most inclusive” process in the country.

“In 25 years of doing this work in half the states, this is by far the most inclusive process I have ever seen,” said Rabinowitz. “You actually did what you said you were going to do.”

Rabinowitz applauded CDE for developing an online tool to gather feedback and for assembling committees with broad membership, including preschool through high school representation, the business community and higher education. “The way the committees were put together was a very brave thing,” he said.

Rabinowitz added that the process achieved the “proper balance” of research, examples from existing national and international standards and national and Colorado content experts. Including expected outcomes related to each grade level content standard “puts meat on the bones” of the process, he added, and the standards clearly reference the related 21st century skills that also need to be incorporated in the learning. “This is very important,” he said. “I believe your standards will satisfy legislative intent, state board intent and will prepare college ready, work ready students. You set the stage for the content being right.”

During the work session, Assistant Commissioner Jo O'Brien presented the board with the first draft of the revised social studies standards—civics, economics, geography and history and the expectations that have been developed for personal financial literacy as mandated by House Bill 08-1168. She also briefed the board on the early stages of revision work in dance, physical education and health, theatre, visual art and world languages.

"These really will be Colorado standards," said Rabinowitz, anticipating board member questions about how the process fits with work being done to develop common core content standards on a national level.

The standards are expected to be presented to the board in December 2009 but Rabinowitz urged that work should begin "yesterday" to prepare for implementation.

One key question, he suggested, is "how do these standards make their way properly into the classroom?" The implementation will require resources and a statewide communication plan.

Various board members quizzed Rabinowitz on how Colorado's work will mesh with the national conversation, but also praised the work of staff in managing the process.

"This is a huge challenge," said board member Marcia Neal. "We do want to keep Colorado standards and we do want Colorado to be one of the leaders. I am very excited and very pleased with the work that's gone on."

Board Vice-Chair Randy DeHoff also urged that Colorado be seen as a "national model" for this work.

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones underscored the urgency to begin and complete cost studies for the both the standards implementation process and the work to develop and identify a new statewide assessment, particularly in the light of tight financial resources.

### **Statewide Tour Update**

The Phase II tour of the state continues next week to listen to feedback from parents and community members on the first sets of revised draft P-12 Colorado Academic Standards in the four social studies content areas—civics, economics, geography and history.

Participants have the opportunity to review the new expectations in personal financial literacy are embedded in the revised economics and mathematics standards.

Drafts are online at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/DraftStandards.html>

Meetings during the Phase II tour will begin at 5:30 p.m. The schedule is:

- Monday, Aug. 17, Doubletree Hotel, 8773 Yates Dr., Westminster
- Tuesday, Aug. 18, Inn & Suites @ Riverwalk, 27 Main St., Edwards
- Wednesday, Aug. 19, Doubletree Hotel, 501 Camino Del Rio, Durango
- Thursday, Aug. 20, Hilton Hotel, 425 W Prospect Rd., Fort Collins
- Tuesday, August 25, Burlington, Location TBD
- Wednesday, Aug. 26, Antlers Hilton, 4 South Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs

Work on Phase I on reading, writing and communicating; math; music and science was completed this summer.

Phase III will include dance; health and physical education; theatre; visual art; and world languages.

These drafts offer significant adjustments to the standards originally adopted in 1995. The proposed overhaul of state academic standards:

- Organizes standards grade-by-grade instead of by groups of grades
- Incorporates 21st century skills
- Spells out fewer, but clearer and higher standards

- Adds early childhood and postsecondary and workforce readiness expectations (P-13)
- Calls for students to master concepts and skills rather than just facts

The draft standards have been weighed against other countries and states that have higher college graduation rates than Colorado. Finland and Singapore served as the international benchmarks; Massachusetts and Indiana provided national points of comparison.

The Colorado State Board of Education will adopt the new Colorado Academic Standards by December 2009. In 2007 the state board recommended a comprehensive revision to the Colorado Model Content Standards. Senate Bill 08-212 (also known as CAP4K – the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids) affirmed revisions and expanded outcomes should include a seamless pathway from preschool into postsecondary education or the workforce.

For more information about the Colorado Model Content 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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