



Colorado Department of Education – Communications Office
201 East Colfax Ave.
Room 103
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303-866-3898
Fax: 303-866-6938

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News Release

Draft National Common Core Standards In Harmony With Colorado's Model Content Standards Discussion

Colorado Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones commented today about the first official public draft of the college- and career-readiness standards prepared by the Common Core Standards Initiative, a combined effort of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The draft national common core standards cover English-language arts and mathematics.

"It's clear that the draft national standards match well with the state's work, which was the product of thoughtful statewide conversations over many months and including a broad cross-section of the business and education communities," said Commissioner Jones. "Both the national and the state efforts emphasize fewer, clearer and higher standards and both share nearly identical content knowledge expectations for college and career success. We believe the national and state efforts are in close harmony. Both efforts will yield students who are fully prepared to compete at a rigorous, international level."

Commissioner Jones encouraged educators, business leaders and community members statewide to provide feedback on the national standards. The standards are posted by the NGA and CCSSO at www.corestandards.org. Feedback is being received at the same Web address through Wednesday, Oct. 21.

The Colorado State Board of Education is expected to adopt new Colorado Academic Standards by December 2009 following a nearly two-year conversation involving 13 model content standards—reading, writing and communicating; math; music; science; civics; economics; geography; history; dance; health and physical education; theatre; visual art and world languages.

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.

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

Commissioner Jones noted a few differences between the national common core standards and the state:

- Colorado provides slightly different levels of detail and a grade-by-grade level of student expectation, including early childhood education.
- Colorado expects students to apply knowledge and skills in order to demonstrate full comprehension.
- Colorado's standards are more based on mastery of concepts; the national common core standards reflect aspirations.
- Colorado's standards are more specific about when students learn the standards, the degree to which they know the content and how they demonstrate their grasp of the content in actual settings.

"We believe Colorado has a strong voice in the national conversation," said Commissioner Jones. "We were one of six states that we were asked to review drafts of the common core standards in July and August and these early reviews confirmed what we already know, that the national and state standards closely correspond."

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

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