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**April 15, 2010**

**News Release**

***State Board Of Education Unanimously Endorses  
Teacher Evaluation Bill; Approves Rules For Education  
Alignment Act***

The Colorado State Board of Education this week voted unanimously to support Senate Bill 10-191, a bill that calls for statewide reforms to the teacher and principal evaluation process.

The 7-0 vote followed a friendly discussion between the board and four bipartisan supporters of the bill, including prime sponsor state Sen. Mike Johnston (D) of Denver, a former high school principal.

“Thank you for persevering and getting it here,” said State Board Vice-Chairman Randy DeHoff. “If we don’t take this step now, I don’t think we ever will.”

Added Board Member Jane Goff: “Kudos for getting the topic off the ground. [This issue] is something that needs to be dealt with.”

The bill calls for annual teacher and principal evaluations, with the requirements that 50 percent of teacher evaluations are based on student growth, and that 65 percent of principal evaluations are based on student growth and the demonstrated effectiveness of a principal’s teachers.

The bill would require that “non-probationary status” (often referred to as *tenure*) be granted to teachers after three consecutive years of demonstrated effectiveness. But this status could be revoked if a teacher incurs two years of poor evaluations. The bill also establishes

procedures designed to reduce the number of teachers who are assigned (also known as *forced-placement*) to school positions rather than being hired by the school staff.

Under the bill, many details are left to the Governor's Council on Educator Effectiveness, whose work is just getting underway, and to the Colorado State Board of Education. One major detail is the definition of "educator effectiveness." The governor's council meets for the second time next week.

During the discussion, Sen. Johnston and his co-sponsors (Sen. Nancy Spence and Reps. Christine Scanlan and Carole Murray) said they were open to further discussion as the bill works its way through the legislature.

### **Education Accountability Act**

The state board of education this week approved rules for the Education Accountability Act of 2009 (pertaining to S.B. 09-163).

The Education Accountability Act unifies the state's approach to school accountability and ushers in a new era of measuring school performance built around the Colorado Growth Model and expectations for all students reaching readiness for postsecondary and workforce success.

The rules spell out a clear state role for intervening in districts when accreditation scores are poor for five consecutive years. The rules also establish a new system that gives districts with high performance greater autonomy and gives districts with higher needs more intervention and support.

The rules also define the accreditation process and the six categories for school district accreditation—accredited with distinction, accredited, accredited with improvement plan, accredited with priority improvement plan, accredited with turnaround plan and unaccredited.

The rules require the state board to annually review the performance of each school district based on four key performance indicators including student longitudinal growth, student achievement levels, extent of student growth and achievement gaps and postsecondary and workforce readiness.

By Nov. 30 of each year, under the rules, the state board will "set, reaffirm or revise, as appropriate, ambitious but attainable statewide

targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators for the coming academic year with the goal of raising the level of academic performance" across the state.

### **Title I Distinguished Teachers Honored**

The Colorado Distinguished Title I Teacher award annually recognizes one Title I school teacher who demonstrates outstanding commitment and excellence in teaching. In 2009, two individuals—sisters Susan and Bernadette Medina—shared the award because they share the responsibility for teaching first-graders at Las Animas Elementary School in Las Animas. This week, the board had a chance to meet the sisters—and sing their praises.

"Thank you for making Colorado look great," said Chairman Bob Schaffer. "Thank you for all you do."

Bernadette and Susan Medina have been teachers for more than 20 years at Las Animas Elementary School. Over the past two years, 100 percent of their first grade students have achieved Benchmark on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) reading assessment. In addition, 68 of the 79 students doubled the DIBELS Benchmark score of 40 by registering year-end results of 80 or above. "This really is a rigorous process," said Patrick Chapman, executive director of the Office of Federal Programs at CDE. "Both of these teachers rose to the top of the nominees and we are pleased to recognize them today."

### **Charter School Appeal—Colorado Distance and Electronic Learning**

In January, the Colorado Charter School Institute denied a renewal application for an online school based in Adams County, the Colorado Distance and Electronic Learning Academy (CDELA). Organizers of the 400-student academy appealed the decision to the state board of education, arguing primarily that the institute had received erroneous information about the academy's financial affairs.

Following an hour-long hearing this week, the state board upheld the institute's decision on a 6-0 vote. (Board Member Randy DeHoff, who was the institute's executive director until late last year, recused himself.)

State board members cited a variety of issues including the financial and student achievement issues. In the case of appeals on institute

decisions, said Board Chairman Bob Schaffer, "there's really only one standard and that's what's in the best interest of students."

### **Rules for Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement Act**

The state board this week approved rules for the Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement Act (Article 14 of Title 22 of the Colorado Revised Statutes).

The new rules establish criteria for identifying high-priority and priority local education providers. They also implement the Student Re-engagement Grant Program, define the student dropout rate, graduation rate, completion rate, student re-engagement rate, truancy rate, student mobility rate, suspension rate and expulsion rate.

The rules become effective Monday, May 31, 2010.

### **Parental Notification**

The state board heard oral testimony on a proposed rule that would require parental notification upon an arrest of or charges brought against a school employee.

Under the proposed rule, a local board of education, charter school board or board of cooperative educational services would be required, after consulting with the charging criminal justice agency, to notify all parents of the students enrolled in a school when an arrest is made or charges are brought against an employee of a school, as long as the arrest or charges are based on specific offenses described in the rule.

The notification would be sent by electronic means or by mail within a 24-hour period from the time the notifying party learned of the arrest or charge, whichever occurs earlier, or upon such later date, if requested by the arresting criminal justice agency.

The notification would not describe the underlying facts of the case, and would not disclose the identity of the alleged victim if the alleged victim is a student in the school community.

Parental notification would be required only when the employee is arrested or charged with a felony offense; a misdemeanor offense or municipal ordinance violation involving unlawful sexual behavior; a misdemeanor offense or municipal ordinance violation involving children; or a misdemeanor offense or municipal ordinance violation involving indecent exposure, driving under the influence or driving while ability impaired.

At its meeting Wednesday (April 14), the board heard testimony from the Colorado Education Association (CEA), the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASE) and the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASB). Some of the concerns expressed, primarily by representatives from CEA and CASE, had to do with teacher reputations being unfairly damaged before an individual's due process rights had run their course.

The board has scheduled a vote at its May 12 meeting. Written comments are welcome to [state.board.efilings@cde.state.co.us](mailto:state.board.efilings@cde.state.co.us) by Wednesday, April 28.

### **CAP4K Implementation Costs**

Implementing the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K) reforms comes with some costs. The state board this week heard from Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) on the potential costs that might be incurred to implement the new vision for the state's education system. The CAP4K legislation (S.B. 08-212) has led to new definitions of postsecondary and workforce readiness, new content standards, the development of a new state testing system and building a seamless transition from high school to college.

The APA study found that potential costs could range from \$131.5 million to \$142.4 million or more, with most of the costs being borne by local school districts. The study estimated costs to the department of education at \$1.5 million and \$1.7 million for the department of higher education for the first phase of work alone.

A complete copy of the analysis is available here:

[www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/CAP4KInterimReport3-1.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/CAP4KInterimReport3-1.pdf).

### **TELL Survey**

More than 23,000 educators participated in the Colorado Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning survey last spring, a first-of-its-kind sample of educator opinions and attitudes across the state. The state board this week heard an overview of the analysis from the California-based New Teacher Center, which analyzed the data. More information:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/20100415TELLSurvey.pdf>

### **Resolution Supporting Healthy & Fit Students**

The state board of education this week approved a resolution encouraging districts to ensure that Comprehensive Health and

Physical Education is part of every child's education from preschool through 12th grade and to implement the Colorado Academic Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education.

"Twenty-nine percent of Colorado's children ages two to 14 years are overweight or obese and higher rates of ... obesity are observed in low income, Hispanic and black children," the resolution states. "Only 56 percent of Colorado's children aged five to 14 meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendation of being physically active seven hours or more each week; and only 10 percent of Colorado's children ages two to 14 years eat two servings of fruits and three servings of vegetables recommended by the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion's Dietary Guidelines."

### **Other Action**

Key items the board also considered and approved include:

- Appointments to the Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee.
- Requests for initial emergency authorizations (monthly total, 12).
- The principal/administrator induction program submitted by Colorado Connections Academy.
- A waiver request from certain statutes for Falcon School District 49 on behalf of Rocky Mountain Classical Academy.
- A waiver request from certain statutes by the Charter School Institute on behalf of Provost Academy Colorado State Charter School.
- Notice of rulemaking for the rules for the administration of concurrent enrollment programs.
- Notice of rulemaking to amend rules for the administration, certification and oversight of Colorado online programs to align with the Education Accountability Act of 2009 (S.B. 09-163).
- Annual acknowledgement of school districts regarding Exclusive Charter Authority status.
- Certification of online program for Colorado Calvert Academy.

- Certification of the online program for Colorado Pathways.
- Certification of the online program for Poudre School District Online Academy.
- Certification of the online program for Boulder Valley School District.
- Recommended funded sites for the 2010 Summer School Grant Program.

**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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