Dear Staff,

Happy spring! Please take a moment to read through the most relevant and timely updates on educator effectiveness (S.B. 10-191), the Colorado Academic Standards and the new state assessments.

**Educator Effectiveness**Starting in the 2013-14 school year, all Colorado school districts will implement new evaluation systems that align to Senate Bill 10-191 and State Board rules in order to support ongoing professional development and ultimately, increase student achievement. The first year is a practice year so any ineffective or partially effective evaluation ratings do not count. This gives us a chance to practice in a low-stakes environment while we improve our systems and processes. With the new evaluations, educators will be evaluated on statewide Quality Standards that consider professional practice (50 percent of the evaluation) and student learning outcomes/growth (the other 50 percent of the evaluation).

**Benefits of the New Evaluation Requirements**The Colorado State Model Evaluation System is being piloted in 27 school districts of varying size and location in the 2011-13 school years. Educator feedback from these districts is informing improvements to the system prior to statewide implementation. At a recent panel discussion, several pilot districts shared the benefits they are noticing from the new evaluation requirements. Pilot districts are reporting that the new process creates more of a partnership between principals and teachers, and is focused on the professional needs and aspirations of teachers rather than a compliance exercise for human resources. Teachers in the pilot also report that evaluation feels less subjective and they greatly appreciate receiving actionable feedback. To learn about more benefits the pilot districts are experiencing, view a short video from the discussion: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/SMES-Pilot.asp>.

**Recommendations for Specialized Service Professionals (Other Licensed Personnel)**New evaluation requirements under S.B. 10-191 require annual evaluations for all licensed personnel including principals, teachers and other education professionals who are licensed by the state. The State Council for Educator Effectiveness has identified nine categories of specialized service professionals referred to as "other licensed personnel" (now called specialized service providers) in state rule. After working with groups of specialized service professionals from around the state, the State Council for State Council for Educator Effectiveness will give their standards and elements recommendations to the State Board of Education in May to guide the creation of evaluation systems. These recommendations will begin the state board rulemaking process on the evaluation system for these professionals through 2013.  Evaluation requirements for specialized service professionals do not go into effect until 2014-15. However, an annual evaluation will be required for specialized service professionals using the previous method for evaluation in the 2013-14 school year.

To view the preliminary recommendations, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/downloads/SCEE/SCEEOLPREPORTDRAFT03132013.pdf>

**Colorado Academic Standards**Colorado’s schools are transitioning to the new Colorado Academic Standards, the expectations of what students need to know and be able to do at the end of each grade for ten content areas (music, visual arts, theatre, dance, comprehensive health and physical education, mathematics, reading, writing and communicating, science, social studies and world languages). The standards for mathematics and reading, writing and communicating incorporate the Common Core State Standards while maintaining the unique aspects of the Colorado Academic Standards, including 21st century skills and prepared graduate competencies. Full implementation will occur by the 2013-14 school year. For more information, read the fact sheet: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/download/FactSheets/COAcademicStandardsFactSheet.pdf>

**READ Act**The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (the READ Act) focuses on early literacy development for all students and especially for students at risk for not achieving third grade reading proficiency. To learn more, make sure to read the new fact sheet: [www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/download/FactSheets/READActFactSheet.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/download/FactSheets/READActFactSheet.pdf). In March, The State Board of Education adopted rules for the READ Act. The rules can be accessed at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>.

Through May, the Colorado Department of Education will provide training sessions for teachers and instructional leaders focused on components of the READ Act, identifying a significant reading deficiency, developing effective READ plans, and the READ Automated Data Exchange system collection. Information about the opportunity to participate in a state sponsored license for the DIBELS Next System will also be provided. For dates and locations, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>.

**School Readiness**
Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), passed in 2008 with the goal of aligning Colorado’s preschool through postsecondary education system. The act included provisions related to school readiness for both the State Board and local education providers.

The Colorado Department of Education is hosting a series of five regional meetings designed to support kindergarten teachers, elementary principals, preschool program directors and district leaders with implementation of the school readiness provisions of Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids. For a list of dates and to register, visit <http://bit.ly/Xq63uc>.

**Assessments**Colorado continues to prepare for new statewide summative assessments that align to and accurately assess student mastery of the new Colorado Academic Standards. In 2014, new science assessments will be administered in grades 5, 8 and once in high school and social studies in grades 4, 7 and once in high school. The new tests are to be administered online and will include selected response items, constructed response items, and – for the first time – simulations and performance-based tasks. The new English language arts and mathematics tests will begin in 2015.

**Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Consortium Update**Colorado serves on the Governing Board of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) which is creating tests in English language arts and mathematics to use in grades 3-11. Recently, PARCC released information about technology expectations and administration of the PARCC assessments.  Information about testing time, testing windows, and recommended student-to-device ratios was made public for the first time.  More information is available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/NewAssess-PARCC.asp>.

**Help Develop and Review the State Science and Social Studies Assessments**Educator involvement in the development and review of state assessments is essential to ensure the content of items is appropriate for Colorado students and that items are not unfairly advantageous or disadvantageous to a particular group of students. If you are interested in helping, please visit [http://educator.force.com/CO.](http://educator.force.com/CO.%20)