***A resource for educators***

Superintendents/Principals to Parents, Teacher and School Community

*Use this entire article or just portions of it to communicate with educators about the score reports.*

Parents to receive score reports that identify a student’s academic strengths and areas for improvement, resources available to help

Parents will soon receive student score reports that detail how students performed on last spring’s statewide assessments, including tests in English language arts, math, science and social studies. In addition, the Colorado Department of Education has developed a passel of resource materials to help parents navigate the score reports and anticipate what is expected for the 2016-17 school year.

Statewide assessments taken in the spring by students from third to 11th grade are used to provide academic check-ins and give feedback on students’ progress. The score reports explain whether a student is meeting grade-level expectations and whether he or she is on track for college and a career. The report has been broken down to reflect where the student is succeeding or where he or she needs more practice.

The tests, which include the Colorado Measures of Academic Success tests, or CMAS, are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards. They match content taught in the classroom every day and are designed to measure real- world skills, like critical thinking, problem-solving and writing, skills that will help them be prepared for success in college and careers. These tests provide only one measure of a child’s achievement. Parents should know the tests, along with classroom grades and feedback from teachers, provide a more complete picture of their students’ performance.

Score reports can be used by parents as a discussion guide about what additional supports can help their students succeed. The reports also can help parents understand where to focus learning time at home. For older students, Khan Academy offers voluntary, optional and free practice resources for the PSAT 10 and SAT, including practice paper tests, a daily practice app and a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club. Additionally, students can get connections to scholarship providers, access to online college and career planning tools and feedback to support opportunities for rigorous coursework.

CDE has created tools to help parents understand the tests and what to expect for the school year. The tools include handouts in both English and Spanish that include FAQs about the tests, a guide to understanding the score reports and explainers about the SAT and PSAT. There are also communications tools that help explain what to expect in 2016-17. All of the resources can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/tools>.

Where can I learn more?

* www.cde.state.co.us/communications/tools
* www.cde.state.co.us/communications