

# SUPPORTING Success for All Students

## Colorado's Education Improvement Efforts "101"

Colorado is pursuing a focused, strategic education agenda with a singular purpose: to ensure that all students are prepared for success in a globally competitive world. Students need a high-quality P-12 education that prepares them to succeed in college and the workforce. Colorado is improving learning for all students through comprehensive efforts targeted at the student, educator, school/district and state levels.

### Overview of Reform Efforts

Broadly owned by policymakers of different political parties and education organizations across the state, Colorado's reform agenda is encoded in state law, including:

#### Senate Bill 08-212: Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K)

- Focused, coherent and rigorous academic standards (preschool through postsecondary)
- Informative assessments aligned to the new standards
- School readiness definition, assessments, and plans
- Common definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness

#### Senate Bill 09-163: The Education Accountability Act

- Shared accountability measures for districts and schools
- Value placed on growth and postsecondary readiness
- Clear cycle of support and intervention for struggling schools and districts
- Strong emphasis on school and district improvement efforts

#### Senate Bill 10-191: The Great Teachers and Great Leaders Act

- Annual performance evaluations for all educators based on statewide Quality Standards (50% based on multiple measures of student academic growth)
- Evaluations focused on meaningful feedback and continuous professional growth
- Non-probationary status earned and retained based on demonstrated effectiveness

The power of these education improvement efforts lies in their integration: in the intersection of rigorous academic standards, informative assessments, outstanding educators, and high-performing schools all committed to continuously improving and preparing students for success in a globally competitive world.

### Transforming the Learning Experience in Colorado

*"The best evidence for the rigor and excellence of these efforts [Senate Bills 08-212, 10-191 and 09-163] has been other states' adoption of key elements of what is increasingly known as 'the Colorado model'... These accomplishments underscore Colorado's commitment to improving education for all students and demonstrate how states can lead the push for education reform."*

- Arne Duncan

U.S. Secretary of Education  
Denver Post, Feb. 29, 2012

### Driving Questions

What do students need to learn to be college and career ready?

➤ Colorado Academic Standards

How will we know if students are meeting learning expectations?

➤ Aligned assessments

How will we know if instruction is impacting student learning?

➤ Educator evaluations

How will we know if schools/districts are performing?

➤ Performance frameworks

## Implementation Progress

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Collaborating closely with state education organizations and other strategic partners, Colorado has:

**Senate Bill 08-212:** Adopted the new Colorado Academic Standards which incorporate the Common Core State Standards in mathematics, reading, writing, and communicating; provided training to districts on the new standards; developed a dynamic standards implementation tool kit; delivered workshops on standards-based curriculum design; adopted school readiness assessment requirements; and, with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, adopted a shared, statewide definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness.

**Senate Bill 09-163:** Launched new School and District Performance Frameworks (SPF/DPF) holding schools/districts accountable for academic achievement, growth, growth gaps and postsecondary and workforce readiness; implemented a system of Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) that builds from the data in the performance frameworks and aligns state, federal and grant expectations into a single improvement plan for schools/districts; and enacted a tiered system of support giving higher-performing districts greater autonomy and lower-performing districts more support and intervention.

**Senate Bill 10-191:** Adopted statewide teacher and principal Quality Standards defining effectiveness and S.B. 10-191 Rules (based on recommendations from the State Council for Educator Effectiveness); developed, and currently piloting, the Colorado State Model Evaluation System for teachers and principals. Currently supporting all districts with implementation guidance and training all districts/BOCES opting to use the model system in 2013-14.

## Next Steps

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The state's education reform work has great momentum; however, continued support is needed to ensure that the goal of increased success for all students is achieved. Next steps include:

- **2013-14:** Implementation of the new standards; new social studies and science assessments begin; Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) for mathematics, reading, and writing; statewide implementation of S.B. 10-191; and phase-in of school readiness assessment and plans begin
- **2014-15:** New statewide reading, writing, communicating and mathematics assessments (replacing TCAP) administered; new educator evaluation requirements continue with ineffective ratings counting towards the loss of non-probationary status; and phase-in of school readiness assessment and plans completed

## Where can I learn more?

The CDE website ([www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)) has a variety of resources for those wishing to learn more.

- **S.B. 08-212:** [www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB212.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB212.htm)
- **S.B. 09-163:** [www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/index.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/index.asp)
- **S.B. 10-191:** [www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/](http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/)

**The Colorado Department of Education**

**CONNECTING** . . . *rigorous academic standards . . . meaningful assessments . . .*  
*engaging learning options . . . excellent educators . . . for* **STUDENT SUCCESS**