

Question: (Bob Selle – PP BOCES)

Colleges have received top quality students for years. At this time, students going to College are coming from the middle and low ability level students. We need to provide education that boosts kids from the middle to perform at the top – How?

Response:

The intent of SB 212 is to improve education by aligning postsecondary standards and measures with those being revised for K-12. No matter where a student starts, the goal is to ensure that he/she has a pathway from successful graduation from high school to entrance into college or the workforce. The way to do this is to set fewer, clearer and higher standards. Additionally, tools like the Colorado Growth Model will help provide better information each year on student progress toward achievement targets. Finally, an assessment is currently being developed that will gauge students' readiness for postsecondary or workforce. The results of this assessment will provide students with early warning signals about whether they are on track to successfully graduate high school.

Question: Description handout

I noticed that the states that have definitions are some of the states that are economically challenged.

How does the economic picture marry up to the states fiscal picture for employment?

Response:

While we do not have the information to answer this question specifically, it seems pertinent that the current economic outlook makes this work all the more important.

Question:

Stronger emphasis on arts education track – specifically on arts high school in Colorado Springs.

Response:

We couldn't agree more. Under SB 212, arts standards for dance, music, theater and visual are being modernized in 2009. Research suggests that students exposed to a well balanced curriculum, including the arts, do better on statewide/national assessments than students exposed only to the basic "Rs": Literacy, math (and science). A reason? The former students may be better in critical thinking and related, as well as in content knowledge acquisition.

Question:

What standards will emerge related to teacher education as it relates to pedagogy and methodology?

Response:

Once standards for what young people should know and be able to do are in place, attention should turn to implications for teacher preparation in Colorado. Presumably, they will need to be adjusted accordingly. There are going to be changes in teacher education performance standards resulting from changes to model content standards and school/student performance expectations.

Question:

Under the "effect" heading, it was mentioned that SB212 will eliminate the CSAP. Does this mean total elimination or partial for HS only?

Response:

The current CSAP program is destined to undergo substantial change as standards are revisited and revised, particularly in high school. However, we will not know what the new assessment system will look like until Dec. 2010, when it is designed and adopted by the State Board of Education (with local implementation in 2012). Until then, CSAP will remain in place.

Question:

How will professional development opportunities prepare teachers for the new changes?

Response:

SB212 does recognize the need for changes in both teacher preparation and professional development. To inform this process, CDE is launching a 12-stop teacher tour from Jan. 28 – Mar. 5 to identify teacher understanding of SB 212, its relevance to practice, its impact on teaching and learning and the kind of help that teachers would find useful for classroom implementation.

Additional information is available on the CDE web site.

Question:

There also needs to be discussion on the "documentation gap" that exists for students with learning disabilities as they transition from high school to post-secondary education. How can that be addressed? Changed? Fixed?

Response:

SB212 appears to leave this matter to "local education providers" to solve.

Comment:

Maybe it's time to make pre-K & (K) a must. Also, know that it may need backing from the state. Let's make our state successful.

Question:

How do we change the culture so that parents bring students to school prepared?

Response:

In addition to a Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness description (purpose of the regional meetings), SB 212 called for a description of School Readiness to be adopted by the State Board of Education in Dec. 2008. Available at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev/School%20Readiness%20Description%20approved.doc, School Readiness recognizes the importance of parent and family engagement in students' learning. Schools cannot do it all; however, with interagency cooperation, schools can help bring things together for kids. Some agencies are in a better position to outreach to families than others, especially preschool and earlier settings. Preschool is a start but not nearly enough.

Companion legislation that begins to address some of the issues that manifest in the schools may also be a strong step. Addressing healthcare, employment, job training and access to education could potentially address challenges some parents experience (in supporting their children, inside and outside of school), while also serving to potentially enhance student performance and productivity.

Question:

Does CAP4K provide resources to make these changes?

Response:

SB212 does provide funding for carrying out some of the mandates in the bill; however, it is unclear how much funding is available, and how much will be aimed at particular mandates. Specifically, the legislation provides funding for FY 2009 and FY 2010. Beginning in Sept. 2009, a three-part cost study is legislated to determine the fiscal impact of all costs of implementation. This cost study will inform funding in subsequent years.

Question:

In Higher Ed arena (and possibly HS) are we zeroing in generational differences and how to adapt them to workforce? (For example: millenials [sic] and texting – how does business take this generation's unique skills and use them without squelching their creativity, etc.)

Response:

This is an important question. SB 212 does require that 21st century skills be a part of the revised standards. Through the public input process, CDE and DHE are beginning to describe what these descriptions look like, and what the significance is to K-12 and higher education. Initial drafts can be found on our web sites.

Question:

Has anyone studied why students leave college before graduation?
--Relationship to high schools, culture, etc.

Response:

Yes, there is a multitude of literature around this subject.

Question:

Are you asking the teachers in public + private schools these same questions?

Response:

The statewide, co-convened 212 meetings are open to the public; however, the legislation applies to public schools.

Question:

How can we address + change Colorado's culture vis-à-vis education:

1. Paying lip service to valuing education, while not supporting it through taxes, advocacy for education and
2. The anti-tax mantras of our elected politicians

Response:

Excellent question! Elect legislators and other state leaders who support public education.

Question:

Specify what exactly is: e.g.,

- What does critical thinking look like in math, writing, science, etc.
- What does reading critically + actively mean?
- What can you do when you read critically & creatively?

Response:

The revised standards and assessments, informed by descriptions of school readiness, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and 21st century skills are intended to do precisely this. We will have a more specific picture of what this looks like when the descriptions and revised standards are adopted in Dec. 2009. In the meantime, we are holding public meetings to gather input on and advise this process and encourage as much participation from all members of the public as possible (meeting schedule available at: <http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/CAP4K/Meetings/meetings.pdf>).

Question:

Where is the funding to accomplish SB212?
Does every school district have the resources needed to fulfill SB212?
Does CDE have a budget to cover the resources needed to fulfill SB212?

Response:

Legislative appropriations, present and future. See also response above about the cost study mandated by law, which will inform future funding levels.

Question:

I fully support what CAP4Kids identifies as a need, but how will schools meet these needs without a change in funding?

Response:

Governor Ritter has identified the need for a change in the structure of funding for education at both a state and national level. This will be a crucial conversation for our new administration.

Question:

How can we ensure that we truly raise the threshold and not set up another teach-to-the-test "CSAP" system?

Response:

There is no reason to believe that CAP4K will abolish the "teach to the test" principles; however, CAP4K is much broader in scope (and therefore, what would presumably be tested) than the current CSAP.

As long as law requires national state testing, this could be a component. In the meantime, this focus is a challenge of local leadership.

Question:

What plans do CDE[/DHE] have – elementary and higher education – on raising the standard of the educators as well?

Response:

As P-12 standards are revisited and revised, new performance expectations for educators will be adopted.

Question:

What about standardizing the educational programs so there are no significant statistical differences from teacher to teacher / school to school?

Response:

The state's job is to set standards. In a local control state like Colorado, decisions about curriculum and instruction will always be made at the local level.

Question:

What kind of benchmarking is CDE doing (best in class? – like China, India / Sweden?)

Response:

On our website is a report conducted by WestEd that reviews Colorado standards as compared to those in other states and countries (available at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev.html). Additionally, the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers and Achieve, Inc. published an International Benchmarking report titled "*Benchmarking For Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World-Class Education*" in Dec. 2008 that is co-authored by Commissioner Jones (available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/20081219benchmarking.pdf>).

QUESTIONS Posed by Participants

Question:

What is the next step after the definition is done?

Response:

Once the new description of postsecondary and workforce readiness is agreed to and adopted by the State Board of Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education, then it will provide guidance for how revised standards and assessments are determined. Specifically, the standards revision process is designed to map standards between the School Readiness description at the early childhood level and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness at the high school level. A public meeting will be convened by the State Board of Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education in June to invite public input on a working description (as a result of the 12 regional meetings).

Question:

Will the definition be translated into defined, measurable, and quantitative metrics to assess students during their education?

Response:

Yes, this is a precise intent of the reform.