



COLORADO
Department of Education

Commissioner's Office
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 500
Denver, CO 80203-1799

March 17, 2021

The Honorable Miguel Cardona
Secretary of Education
Office of the Secretary & Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona,

On behalf of the citizens of the state of Colorado, I am writing to request a partial waiver, pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, for specific assessment requirements. Enclosed with this letter is relevant information and rationale for the partial waiver specific to the conditions in Colorado, including those caused by the necessary responses to COVID-19 to protect the health and safety of Colorado students, families and educators, as well as support student academic, emotional and social growth and provide the state, districts, schools, parents and the public with data to inform their decisions on choosing and directing resources appropriately.

While the testing window has already been extended as late into the school year as possible, Colorado's early testing window opens March 22, 2021. Given the time sensitive nature of this request, we respectfully request an expedited review of our partial waiver request and eagerly await what will hopefully be a positive response.

Thank you,

Katy Anthes, Ph. D.
Commissioner of Education

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400 Maryland Avenue, SW
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Dear Secretary Cardona,

I am writing to request a partial waiver, pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, of the following requirements as a result of ongoing challenges related to the novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

It is important to note that Colorado is committed to gathering relevant information to inform the evaluation of student achievement under COVID-19 and to direct local, state and federal supports and resources accordingly. Therefore, Colorado is not seeking a "blanket" waiver. Concurrently, we must acknowledge and adapt to the legitimate challenges and limitations imposed on students, families, schools and districts by COVID-19. The health of our students, their families and communities are of paramount importance. The necessary health and safety protocols have strained our educational systems in terms of space, personnel, equipment and materials, instructional time and facility in remote instruction. The department's guidance to the Chief State School Officers dated February 22, 2021, appears to begin to address some of these issues by suggesting administering a shortened version of its statewide assessments. Rather than compromising the reliability and validity of each of our individual state assessments through an abbreviation process that could fundamentally change the constructs being measured and result in loss of test information (e.g., more fine-tuned levels of reporting, such as subscores), we are requesting the flexibility to reduce the testing burden by administering a shortened version of our statewide assessment battery through a partial waiver of assessment requirements in section 1111(b)(2) in school year 2020-2021, namely:

- a partial waiver from ESSA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(aa) requiring the administration of mathematics and reading or language arts in each grades 3 through 8 to allow for a shortened version of the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment battery through a suspension of the administration of reading/language arts in grades 4, 6, and 8 and math in grades 3, 5, and 7
- a waiver from ESSA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(II) requiring the administration of science one time during grades 3-5, grades 6-9 and grades 10-12 to allow for a shortened version of the CMAS assessment battery through a suspension of science in grades 5, 8 and 11

Pursuant to Colorado House Bill 21-1161, approval of CDE's waiver request will result in the following (federal) assessment schedule for spring 2021:

- Summative reading/language arts: administered in Grades 3, 5, and 7 (general and alternate)
- Summative math: administered in grades 4, 6, and 8 (general and alternate)

- Summative reading/language arts: administered once in high school, grade 11 (general and alternate)
- Summative math: administered once in high school, grade 11 (general and alternate)
- English language proficiency: administered in kindergarten through grade 12 to English learners (general and alternate)

While recognizing the importance of reducing the amount of time spent on testing in spring 2021 to provide schools with needed instructional and socio-emotional time and support, this partial assessment waiver request continues to recognize the value and importance of state assessment data and its utility in advancing student academic achievement. While students’ learning opportunities have been significantly disrupted, it is important for teachers, families, and education leaders to have information to inform decisions moving forward related to necessary academic supports for students, professional learning opportunities for teachers, and resources to address student reengagement. As a result, CDE will offer families of students in grades 4, 6, and 8 the opportunity to opt-in their children to take the reading/language arts assessments, and families of students in grades 3, 5, and 7 the opportunity to opt-in their children to take the math assessments.

Further, it is critical that all Colorado students have equitable access and opportunity to participate in a college entrance exam program. As such, Colorado will continue to administer the state grade 11 reading/language arts and math assessments through the SAT. As part of the state system, PSAT will be administered to students in grades 9 and 10 as well.

Understanding that English language acquisition is crucial to student on-going academic achievement, where local health and safety mandates allow for in-person test administration, Colorado has already administered the ACCESS for ELLs to tens of thousands of English learners. Parents of students receiving remote instruction determined whether to allow their students to go into school buildings for testing.

Due to the significant disruptions in this year’s learning environments, the implementation of the 2020 Science standards and related assessment development have been highly impacted. As a result, there is a considerable misalignment between students’ opportunity to learn and master science content and the current state science assessment. As such, reliance on the interpretation and use of results use is diminished and, likely, misleading. Due to these circumstances and the need to prioritize in-person assessment administration options, Colorado seeks to suspend the administration of its science general and alternate summative assessment for grades 5, 8, and 11 for school year 2020-21. Additional rationale for suspending science is provided in later sections of this waiver.

Context

The extraordinary events resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have caused historic disruptions to education systems across the world. Colorado educators have made every effort to provide students with the best education possible during the 2020-21 school year throughout the staggering health crisis and incredible interruptions to learning environments and experiences for students, schools, and districts; however, the pandemic’s impact continues to be severe and far-reaching. Many Colorado schools have provided instruction remotely since the beginning of the school year. Some have offered a hybrid in-person-remote experience for students, and some have provided fully in-person instruction while shutting down intermittently due to COVID-19 exposure. Based on available data, as of January, we still had about two out of three of our elementary students and three out of four of our middle and high school students receiving remote learning.

While the hope had been that COVID-19 conditions would improve and students would be able to return to in-person instruction, with the opening of the assessment window approaching, the majority of our students are only now in the

process of returning to in-person instruction, with many Colorado middle and high school students still expected to receive some form of hybrid instruction. In addition, some districts that have returned to in-person instruction report that approximately 20% of their students are still receiving remote instruction based on parent choice. Schools are balancing multiple competing priorities, including ensuring the academic success of students while grappling with the heavy and critical demands of supporting student and educator socio-emotional needs and mental health issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

As the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) navigates these disruptions locally, we are working to provide immediate and meaningful supports to our education communities. In doing so, we remain focused on our mission and commitment to ensuring equity and opportunity for all Colorado students. CDE is accountable to our students, educators, families, and the general public and, as such, is ethically responsible for providing safe, high-quality learning environments for students and educators in accordance with local public health orders.

Due to on-site restrictions, many Colorado schools, especially middle and high schools, continue to operate under a cohort model with students receiving in-person instruction only a couple of times of week. Given these conditions, full scale, comprehensive testing would disproportionately consume the limited face-to-face instructional time by requiring allocations of staff that would further diminish or halt instruction. Students who remain in hybrid instruction will have approximately 18 in-person days in April and May. Assuming students take one session a day, without a reduction in testing, 8th grade students would have half of their in-person days impacted by state assessment. With the suspension of science and reading/language arts, that is reduced to about 17%. Even if all sessions were administered in a single day, about 5% of the students' in-person days would still be impacted by testing. With in-person instruction reduced by more than half for some middle and high school students, the proposed reductions in state testing are reasonable adjustments to current educational environments.

The impacts of the pandemic have limited CDE's ability to provide comprehensive and secure test administration in spring 2021 that can be safely and effectively managed in-person. Local Education Agencies (LEA's) have significant state and local health restrictions that apply to on-site services, including assessment. Due to these commitments, responsibilities, and limitations for school year 2020-21, CDE is seeking a waiver that would reduce the testing burden by reducing the number of tests we administer. The following information summarizes the investigations conducted by Colorado and the feedback received from various Colorado stakeholders regarding potential spring 2021 state assessment options that support this waiver submission.

Stakeholder Group

The COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group was established through statute in spring 2020 to make recommendations regarding state assessment and accountability, along with other issues related to educator evaluation. The committee represented stakeholders with a range of practical knowledge of the assessments, as well as beliefs regarding the perceived utility of the results. After meeting throughout the fall, the committee came to consensus on recommendations regarding how to approach high school reading/language arts and math assessment (administer in spring 2021) and science (do not administer in spring 2021). They were unable to come to consensus on how to approach CMAS English language arts (reading/language arts) and math in elementary and middle school. See Attachment 1: *COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group Report*.

Public Comment to Board

Throughout the fall and winter, the State Board of Education received over 96 communications from educational organizations, individual educators and parents calling for the complete suspension of CMAS, along with 11 letters of support for administering the assessments in order to get at least some data on the impact of COVID-19 on Colorado children. The table below provides a summary of the positions expressed according to stakeholder group. See Attachment 2: Colorado State Board of Education Public Comment.

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group
TOTAL	29	28	32	7
Maintain	0	1	4	6
Suspend	29	27	28	1

Colorado Review of Options

In addition to the stakeholder group work, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) consulted with its technical advisory committee, other national and local state assessment experts, the U.S. Department of Education, and the state’s assessment contractor to investigate all possible options for successfully administering the spring 2021 assessments while adequately recognizing COVID-19’s undeniable impact on schools and districts this school year. Among other possibilities, the following options were considered:

1. *Shorten the individual content tests.*

Colorado’s reading/language arts and math tests were shortened by approximately one-third in 2018. The 2018 reduction included cautious and methodical planning that allowed the state to maintain the content expectations, measured constructs, and technical integrity of the assessments. The prospect of further reducing the assessments for spring 2021 presented serious technical and practical implications as well as potential negative fiscal implications. The short amount of time available to make the adjustments further added to the high-risk nature of the shortening individual tests option. The individual content tests simply could not be shortened enough to have meaningful impact on reducing the assessment demands to adequately address family and educator concerns.

2. *Remote administration.*

CDE consulted with state and national technical advisors, took into consideration concerns from the field, and collaborated with the CMAS assessment contractor regarding remote administration possibilities. It was determined that remote CMAS administrations this spring would introduce insurmountable challenges, including lack of equitable access to technology; a quiet, supportive, distraction-free assessment environment; and accommodations and alternate assessments. In addition, the increased burden for parents, schools and districts, technical issues regarding the comparability of results across administration environments, and student and family privacy concerns were prohibitive.

3. *Extension of the state testing window.*

CDE extended the spring 2021 elementary and middle school testing window and added additional high school reading/language arts and math assessment administration dates. Taking into consideration district closing dates for the 2020-21 school year, CDE added the dates to provide schools and districts with additional administration flexibility. The test window was extended to as close to the end of the school year as possible. Extending further would create logistical challenges of testing in the summer as well as technical challenges with interpreting and comparing scores of early testers with later testers, resulting in increased opportunity to learn differences. The extension does not adequately address the state assessment burden and instructional compromises that would have to be made this year should we move forward with our historical battery of assessments.

After the U.S. Department of Education’s communication regarding potential spring 2021 state assessment flexibilities, conversations focused on ways to operate within the Department’s guidelines while providing schools and districts with a meaningful reduction to testing and still preserving the integrity of the administered assessments along with the resulting utility of their data. Beyond the window extensions already provided to schools and districts, stakeholders across Colorado engaged in deep and challenging conversations about additional options that would allow schools and districts to participate in the state assessments while also acknowledging the legitimate capacity challenges of and strains on Colorado schools at this point in time. Finding a solution that recognized the state of schools and districts by keeping the state assessment burden to a minimum while simultaneously prioritizing the availability of statewide assessment data was the focal point of the conversations.

The option of providing a shortened version of the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment battery through a suspension of the administration of the assessment in certain grade levels met the objectives of reducing testing time and demand for Colorado schools while also preserving the technical integrity and rigor of the assessments. Specifically, instead of testing reading/language arts and mathematics in each of grades 3-8, testing in particular grade levels would substantially reduce the number of tests given in elementary and middle schools, while still providing important data for the grade band. This approach has the benefit of reducing the strain on students and the educational systems. It was determined that reducing testing for these students is the right course of action with appropriate regard for what they are currently able to tolerate. Students are still rebuilding their focus and academic endurance while simultaneously adjusting and addressing their mental and emotional reactions to the pandemic environment. The reduced number of tests also addresses the very practical issues of adequate space and personnel. It will require fewer adults and allow for safe testing within the extended testing window.

In determining which assessments to suspend, the following objectives were considered:

- Allow for the administration of the assessments within a reasonable period of time following state and local health and safety guidelines.
- Alleviate significant assessment burden and increase instructional time during the fourth quarter, by which time hopefully most students will have returned to either hybrid or in-person instruction.
- Maximize the likelihood of being able to establish representative state-level data by focusing on the administration of specific assessments, rather than leaving individual schools to make prioritization determinations in their efforts “to do the best they can.”
- Prioritize content areas that are critical foundations for success prior to middle/high school. This supports prioritizing reading/language arts and math over science.
- Prioritize content areas that most influence success in other content areas. This supports prioritizing reading/language arts and math over science.
- Prioritize assessments that will be aligned to the same academic content standards in 2021 and 2022 over assessments that are undergoing a revision process to align to new academic content standards. This supports suspending science.

In determining how reducing the number of required assessments would support the state’s standard of maintaining sufficiently standardized and equitable student testing experiences and support the generation of valid and reliable assessment results, the following objectives were considered:

- Maintain conditions that ensure fairness in the student test-taking experience
 - Quiet, supportive, distraction-free assessment administration environments
 - Appropriate implementation of accessibility supports
 - Relatively consistent student opportunity to learn the tested content
 - Access to appropriate and secure test-taking devices and stable internet connections, as necessary
- Support conditions that ensure appropriate data use and reporting
 - Standardized test administration practices

- Sufficient student group participation rates
- Minimize missing data, where any existing gaps do not reflect systemic factors (e.g., access to resources)
- Secure assessment conditions, including trained proctors (to ensure independent student performance and protect secure item pools)
- Produce data that could be used to inform decisions about the allocation of support and resources at the local, state and federal level at the elementary, middle school and high school levels. Administering in alternating grades and content areas (reading/language arts and math) will still allow for approximately 90% of our elementary and middle schools to have reportable data, assuming no change in parent opt-out from 2019.
- Produce data that could be used as a source of information to be used in evaluating recovery efforts in 2022 in elementary, middle and high schools.
- Produce data that may allow for the production of some growth information in 2022.

To focus limited on-site resources, CDE is prioritizing the assessment administration options that serve immediate and essential needs for Colorado students. Public comment made during the state legislative process on the proposed adjustments to the CMAS assessments is provided in Attachment 3: House and Senate Education Committee: Public Comment on H.B. 21-1161. Much of the feedback reflected that: 1.) an appropriate balance was found given the current COVID-19 conditions in Colorado, 2.) local assessment data is providing much of the information that is guiding day-to-day instruction, and 3.) time was needed for both academic instruction, as well as social and emotional support. The table below provides a summary of the positions expressed according to stakeholder group.

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group	Students
TOTAL	22	12	1	10	1
Support	20	11	1	10	1
Neutral	2	0	0	0	0
Oppose	0	1	0	0	0

The rationale for how this waiver request supports our commitments and responsibilities to our students, educators, families, and communities follows.

Advancing Student Academic Achievement: Learning Environments

Reducing the battery of state tests administered across Colorado in spring 2021 as included in this partial waiver prioritizes one of the state’s most critical education objectives, advancing student academic achievement, by replacing the time spent on preparing for the logistics and administration of a number of state assessments with essential instructional time that has been widely unavailable to many students throughout the school year. At the same time, student group, school and district reading/language arts and math achievement information will still be made available to contribute to the decisions regarding distribution of supports and resources across the state.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to inconsistent, learning environments with:

- Significantly reduced in-person instruction
- Insufficient technical resources for all students and educators to engage in high-quality instruction that prepares students to master the Colorado Academic Standards

- New instructional approaches and strategies for all educators designed for effective use in remote and hybrid learning environments
- Significantly reduced number of educators available to provide in-person instruction. While Colorado has prioritized educators for vaccination, there are still not sufficient numbers of educators and substitutes available to adequately support in-person activities, including assessment.

Prioritizing specific state assessments while suspending others also provides schools with the valuable time needed to combat the consequential socio-emotional and mental health issues that have been greatly exacerbated by and in some cases a direct result of the pandemic. For many students, socio-emotional and mental health concerns present a barrier to reaching their full academic achievement potential. For the Colorado students who have experienced disrupted in-person instruction throughout the year and for those who are just beginning to have in-person opportunities with their teachers, less time on testing can result in more face-to-face interactions with their teachers, engaged in meaningful instruction on the Colorado Academic Standards while simultaneously battling barriers to academic achievement such as socio-emotional and mental health issues for some students.

To support LEAs, CDE’s cross-unit COVID Learning Impact Group is developing a COVID-19 learning impacts tool kit that will provide guidance and resources for LEAs on assessing academic, student engagement, and well-being needs, and will provide guidance on using evidence-based strategies to develop a COVID-19 response plan of action, resources to address the academic and social emotional impacts of COVID-19 on students, supports for expanded learning opportunities, and opportunities for districts to connect and learn from each other so that students will receive the supports they need to recover and re-engage in high quality learning experiences. The tool kit focuses on initiatives in these four areas:

- Response Planning
- Expanded Learning Opportunities
- Instruction and Intervention
- Well-Being and Connectedness

Colorado school district leaders have expressed a need to prioritize local assessment system endeavors that provide actionable, instructionally relevant information that target the individual needs of students and serve to inform more comprehensive instructional and professional development resource decisions. CDE has and will continue to provide districts instructional and professional learning resources, and technical assistance to bolster and implement approaches to comprehensive systems of assessment.

Maintenance or Improvement of Transparency in Reporting to Parents and the Public on Student Achievement and School Performance

While Colorado considered many options to maintain or improve transparency for spring 2021, including shortening each of the assessments or using different assessments (i.e., locally selected interim assessments), it was determined that administering abbreviated assessments that changed the construct being measured or providing information on a different set of locally-selected assessments would actually decrease transparency because of the decreased alignment to the standards and interpretability of the results. Without adequate accommodations and alternate assessments, the latter also posed equity challenges for English learners and students with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Providing a consistent summative measure of Colorado student achievement of the Colorado Academic Standards at the state, district and school-level is the unique role that the state assessments play in the larger local assessment systems,

which may also provide classroom-based formative assessment practices, school-selected interim assessments and curriculum-specific periodic assessments. These other assessments may provide parents and individual communities with information on their individual students, schools and district; but they do not provide that necessary state-wide picture that allows stakeholders, including policymakers, to understand the status of learning in the state. The state-wide assessment data may help to inform the targeting of federal, state and local supports and resources to those student groups and schools most impacted by COVID-19. We need the state system to provide school- and district-level information by content area and by student subgroup. To meet this goal, not every content area in every grade must be assessed. We can meet this goal through our proposed approach of alternating grades and content areas.

Perhaps the most significant advantage of shortening the assessment battery by suspending some tests is that the assessments that are administered remain the same. The measuring tool being used remains constant from prior to, during, and after the pandemic. While attributing cause or responsibility for changes in result patterns this year is being actively discouraged, as reinforced by Colorado's separate accountability waiver submission and the decision not to include state assessment results in the evaluation of educators, being able to make some tempered comparisons either to prior years or to future years increases the utility of these results. Maintaining standards-aligned reading/language arts and math results at the school, district and state levels based on a subset of assessments that remain constant is critical to providing adequate transparency to the public on school and district achievement. In addition, results for student subgroups will also be provided, while protecting individual student data privacy. Given the expected increase in parent excusals in Colorado this year based simply on the number of students whose parents have chosen to continue with remote learning despite schools reopening in-person learning, we are discussing how we may need to revise our current guidance on how to use this year's results in responsible and appropriate ways.

Reporting student achievement to parents of students who test in assessed content areas will be maintained. All parents will receive achievement information on their students in at least one content area (reading/language arts or math). Transparency of student achievement is further supported by providing parents the opportunity to also opt-in to the corresponding non-required assessment should they want information on both content areas.

While the rationale for suspending science was provided previously, it is important to note that the CMAS Math and Science historically have been highly correlated (>0.70). In addition, the SAT Analysis in Science score, which students will receive this year, has also been highly correlated to CMAS Science. That SAT Analysis in Science score can serve as a proxy for the CMAS Science score this year. Lastly, up to 15,000 Colorado students are expected to take an advanced placement science exam this year. College Board supports annual reports on these assessments by student subgroups.

There are additional data sources that will continue to support transparency of the system as a whole. Most significantly is the Unified Improvement Planning process. District and school improvement plans referred to as Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) in Colorado are published annually on the [CDE website](#). Plans for districts and schools that are identified as needing improvement through state and federal accountability are reviewed by CDE annually. Feedback and technical assistance is provided to the schools and districts to ensure stronger improvement plans. Plan elements include:

- Current Performance and Performance Priorities: Analysis and identification of needs based upon student performance from state and local assessment data. This section also addresses reasons for identification under the state accountability system and/or through ESSA.
- Root Causes: Systems level analysis to provide a link to actions the district or school can take to address identified student performance issues. This section incorporates types of systems data to build the case for the direction.
- Strategies: Research-based responses and associated action plans to address the identified needs.

- Targets and Progress Monitoring: Longer range performance targets and interim measures using state and local assessments to check student progress. Implementation checks are also included.

Colorado’s UIP is built upon a continuous improvement model – meaning that plans build on a process of annual reflection and adjustment. For the most part, the UIP process has been able to proceed despite the accountability pause due to the pandemic with some modifications. As schools engage in the work of analyzing available state and local data, plans can respond to current and emergent needs. For example, the state gave flexibility in using state data in the data narrative because of the cancellation of spring 2020 state assessments. Because most schools had enough local interim data to gauge student needs, local performance data has played a bigger role in the analysis more recently. Additionally, districts have the ability to direct schools to respond to widespread needs in their planning process. In some cases, schools have been directed by their district to include links to COVID-19 plans which provide more detailed responses. Colorado has provided some flexibility in the timeline in publishing plans (e.g., moving the April due date to October), which will provide schools with more time to reflect on what they know about student achievement and what is needed for the start of the new school year. The timing flexibility allows plans to be based on a fuller picture than would be available if plans were due in April when many students will have only recently returned to in-person learning.

Additional state data providing insight into school academic performance will be posted in publicly available locations, including, but not limited to:

- [K - 3 reading data required by the Colorado READ Act](#)
- [Graduation rates](#)
- [Concurrent enrollment data](#)
 - [Student and parent information](#)
- [Chronic absenteeism data](#)
- [High school drop-out rates](#)

Colorado educational leaders value their responsibility to provide transparency in reporting to the students, families, and citizens in their communities. CDE will work with LEAs to consider additional opportunities that provide the public with information on the status of student achievement and information as to how the LEA will continue to support students and educators. Potential options include, but are not limited to:

- Surveys: school climate, teacher needs, student perception
- Well-being checks for students and educators
- Local interim assessment results
- Professional learning opportunities for educators that address instructional strategies for use in remote/hybrid learning settings
- COVID-19 Impact Data Collections

Public Comment

As noted previously, Colorado has already received a significant amount of public comment on spring 2021 state summative assessment, including comment on the requests specifically addressed in this waiver as they were outlined in Colorado House Bill 21-1161. See Attachments A, B and C.

The department will provide the public and all local education agencies in Colorado with notice through a news release and social media postings and another opportunity to comment on this explicit request through a survey. This waiver

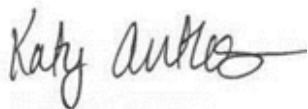
request is expected to be published no later than March 18, 2021 and will remain posted for public comment for a minimum of two weeks at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/waivers-assessment-accountability>. The survey will allow for identification of stakeholder affiliation, perspective on reducing the number of state summative assessments and support for or against the proposed plan. Due to the urgency of this matter, CDE has posted this waiver for comment and submitted it to USED concurrently. Should this public comment period provide feedback that differs significantly from what we have already received, we will immediately notify USED and make adjustments accordingly.

Conclusion

This time of crisis has required us all to adjust our expectations and reimagine our typical processes to ensure that we are providing Colorado students with the best education possible. Being nimble has become necessary on a day-to-day basis. As we reviewed our state's equity focus, capacity challenges and the utility of results, we believe that our proposed plan, which was the result of much negotiation within Colorado across key stakeholder groups, is a reasonable path forward. It passed the legislature with bipartisan support and the public comment reflected a variety of stakeholders, the vast majority of whom support this state summative assessment plan for spring 2021. We know that the decisions made this year may have long lasting effects on public confidence in our state assessments. We believe that the proposed plan meets the state's objectives of prioritizing student academic achievement while maintaining public transparency and preserving the integrity of the state's assessment and accountability systems. We hope that you deem it acceptable and will grant our requested waiver.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact my Chief Assessment Officer, Joyce Zurkowski, at Zurkowski_j@cde.state.co.us.

Sincerely,



Katy Anthes, Ph. D.

Commissioner of Education

Attachment 1:
COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group
Report

COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group Report

Submitted to:

Dr. Katy Anthes, Colorado Commissioner of Education

By:

Amie Baca-Oehlert, Colorado Education Association

Elizabeth Casillas, Denver Metro Region

Carol Eaton, Technical Advisory Panel and Jefferson County School District

Christina Ethier, Association for Colorado Education Evaluators and Cherry Creek School District

Paul Freeman, Roaring Fork School District RE-1

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Da'Lisa Hatcher, Third Future Schools - Coperni 2 Charter School

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Bret Miles, Colorado Association of School Executives

Michelle Murphy, Colorado Rural Alliance

Stephanie Perez-Carrillo, Colorado Children's Campaign

Amy Pitlik, Stand for Children

Luke Ragland, Ready Colorado

Johan Van Nieuwenhuizen, Weld County School District RE-1

Jen Walmer, Democrats for Education Reform

Jason Westfall, Colorado Association of BOCES

Cheri Wrench, Colorado Association of School Boards

December 2020

The COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group is facilitated by the
Colorado Department of Education.

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Executive Summary

The Colorado General Assembly called for a stakeholder group of Colorado education leaders to advise policymakers on what, if any, changes should be made to state law around testing and accountability because of the COVID-19 crisis.

On assessments, the group said districts should administer the PSAT and SAT to the extent that local health orders allow and that CMAS tests in science and social studies should be canceled in the spring. The group did not reach a consensus agreement on administering the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) mathematics and English language arts tests for a range of conflicting reasons, with some stakeholders wanting to be able to measure student learning loss and others concerned about the misinterpretation of the results within the context of COVID-19.

Additionally, the group recommended the School and District Performance Frameworks should be paused for the 2021-22 school year, allowing the school or district's rating to be rolled over from 2020. The 2020 ratings were previously rolled over from 2019 because assessments were not given in spring 2019 due to the pandemic.

The group also said educator evaluations should be based 100% on their professional practice score for the 2020-21 school year only.

Convened by the state legislature in the spring through the School Finance Act ([HB20-1418 \(PDF\)](#)), the group provided recommendations on issues ranging from accountability to assessments to teacher evaluations. Final decisions are up to the legislature since these matters are tied to state law.

Introduction

In the 2020 legislative session, the Colorado General Assembly included in the School Finance Act ([HB20-1418 \(PDF\)](#)) the creation of a stakeholder group to address issues for students, schools and districts presented by the COVID-19 crisis. The Commissioner convened the COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group which worked from late August through November 2020 to understand, discuss and make recommendations to policymakers. The charge of the COVID-19 Policy Implications Stakeholder Group was to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption to the 2019-20 school year, and to make recommendations regarding whether and how to proceed with state assessments, accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluations during the 2020-21 school year.

Members of the Stakeholder Group worked hard to find common ground so as to make consensus recommendations. The members represented a variety of perspectives which ensured robust and substantive discussion. These recommendations were made in a world that continues to change each week. It is impossible to know what spring of 2021 will look like for students, parents, schools, districts, and the state. The Stakeholders acknowledged that it is difficult to make static decisions in a quickly changing world.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) thanks all the Stakeholders for their hard work and commitment to this process. They engaged in thoughtful dialogue and discussed their perspectives in a collaborative manner. CDE is grateful for their leadership.

HB20-1418 (Statute)

Following the intent of HB20-1418, the Commissioner convened the Stakeholder Group to:

- (i) Review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption of the 2019-20 school year, including student transition to remote learning and the cancellation of the state assessments, accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluation systems for the 2019-20 school year;
- (ii) Discuss how the cancellation of state assessments will impact accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluations during the 2020-21 school year and whether future modifications are needed regarding the accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluation systems as a result of, and in response to, the COVID-19 pandemic and possible further disruptions; and
- (iii) Make recommendations regarding whether and how to proceed with state assessments, accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluations during the 2020-21 school year and how the systems can continue to effectively measure student achievement and growth and provide an accurate, credible, and comparable assessment of the quality of the public education system throughout the state following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact of COVID-19 and the Resulting Disruption of the 2019-20 School Year

The Stakeholder Group reviewed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption of the 2019-20 school year, including the student transition to remote learning and the cancellation of the state assessments, accountability, accreditation, and educator evaluation systems for the 2019-20 school year. During the spring of 2020, Colorado was in a Stay at Home Executive Order which resulted in schools transitioning to remote learning. Schools and districts had to address many student, staff, and parent needs during this

transition, including, but not limited to, remote learning curriculum and instruction, communication challenges, access to devices and connectivity, and student and staff well-being. Many of these needs persisted into fall 2020.

In 2019-20 state assessments were cancelled through Executive Order, and no new state accountability ratings were issued for schools and districts. Through an Executive Order by the Governor last spring that was later codified through the Finance Act (HB 20-1418), state accountability was paused in 2020-21. This means that school and district plan types (e.g., Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, Turnaround), rolled over from 2019 to 2020. The Colorado Department of Education did not create 2020 performance framework reports in the fall of 2020 as is typical practice. The request to reconsider process was also not available. Schools and districts on Performance Watch (i.e., Priority Improvement, Turnaround, On Watch) retained their Performance Watch year without advancing (e.g., a school on Year 4 of the accountability clock in 2019-20 remains on Year 4 in 2020-21).

The disruption to learning in the spring of 2020 also impacted the education effectiveness system. The cancellation of spring 2020 state summative assessments, the disruption to local assessment systems, and the resulting lack of school and district performance frameworks meant that many educators had insufficient or incomplete data needed to produce a final evaluation rating that is based 50% on measures of student learning/outcomes (MSL/MSO). As a result, prior to the start of the school year, CDE announced the department would not be monitoring the MSL/MSO portion of the educator effectiveness requirements for educator evaluations in the 2020-21 evaluation cycle.

Topics at Consensus

Topics at Consensus: The Stakeholders reached consensus on several topics.

Assessment

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)/Colorado Alternative (CoAlt) Social Studies: The Stakeholder Group recommends CMAS/CoAlt Social Studies not be administered in grades 4 and 7 in spring 2021. This recommendation requires state statute change or an executive order.

CMAS/CoAlt Science: The Stakeholder Group recommends CMAS/CoAlt Science not be administered in grades 5, 8 and 11 in spring of 2021. This recommendation requires state statute change or an executive order, as well as federal approval.

PSAT/SAT - (If and How to Assess): Consistent with current statute, the Stakeholder Group recommends that districts and schools administer the CO PSAT/SAT (and associated CoAlt) assessments to Colorado public school students enrolled in grades 9 (PSAT 9/CoAlt), 10 (PSAT 10/CoAlt) and 11 (SAT/CoAlt) in the spring of 2021 to the extent local health orders allow testing to occur.

The Stakeholder Group recommends that CDE work with districts to increase flexibility to ensure equitable access to PSAT/SAT testing.

CO SAT Essay: If the CO SAT is administered in spring 2021, the Stakeholder Group recommends the essay portion of the assessment should be an option for students to select as needed or desired.

PSAT/SAT (Individual Reports For Achievement and Growth): If 2021 PSAT/SAT results are available, then in accordance with current statute, board rule and state practices, the Stakeholder Group recommends the state distribute individual student level assessment and growth results containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) to students and their guardians, schools, and districts.

The Stakeholder Group recommends when providing reports that CDE describe the unique circumstances and conditions of testing in 2021 and provide additional guidance on proper use and interpretation of results.

Accountability and Accreditation

School and District Performance Frameworks: The Stakeholder Group recommends changes to statute or board rule to pause the calculation and publication of school and district level performance frameworks and state accountability ratings for the 2021-22 school year. A school or district's rating will roll-over from 2020. For the 2021-22-year, current statute and board rule of the reconsider process may need to be revised for schools on the accountability clock. CDE will partner with schools, districts, and other stakeholders to develop the process for special considerations, including, but not limited to, utilizing a body of evidence, leveraging the state review panel, or providing additional supports and grants.

Note: 2020 ratings were rolled over from 2019 based upon the 2020 accountability pause.

Accreditation: While the Stakeholder Group recommends rolling over plan types from 2019, it further recommends that districts continue to be responsible for the reporting and implementation of the other legal responsibilities of district accreditation (i.e., safety, finance, accreditation contract assurances) in considering current statute, board rule and state practices. Districts will continue to be responsible for accrediting their schools in alignment with current statute, board rule and state policies. The department will provide assistance as requested for the local accrediting process.

Improvement Planning: The Stakeholder Group recommends providing an optional spring 2021 submission window for improvement plans (e.g., Unified Improvement Planning -- UIP). In 2021-22, the improvement planning process should be implemented in alignment with current statute, board rule and state practices, as amended in 2020 during the accountability pause (e.g., focus on using local performance and non-assessment data). The process should also be adjusted to better reflect the learnings and needs of schools and districts as a result of the impact of COVID. Note: The department will also convene conversations with the field and other stakeholder groups to determine flexibilities in future planning (2021-22 and beyond), including the consideration of more locally designed plans.

Educator Effectiveness

Educator Evaluations: Because of the cancellation of state assessments and school disruptions due to COVID-19 in the spring 2020, the Stakeholder Group recommends educators' final evaluation ratings be based 100% on their professional practice score for the 2020-21 school year only. This recommendation requires state statute change or an executive order.

Topics Not at Consensus

Topics Not at Consensus: The Stakeholders did not reach consensus on several other topics.

Assessment

CMAS English Language Arts and CMAS Math: The stakeholders did not reach consensus on administering CMAS English Language Arts and CMAS Math for a range of reasons, including but not limited to the following. Some stakeholders expressed a desire to measure student learning loss, provide families and educators student academic information, and provide an opportunity for the Colorado community to see student learning progress across the state. Other stakeholders expressed concerns over loss of instructional time to administer CMAS, the perceived value and credibility of the assessment, and the misinterpretation of student results within the context of COVID-19.

Assessment and Growth Reporting

CMAS English Language Arts/Math and PSAT/SAT Public Release of Results: The stakeholders did not reach consensus on the public release of CMAS and PSAT/SAT results for a range of reasons, including but not limited to the following. Some stakeholders expressed the need to provide public results as another data point to show student learning, provide an opportunity to see student progress across the state, and understand student learning loss to make better policy and resource decisions in response to the impacts of the pandemic. Other stakeholders expressed concerns about the potential inequities to access the assessment and corresponding credibility issues, and misinterpretation of student results within the context of COVID-19.

CDE Staff and Facilitator of the Stakeholder Group

Katy Anthes, Commissioner, CDE

Mary Bivens, Director of Educator Development, CDE Heather

Chikoore, Facilitator

Melissa Colman, Associate Commissioner of Student Learning

Rhonda Haniford, Associate Commissioner of School Quality and Support, CDE Marie

Huchton, Supervisor of Accountability Analytics, CDE

Mark Kirkemier, Executive Director of Student Learning Federal Programs, CDE

Lisa Medler, Executive Director of Accountability and Continuous Improvement, CDE

Colleen O'Neil, Associate Commissioner of Educator Talent, CDE

Christina Wirth-Hawkins, Director of Assessment Development, CDE

Joyce Zurkowski, Chief Assessment Officer, CDE

Endnotes

Additional information from the Stakeholder Group may be found on the [Stakeholder Group webpage](#), including all meeting recordings, slide deck presentations, Zoom chat box notes, and all meeting materials.

Attachment 2:

Colorado State Board of Education Public Input

**Colorado State Board of Education Public Input (Emails & Public Comment)
Regarding Proposed Federal Waivers**

#	Date of Email	Stakeholder Group	Reduce (R) Suspend All (S) Maintain (M)	Concluding Comment/ Position
1	10/14/2020	Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association (PPASA)	S	Our overwhelming and energetic consensus is that state-administered and state-required assessments are counterproductive during the current health crisis and therefore we recommend that they be cancelled or made optional this year.
2	10/29.2020	Denver Area Superintendents Council (DASSC)	S	The DASSC would like to express support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
3	11/2/2020	San Juan BOCES School Superintendents	S	The Superintendents of Southwest Colorado's Board of Cooperative Services would like to express support and parallel the sentiment in letters from school and district leaders across the Centennial State regarding recommendations related to a pause on the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year. The recommendations outlined in the letters also represents the near-unanimous consensus of rural district and school leaders representing communities from across our region.
4	11/15/2020	Liberty Common School Board	S	All of Liberty's professional instructors are overcoming pandemic-related workplace stress despite increased demands on their time. Their unwavering commitment to both in-classroom and remote-observing students necessitates many additional working hours for preparing lesson plans, grading, and ensuring cohesiveness between and

				equity among students in diverse learning settings.
5	11/17/2020	NW BOCES	S	Cancel all K-12 standardized tests normally required during the spring of 2021 except the PSAT and SAT. Preparing for the administration of these tests while adhering to COVID guidelines is exceedingly cumbersome. Setting aside time from normal instruction when the test results will not render usable data seems an irresponsible use of precious instructional minutes.
6	11/19/2020	Student Leaders	S	Not only do the state-mandated tests hinder us from learning, but the COVID-19 crisis is currently inhibiting the amount of time we have to master the curriculum.
7	12/2/2020	Denver School Leaders Association (DSL) ~125 DPS Principals/Aps	S	The Denver School Leaders Association (DSL) would like to express our deep support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, and then supported and amplified by the Denver Area Superintendents Council, regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
8	12/2/2020	Staff ECE-8 ~40 Educators	S	The staff of McGlone Academy ECE-8 would like to express our deep support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, and then supported and amplified by the Denver Area Superintendents Council and the Denver Principals Union, regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
9	12/2/2020	Staff of Elementary School ~40 Educators	S	The staff of John H. Amesse Elementary would like to express our deep support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, and then supported and amplified by the Denver

				Area Superintendents Council and the Denver Principals Union, regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
10	12/2/2020	Staff of K-8 ~30 Educators	S	The staff of Denver Green School Southeast K-8 would like to express our deep support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, and then supported and amplified by the Denver Area Superintendents Council and the Denver School Leaders Association, regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
11	12/2/2020	Staff of M.S. ~30 Educators	S	The staff of Denver Green School Northfield (Middle School) would like to express our deep support for the letter recently penned and submitted by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, and then supported and amplified by the Denver Area Superintendents Council and the Denver Principals Union, regarding their advice related to the statewide assessments during the 2020-2021 school year.
12	12/28/2020	East Central BOCES Superintendents	S	Our overwhelming and energetic consensus is that state-administered and state-required assessments are counterproductive during the current health crisis and therefore we recommend that they be cancelled or made optional this year.
13	1/5/2021	Uncompahgre BOCES Superintendents	S	Calling for suspension of CMAS Assessments in 2021

14	1/6/2021	Southeastern BOCES Superintendents	S	Addendum of support for letter from Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association
15	1/12/2021	Parent	S	Testing during a pandemic would not only be incredibly stressful, it will present an undue burden for parents who work and will undoubtedly have to take additional time off, when few can afford to do so, to take kids to these tests in the middle of the day.
16	1/13/2021	Public Comment/ Westminster Educators' Union	S	This spring is not the time to do any standardized testing, including CMAS, ACCESS, PSAT and SAT as it will result in a loss of instructional time at a critical moment in students' education.
17	1/18/2021	Parent	S	I could not be more opposed to pretending that this year is a normal school year and testing should continue as normal. Educators, families, and students are stressed under the current conditions. Testing will require even more time and resources from these already stressed systems. Please consider using this time and effort to figure out how to get the children who would be identified by these tests as either special needs or gifted. We need a different way this year.
18	1/20/2021	School Administrator	S	Below is a list of reasons that I feel that testing should be postponed until next year: 1. Equity; We have never had such a great discrepancy in how we educate our children in this state. 2. Assessment; Most schools already have the data we need to make instructional decisions and to work on closing student gaps. 3. Time; Our children lost valuable instructional time last year.
19	1/22/2021	Parent	M	I am writing this email to strongly express my support for state assessment testing to take place this year. I know that the CCSD

				Superintendent is lobbying for the testing to not take place. I feel strongly this year it is more important than ever to follow through with the testing. Testing will show if there are any gaps that have occurred in the education progress of students. It will also help determine if achievement gaps have closed, stayed the same or gotten worse. I welcome any ideas as an alternative to state assessment testing that can accomplish the same insight but so far none have been offered.
20	1/22/2021	Cherry Creek School District Board of Education Resolution	S	IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that CCSD Board hereby supports and strongly recommends that the Colorado Department of Education suspend state assessments for the 2020-2021 school year.
21	1/26/2021	Parent	M	While I am not certain that CMAS is the best indicator of student progress, it is certainly at least an indicator. How will parents ever know what education our kids have missed this year if the schools are never required to disclose it to us? Now the Educators want to cancel CMAS? Isn't this the fox guarding the hen house? A proper way to assess students is also guaranteed in the state constitution. How will student' be assessed? Now this right may be taken from our children, and the taxpayers who fund public education, as well?
22	1/26/2021	Mapleton Public Schools Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends that the CDE suspend state testing for the 2020-2021 school year.
23	2/4/2021	Denver Public Schools Board of Education Memo	S	In acknowledging the difficulty the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present to our school staff, students, and families, the Denver Public Schools Board of Education calls on Governor Jared Polis, the State Board of Education, and the Colorado General Assembly to urge the Colorado Commissioner of Education and

				Department of Education to submit an application to the federal government to waive required standardized assessment. In DPS, we're focused on building a system that's designed to help every student thrive and in doing this we are prioritizing the health and mental health of students, Educators and staff, along with focusing on recovering learning loss.
24	2/4/2021	Thompson School District Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends that the CDE suspend state testing for the 2020-2021 school year.
25	2/5/2021	Englewood Schools Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends that the CDE suspend state testing for the 2020-2021 school year.
26	2/5/2021	Adams 12 Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends that the CDE suspend state testing for the 2020-2021 school year.
27	2/5/2021	Parent	M	I want to encourage CMAS testing to take place this year. It is a critical tool, especially this year, to understand students progress or setbacks.
28	2/7/2021	Parent	S	I am simply writing to you to implore you to cancel the expensive, outdated, inaccurate and onerous CMAS testing this year. Standardized testing is an antiquated, inaccurate measurement in normal times, hence completely irrelevant and unnecessary during these extremely arduous times of COVID. Again, I beseech you to do the right thing.
29	2/8/2021	Parent	S	Please support our kids- NO state mandated testing until kids return to school full time. I have already elected to opt my kids out of testing this year and no many families doing the same, the validity of these tests will be poor - please let them have the time for classroom instruction.

30	2/8/2021	Parent	S	Please consider the needs of our children and educators and waive standardized testing this year.
31	2/8/2021	Educator	S	I ask that Governor Polis and CDE consider cancelling state testing once again so that we actually can work on making Colorado a safe state once again.
32	2/8/2021	Educator	S	As a public school educator for many years, I want to urge you to request a Federal waiver from the state testing this year.
33	2/9/2021	Parent	S	I am contacting you because I want to voice my opposition to wasting time and money on CMAS this year to as many audiences as I can. I cannot in good conscience support a system that will claim to represent valid and reliable data during a time of so many instructional inequities across our state and world.
34	2/9/2021	Parent	S	As a parent with elementary school children, I urge you to not mandate standardized testing in 2021. Our children have lost so much and I can't even imagine that the information collected would be of use. They need to be learning, not testing.
35	2/9/2021	Brighton 27J School District Education Association and Superintendent	S	Our students have had a year filled with uncertainty and disruption; the state assessments will only hinder schools' efforts to create stability and predictability for their students and will not provide useful data to educators. Please vote to suspend state assessments for the 2020-21 school year.
36	2/9/2021	Parent	S	I am a DPS parent requesting that we opt out of standardized tests during the pandemic. Tests given under these unique conditions cannot be considered valid or predictive in any way, especially as they will only be given in person and so many students are online-only. These tests add stress and strain to children, families, and

				Educators who are already under the maximum amount of stress and strain. They take up weeks of crucial classroom time, when we have already lost so much and our children have fallen so far behind. Please let our children learn instead of test.
37	2/9/2021	Parent/Educator	S	In closing, please cancel the Spring 2021 CMAS testing. It is what is best for families, students, Educators, and districts. Please remember we are still in a pandemic. To pretend that these are normal times is a falsehood. Our children deserve the best education we can give them. CMAS testing during the pandemic is not what is best for kids.
38	2/9/2021	Educator	S	I urge you to prioritize learning time over testing time, as we finish out the 20-21 school year by cancelling CMAS.
39	2/9/2021	Parent	S	Trying to push for this testing this year rather than focusing on what is best for students, which is as much meaningful educational time as possible, is irresponsible. Please request the waiver and do not have CMAS testing this year.
40	2/9/2021	Parent/Educator	S	I am writing as a parent and educator to ask you to please consider cancelling the Spring CMAS tests this year for all of the students in the state of Colorado.
41	2/9/2021	Parent	S	Thank you for taking the time to read and consider the very real impacts of Standardized Testing in 2021 on the well-being of students. This is an incredibly important issue that directly impacts student learning this school year. Please take action and request the waiver to forgo state testing this school year.
42	2/9/2021	Educator	S	As a third grade Educator, I vote to suspend CMAS this year. The kids need as much direct and explicit instruction as they can get. The last year has been

				crazy and I would hate to lose anymore instructional hours with testing.
43	2/9/2021	Educator	S	It is imperative that CMAS testing be cancelled for all students in all grade levels for this school year. Educators are collecting plenty of data and this will only hurt public school students and schools.
44	2/9/2021	Business Leader Network	M	As a network of business leaders working to ensure all of Colorado's children are educated to their greatest potential, Colorado Succeeds is greatly concerned about the impacts of COVID-19 on student learning. It is urgent that we hold K-12 statewide assessments this year , not for accountability purposes, but to funnel resources to the kids and districts that need it most and set up our economy for recovery.
45	2/9/2021	Parent	S	We are writing to ask you to suspend CMAS testing this spring due to the ongoing global pandemic and the devastating effect it has had on our schools.
46	2/9/2021	Charter School ED	M	The State Department of Education and the Colorado State Legislature has a responsibility to make policy that will help and support students who most need it after this unprecedented year in education. We can't expect them to make good policy decisions if they don't have adequate information about the scope of the needs. We must support standardized testing going forward this spring, despite the challenges, so we can all work together to support our students in the next school year. After the incredible sacrifice our children have made in moving to remote learning which protected the lives of the adults around them more than it protected them, we owe them an informed and targeted response. As a community, we need standardized testing this year so we can ensure our children get what they need; they deserve it.

47	2/9/2021	Parent	S	I believe putting a hold on CMAS testing would benefit our students. Our students have been under trauma with the pandemic. Conducting CMAS now may not give an accurate measurement of students abilities. I request that you hold off on CMS testing.
48	2/9/2021	Parent	S	Please do not do CMAS testing. Students need learning time, more testing shoved down their throats. Enough already.
49	2/9/2021	Educators' Union	S	At this time, we encourage the State Board of Education to think about what is best for kids. No standardized assessment measure will demonstrate what our kids need today ... making sense of their existence in this new reality of learning and living during an unprecedented pandemic.
50	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Educator	S	The data collected from this year's testing cannot possibly be considered reliable, valid, or equitable. There are other data measures that could easily be collected from school sites or districts that would be able to provide the state with valid data from normed and trusted monitoring devices that are currently used. Students have suffered enough since this pandemic started, let's truly show them that we as educators and a state put students first and pause all state testing for this school year.
51	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Educator	S	Please do the right thing by not stressing our families and students any further and cancel the CMAS for the Spring of 2021. Please honor educators across this state by hearing our plea and following what so many other states have already announced. Cancel state assessments.
52	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Parent	S	I would ask that you use this year to improve the procedures for CMAS, eliminating some of the abusive practices that truly harm students as well as educators. I would ask that you think about the potential of using the funding to support the education and

				mental health of students, rather than high stakes testing. I would also advocate for these large and highly funded entities to step aside and allow the parent voice to be heard rather than continuing to act as if they represent our experiences.
53	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Parent	M	I am among the tens of thousands of families in Colorado with school-aged children who want standardized tests administered to their children this spring. Why? I want to know how much the experiment of remote learning, although a necessity during COVID, has impacted my child's academic progress.
54	2/10/2021	Educator	S	I am a 6th grade Educator in Englewood, Colorado and I'm asking that you please cancel 2021 CMAS testing. A high-stakes test that provides me with zero instructional feedback to drive instruction is the LAST thing my students need to experience right now.
55	2/10/2021	Educator	S	Our schools already assess our students regularly and we have a great deal of local data. We are able to use that data in a more responsive and effective way, then getting test results next fall. Please waive the state mandated testing for this year.
56	2/10/2021	Educator	S	If we are going to take the CMAS then we are going to lose valuable instructional time. Please consider postponing the CMAS, saving the money and relieving the stress. Please do what you know is right.
57	2/10/2021	Colorado Stand for Children	S	We understand there may be challenges to administering annual assessments this year given this extraordinary time and we do not believe that the assessments should be used for accountability purposes. However, we believe that it is important that we do assess where our Colorado students are in their learning journeys so that we can understand each district's unique needs and

				challenges in the forthcoming school year.
58	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Colorado Association of School Boards	S	Performing CMAS testing under current conditions will produce inconsistent results with unreliable conclusions. CASB believes that quality public education is the foundation for our nation's economic prosperity, community's quality of life, and every child's opportunity to live their best life. We will continue to advocate for what is best for our students. Prioritizing student learning and mental health needs by preventing additional and unnecessary disruptions to learning is exactly what we believe is best for students at this time given the environment in which we are operating.
59	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Colorado Association of School Executives	S	CASE membership covers all roles within school and district leadership. The credentials and depth of experience of our membership provides a unique perspective that our State Board of Education should strongly consider. We proudly represent public education leaders and our students in saying that the value of the CMAS for this year does not equal the cost, and we request your support.
60	2/10/2021	Public Comment/ Westminster Public Schools Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends that the CDE suspend state testing for the 2020-2021 school year.
61	2/10/2021	Ready Colorado	M	We write to the board today to urge support of having a statewide assessment. There are many reasons to conduct the assessment, but we want to focus on just one of them in this public comment. Isn't having data, even if not perfect, better than having none at all? Don't hide the harm by depriving Colorado of important data. We urge the State Board of Education to support a statewide assessment.

62	2/10/2021	A+ Colorado/Education Research & Advocacy Non-Profit	M	We strongly urge the Colorado Department of Education to encourage and support the administration of CMAS assessments this school year.
63	2/10/2021	Transform Education Now (TEN)	M	We also recognize that any assessments should be used to support our schools and students as we distribute additional resources to those who need them most. We do not believe that any standardized test should be used to inform state accountability systems this year, the data should be used to support our public schools and students as they recover learning loss and discover learning gained during this pandemic.
64	2/10/2021	Education Reform Now (ERN)	M	It is becoming incredibly clear that state leadership is imperative right now as educators have had very little and often contradictory support on how to move forward. We must remember that this is currently federal and state law. We must not falter under the pressure of adult political debates and instead communicate clear and helpful guidance to districts and educators on how best to assess students to ensure they receive the education they deserve.
65	2/10/2021	Colorado Children's Campaign (Research, Policy and Advocacy Organization)	M	We cannot improve what we do not measure. Collecting student performance data in some way in 2021 is essential to developing a roadmap to recovery for Colorado's K-12 schools. They will illuminate how we served or failed to serve our students during this period, and show which students were most negatively impacted by the disruptions of COVID-19. Therefore, we strongly encourage the Department and the State Board to solidify and communicate the importance of assessing students in the Spring. Statewide assessments will help ensure that every student counts and is seen — regardless of race, income, or geography.

66	2/10/2021	Parent	S	I think it's necessary we suspend CMAS testing so we can prioritize instruction, learning, and relationships with students this spring. While assessment feedback is crucial for educators to meet the varying needs of students, CMAS data will not be available when we need it nor will it tell us how to help our students sitting in our classrooms right now.
67	2/11/2021	Parent	S	As a parent of two children in the BVSD school system, I am concerned re: the possibility of CMAS testing occurring this Spring. Our kids have had a really hard year with patchy and intermittent instruction. I know that much of this is out of your control and was dictated by COVID spikes, community outbreaks, positivity rates, etc. However, if we are to consider doing CMAS testing, this will decrease the amount of actual instruction (i.e. learning) that our kids get during this difficult year. Please consider canceling CMAS testing. This is the LAST thing that they need to deal with this year, and will not assist them in their long term learning and education goals.
68	2/11/2021	Parent	S	As a parent of two high school students and a former teacher of 17 years, I am very concerned about our students having to go through state testing this year. Our children have struggled through a widely different form of schooling since last March.
69	2/11/2021	Boulder Valley School District Board of Education Resolution	S	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Boulder Valley Board of Education 1. Affirms its unending commitment to administering meaningful, formative assessments to assess the needs of its students, Pre-K-12; and, 2. Calls upon its elected legislators, the United States Department of Education, and the Governor of Colorado to waive standardized testing for 2020-2021 school year.

70	2/11/2021	Parent	S	Please grant the petitions for waivers that you are receiving from Colorado school districts!! No CMAS!!
71	2/11/2021	Parent	S	I would like to recommend that we postpone state testing for another year so that our students can stay on the path of hybrid learning that they are experiencing right now. Please consider that our schools are continually assessing students for knowledge and will use this information much faster and more accurately than the CMAS results will provide.
72	2/11/2021	Parent	S	Enough is enough! The last thing our educators, students, school staff, and families need is a change of their schedules and the added anxiety of high-stakes federally mandated testing. Especially in a year with a documented rise in depression and anxiety for our educators and students. Please cancel the mandatory testing for students this season. My 3 school age children cringe at the mere thought of them and they are right.
73	2/11/2021	Pueblo School District No. 60 Board of Education Resolution	S	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby supports and recommends that CDE suspend state assessments for the 2020-2021 school year.
74	2/13/2021	Parent	S	Our students cannot lose any more instruction time this year! Please make a good decision for the learners--allow schools to keep teaching and skip testing.
75	2/15/2021	Educator	S	I ask that you do what is needed to waive CMAS this year. Too much instructional time has been lost already. Each day we test wastes a precious opportunity to make up for what our kids have missed. The time and effort that schools use to

				administer this test is taking away from what our kids need most: quality instruction. Every day. All day. We need to devote all of our resources to instruction.
76	2/15/2021	Parent	S	Please do what is best for Colorado's students and Educators and stop CMAS testing this school year.
77	2/15/2021	Educator	S	Please cancel CMAS Testing by giving waivers to school districts. It is ridiculous that we are even talking about this. Testing will lead to more loss of learning that we cannot afford. I am a Educator in DPS.
78	2/15/2021	Educator	S	CMAS testing needs to NOT be administered this year due to COVID19. I'm appalled - as are many parents and Educators - that CMAS is going to be administered this year. This will mean 3-5 weeks of lost teaching/learning and normalcy for kids in a year that has not had any normalcy in it. Why is this a priority? What kind of results do you think we will get? The data is going to be completely off this year anyway. Kids and Educators both have been traumatized this year. Now they are going to lose more instruction.
79	2/16/2021	Parent/Teacher	S	I feel strongly that Colorado schools should not be required to administer the CMAS assessment this year. My year as a teacher and as a parent has been like no other. I feel like I am on a teeter-totter going between gratitude and being overwhelmed every day. I am so very grateful that my own children and my students have had in-person learning 4-days a week since we started school in August. It has been challenging, however, experiencing multiple quarantine orders and seeing my students balance situations out of their control at home due to stressors placed on families. I have never had to be in

				tune with the social emotional well-being of my students more than I have been this year.
80	2/17/2021	Educator	S	State testing does not serve this purpose. It only serves a few select people. Educators have been told again and again this year especially, "students first". It is time you did the same, and cancel state testing for this academic year. Stand in support of students, families and Educators. Make the return to in person learning a joy and a celebration.
81	2/17/2021	School Board Director	S	Please give thoughtful consideration for the needs we have across both our rural and urban areas, to likewise request a federal waiver to pause accountability testing for this Spring 2021.
82	2/18/2021	Parent	S	I'm writing to express my opposition to the CMAS tests for the 2020-21 school year. I am a DPS parent of two children. Both of my children are in 100% virtual programs for the year for health and safety reasons. I have never opted out of assessment tests, but will be doing so this year.
83	2/20/2021	Parent	S	I am a very concerned parent writing today to urge you to support postponing the CMAS testing until the next school year, 2022. We will opt our child out of the CMAS test this year if it is not cancelled. I strongly urge you to cancel this test for <u>all</u> students for the 2021 school year and let our students and Educators, who have endured every irregularity with poise and herculean effort, continue to use the time to actually engage with meaningful learning experiences.
84	2/20/2021	Parent/Educator	S	Hi! I write to you as a parent, community member, and Educator, begging you to cancel CMAS this year. The last thing our educators, students, school staff, and families need is a change of their schedules and the added anxiety of high-stakes testing.

				Especially in a year with a documented rise in depression and anxiety for our educators and students, I respectfully ask that you waive student testing requirements this year.
85	2/20/2021	Parent	S	As a parent of two students in the CCSD school district, I am appalled at the impact that state testing will have on our already chaotic year. My son and daughter have very limited in person instructional time with their Educator, and CMAS testing would further reduce that time. Please support your school districts, which have asked you to cancel testing for this year.
86	2/20/2021	Parent	S	As the parent of two children in the Cherry Creek School District, I implore you to vote to ask for a federal waiver and cancel CMAS testing this spring.
87	2/21/2021	Parent	S	I have concerns about plans to move forward with the CMAS testing this school year. Many schools have distributed all of their computers to remote students so they can attend class. In order to administer these federally mandated tests they would need to have those students return these devices. This would leave those remote students without access to their classes.
88	2/21/2021	Parent/Educator	S	I have already opted my children out of CMAS testing for this year. This year has brought so many changes for our students and Educators that adding more schedules changes and lost classroom instruction is unacceptable. I highly encourage you to stand with our district, schools, Educators, and students and waive CMAS Testing this year.
89	2/21/2021	Parent/Educator	S	I am deeply concerned about requiring students to take the CMAS tests this spring, during this unprecedented pandemic. There are several reasons why CMAS testing this year is not in the best interests of students.

90	2/22/2021	School Board President	S	I am writing to ask you to request a waiver to allow for a pause in the 2021 CMAS testing.
91	2/23/2021	Parent	S	If you are in support of tests this year, you are sorely mistaken about what is going on in the homes of families with students and educators. I am over not being a valued participant in this process as an actual parent.
92	2/24/2021	Educator	S	To put these kids and their Educators through this ridiculous assessment shows the entire state that you are so far removed from an actual classroom, that you have no place making these decisions for us. Evaluations like CMAS do nothing to truly evaluate our schools and Educators.
93	2/25/2021	Parent/Former Educator	S	As a retired Educator and parent in Colorado schools, I urge you to postpone CMAS testing this year.
94	2/26/2021	Parent/Retired Educator	S	Please support postponing the CMAS testing and let the districts determine how best to determine accountability in alternative ways.
95	3/4/2021	Parent	S	Over the last years we have never opted out of state testing, but we will consider doing so this year for following reasons: Learning deficiencies: Computer loaners; Mental Health and Consistency: Impact on attendance: Therefore, I ask you respectfully to consider to cancel 2021 spring testing. This is in the best interest of our children, which should be our number one concern and have priority above anything else.
96	3/10/2021	Public Comment/ St. Vrain Valley Board of Education	S	We write this letter to ask for your leadership during this difficult time for many students and families that reside in the boundaries of St. Vrain Valley Schools by suspending the state assessments for the 2020-2021 school year.

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group	Other
TOTAL	29	28	32	7	0
Reduce	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain	0	1	4	6	0
Suspend	29	27	28	1	0

Attachment 3:
House and Senate Education Committee:
Public Comment on H.B. 21-1161

House Education Committee Hearing - 3/5/21

<https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00327/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20210311/13/10911>

#	Name of Commenter	Role of Commenter	Support (S) Neutral (N) Oppose (O)	Summarized Comment/Position
1	Evie Hudak	Public Policy Director for the Colorado Parent Teacher Association	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o High quality assessments provide valuable information, but we should not overemphasize them. o Tests should be offered remotely or we should expect many students to opt out. o Assessments this year will be inconsistent, not useful, and a waste of time and money.
2	Stephanie Perez-Carrillo	Policy and Partnerships Manager with Colorado Children’s Campaign	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assessments provide vital information. o One year without data was unfortunate, but a second year without data is unacceptable. o Measures do not need to be perfect to be useful.
3	Lynn Seto	Middle School Teacher in Academy 20 School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o State assessments will equate to loss of instructional time when we’ve already lost so much time. o We have already identified learning gaps using local data.
4	Jackie Kapushion	Deputy Superintendent of St. Vrain Valley School District,	O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We should allow districts to use local assessments. o Students have endured significant disruption to their education and need time with peers and to catch up on lost learning. o The state assessments are limited and outdated; we should not re-engage with the status quo. o We have been testing students for 25 years and doing it again will still not fix the testing gap.
5	Monica Johnson	Superintendent of Strasburg School District and President of Colorado Association of School Executives	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o State assessments will lead to lost instructional time and provide data that will not be timely or usable. o Districts already have the data they need to understand learning gaps.
6	Bill Dallas	School Principal in Fountain Fort Carson School District and President of Colorado Association of	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o State assessments will take away from already limited time we have for in-person instruction. o Data will be impractical and spurious.

		Secondary School Principals with the Colorado Association of School Executives		
7	Laura Martinez	Leader with Coloradans for the Common Good	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State assessments are not worth the loss of instructional time and are not useful. District tests can provide the data we need.
8	Mara Altman	Parent	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tests do not provide the whole picture of what is happening. We need to focus on the social-emotional health of students right now, not testing.
9	Sed Keller	Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment for Fountain-Fort Carson School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-scale statewide administration of assessments this year is not worth the costs. We should focus on instructional time instead of collecting data that will not be valid nor reliable.
10	Jill Lliteras	Elementary School Principal in Saint Vrain Valley School District and President Elect of Colorado Association of School Executives	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now is not the time to pile onto an already difficult year. We need to focus on the emotional health of our educators.
11	Angela Anderson	Educator in Jefferson County Public Schools	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will receive no benefit from CMAS assessments this year. Students will lose the interaction that has driven them to risk safety to come to school. This will disproportionately impact the most disadvantaged students by taking their computers away. We can gather the information we need in other ways.
12	Mark Bartlett	Teacher in Poudre Valley School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students need this time to connect and develop socially.
13	Jason Koenig	Board Member for Colorado Association of Leaders in Educational	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because administration of assessment would require the district to pull back devices from students, this will impact vulnerable students the most.

		Technology for the Colorado Association of School Executives and Chief Information Officer for Cherry Creek School District		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CMAS will not tell us what we don't already know. Teachers already know where learning loss has occurred.
14	Angela Bird	High School Teacher in Widefield School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Instead of using time to take assessments, students need extra time to catch up. o CMAS does not provide actionable information for teachers and will not reflect learning loss over summer. o Districts assessments in the fall will be more useful
15	Anne Guettler	School Board President for Garfield RE2 School District,	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Her district has focused on culture and climate this year, keeping kids safe and healthy. o It is not in the best interests of students and staff to administer an assessment that will simply allow us to check a box and tell us what we already know. o Her district uses formative assessments and adjusts teaching immediately; as well as interim assessments that allow them to benchmark how students are doing.
16	Fran Groff Gonzales	President of Westminster Education Association	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Data must be relevant, timely and accurate. o Local assessment data is already available and extended testing would not be helpful at this time. o Mental health of students and staff is tenuous and lack of interaction has taken its toll.
17	Debora Figueroa	Parent and educator in Adams 14 School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Testing right now will just tell us what we already know. o We already administer local assessments that reflect what we observe daily. Students need more time to practice reading. o Resources should be dedicated to instruction.
18	Angelina Sierra-Sandoval	Director of Government Affairs for the Colorado League of Charter Schools	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The League recognizes the need to amend the way that testing looks this year, but hopes that some form of testing will continue. o This bill represents a balance that will allow for us to gather important information.
19	Chris Gibbons	Founder and CEO of Strive Prep	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This bill is the best compromise we are going to find- allows for collection of meaningful data that will inform how we respond to our student needs, minimizes impact on schools, and supports parent choice.

20	Morgan Fritzler	Student in Jefferson County School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is very little benefit to CMAS. It does not cover anything that is not covered by high school SAT and AP exams. ○ State assessments would impose undue burden on students and teachers.
21	Lori Shepherd	Professor at University of Colorado-Boulder in Research and Evaluation Methodology	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is important that this bill limits assessments and prohibits the use of assessment results for educator evaluation. ○ There are still equity and technical concerns that this legislation does not address. ○ A remote learner should not be asked to come to take the test in-person. ○ Students who have received school computers should not be asked to return their computers to be used for test administration. ○ Public reporting is still a means of accountability. The assessments will still take time to administer and still create stress for students. ○ This data will not allow for comparability.
22	Lucy Squire	Educator and representative of AFT Colorado	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State assessments will derail the small bit of normalcy that we've been able to provide this semester. ○ We should use our time to cover standards and tend to the social and emotional health of our students, rather than assess them.
23	Kelly Caufield	Vice President of Government Affairs for Colorado Succeeds	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This bill strikes a balance between ensuring state level assessments are administered but also acknowledging the challenges of the moment. The tests will not be used to punish teachers but will help us better understand learning loss and funnel resources to students who need it most. ○ Learning loss has important implications for our economy and low-income students are expected to bear the brunt of impact.
24	Stepen Fusco	Vice President of Policy and Research for A+ Colorado	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have a lack of meaningful data to tell whether the resources that we've committed to education have been used effectively. ○ State assessments are necessary to help target resources for students with greatest need. ○ Bill strikes a balance between needs of data and flexibility to make testing more feasible.
25	Nicholas Martinez	Founder and Executive Director of Transform Education Now	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Families are concerned about the academic progress of their students. ○ We owe it to our students to tend to their needs, and that starts with knowing where they are at and targeting resources to address needs.

26	Prateek Dutta	Policy Director for Education Reform Now and Democrats for Education Reform	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative assessment results allow us to publicly see and analyze demographics of performance gaps. This bill includes a compromise of pausing frameworks, suspending the use of assessments in educator evaluation, and minimizing assessment subjects.
27	John Johnson	Parent Fellow with Transform Education Now	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bill continues to value data and transparency so that we can learn about the progress of our students.
28	Margaret Baum	Retired teacher from Denver Public School District	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bill represents a reasonable compromise. CMAS is not necessary to address learning loss. It is not used to inform individual instruction. Many more meaningful assessments already exist and are being used by districts. Teachers already have tools to inform parents about the status of their children. CMAS results will not be useful this year, given the number of students who are being opted out by their parents. CMAS results could actually show growth simply because students have learned skills in navigating online assessments rather than showing content gain or loss. The time to administer the assessments will take away from instruction time and exacerbate the learning gap. Standardized tests are culturally biased and exacerbate the problem.
29	Michael Reed	Vice President of Denver NAACP	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State assessments are being pushed as a means to determine which students are falling behind. However, it is unfair that school funding be used for CMAS. We have 25 years of data showing that our education system is failing black and brown communities. The assessments will take away from much needed classroom time.
30	Pam Swanson	Superintendent of Westminster Public Schools,	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bill represents a compromise that will allow us to focus on instruction rather than testing. Years of high-stakes standardized testing have not improved outcomes for our students and are biased. The tests reflect demographics.
31	Kallie Leyba	President of AFT Colorado	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be short-sighted to put standardized testing ahead of daily instruction and connection between our teachers and their students

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students need normalcy in their school day as they are returning in person. The stress these tests put on students is overwhelming in the best of times. o Administration of assessments has its own challenges-including taking computers back from students and facilitating cohorts to comply with safety standards. o Local data is already available and shared with parents.
32	Amie Baca Olert	High School Counselor and President of Colorado Education Association	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CEA recently shared a petition signed by nearly 15,000 Coloradans calling for CMAS to be canceled this year. o Educators have had to adjust to many challenges this year and learning has been impacted. Our students have experienced disrupted learning and we do not need a standardized assessment to tell us this. o This is yet another time of transition for students and we need to prioritize every minute of the school day for instruction. o Teachers are constantly using assessments and gathering information to check for learning and changing their instruction to meet the needs of their students.
33	Brett Miles	Executive Director of the Colorado Association of School Executives	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assessments are incredibly time consuming and this year has been particularly demanding. o Schools are confident that they already have data about their students from a variety of interim and diagnostic assessments to inform how to prioritize learning this year.
34	Cheri Wrench	Executive Director of the Colorado Association of School Boards	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Our students need consistency, stability, and fewer disruptions to their learning. o The additional burden of taking assessments is adding one more stressor, and we need to focus on students' social and emotional wellbeing. o Districts do want to be held accountable, but are constantly assessing through local assessments. o Data this year will not be comparable to previous years.

Senate Education Committee Hearing - 3/11/21

<https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00327/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20210311/16/11003#agenda>

#	Name of Commenter	Role of Commenter	Support (S) Neutral(N) Oppose (O)	Summarized Comment/Position
1	Amie Baca-Oehlert	President of Colorado Education Association	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disappointed with the federal government's decision on assessments. ○ Need to prioritize student learning and mental health. ○ Bill at least provides some relief for parents, students, and teachers.
2	Evie Hudak	Public Policy Director for the Colorado Parent Teacher Association	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supportive of the accountability provisions in the bill, but would prefer to see all state assessments suspended. ○ Tests should be offered remotely or we should expect many students to opt out. ○ Assessments this year will be inconsistent, not useful, and a waste of time and money.
3	Bret Miles	Executive Direction of the Colorado Association of School Executives, Rural Schools Alliance	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment battery in Colorado is extremely time consuming and district constraints are even tighter during these times. ○ Confident that schools have the data they need about their students already through interim and diagnostic assessments. ○ Appreciate that the bill finds some relief and time saved from these assessments.
4	Fran Groff Gonzales	President of Westminster Education Association	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data are important, but they need to be relevant, timely, and accurate. ○ Tremendous disruptions to the learning environment this year and mental health of staff has declined. ○ Standardized testing would add unnecessary pressure at this time.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If testing needs to happen, would like to make sure it is at least burdensome as possible
5	Lori Goldstein	Member of Colorado Education Association and Adams 12 School Board	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CMAS assessments take time to prep for and time to take. o Students with special needs often struggle to take the tests. o MAPs testing is much more effective and timely. o Instructional time spent teaching will be much more valuable; ask that we significantly decrease testing for this year.
6	Bill Dallas	Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals (CASSP), Colorado Middle School Principal of the Year	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Although support the bill, oppose administering any assessments this year as the cost is the loss of instructional time. o Failure to support the bill will exaggerate the existing opportunity gaps as implementing a full assessment battery would decrease instructional time for those who need it most.
7	Sed Keller	Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment at Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Local assessments and state assessments serve different, but important, purposes. o State assessments will not serve their purpose this year since they won't be representative or valid and reliable. o With so little value in the data, it is not worth the time and effort.
8	Prateek Dutta	Public Policy Director, Democrats for Education Reform Colorado	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We cannot create a plan for unfinished learning if we don't know how much learning is left. o Local assessment data should not take the place of state summative assessments because it is often unreliable and does not display key learning gaps, especially for at-risk students. o The bill meets the requirements for federal waiver.
9	Kelly Caufield	Vice President of Government Affairs, Colorado Succeeds	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Legislation strikes a balance between recognizing challenges students and teachers have faced and the need for summative data. o Lifetime earning potential is expected to drop due to learning impacts from COVID-19.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The ability to funnel resources to those places and students that need it most will be important going forward.
10	Deborah Figaroa	Educator Adams 12 school district	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Critical to focus all the time we have with students on teaching and learning. o Local data confirms what we are seeing in the classroom. o We should embrace data and evaluations so long as it helps our students and instruction.
11	Cheri Wrench	Executive Director of the Colorado Association of School Boards	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students need consistency and fewer disruptions to their learning. o Additional assessments will add further stress to students already experiencing heightened anxiety at this time. o State assessment results will not be comparable to other years and will likely be misinterpreted.
12	Nara Altman	Parent	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Administering CMAS is both detrimental to students and inconsequential in the broader scheme of learning. o Children subject to trauma will not test well and could negatively impact students. o If we can't vote to cancel testing, we should vote to minimize it.
13	Kallie Leyba	President of American Federation of Teachers Colorado	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The legislation is not what we wanted, but it's what we need and a true compromise. o It is short-sighted to put standardized testing before connection and instruction. o Students deserve for the adults to put their emotional and mental health first. o CMAS results will not be valuable this year and provide reliable information.

House Education Committee Public Comment

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group	Students
TOTAL	14	10	1	8	1
Support	13	9	1	8	1
Neutral	1	0	0	0	0
Oppose	0	1	0	0	0

Senate Education Committee Public Comment

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group	Students
TOTAL	8	2	1	2	0
Support	7	2	1	2	0
Neutral	1	0	0	0	0
Oppose	0	0	0	0	0

Combined House and Senate Education Committee Public Comment

	Education Organization	Single Educator	Parent	Advocacy Group	Students
TOTAL	22	12	1	10	1
Support	20	11	1	10	1
Neutral	2	0	0	0	0
Oppose	0	1	0	0	0