



## 2015 Communication Toolkit: Parent Audience

Tools for communicating with parents about standards, assessments and educator evaluations

The Colorado Department of Education has extensive communications resources to help superintendents, principals and teachers communicate with parents on the new standards, tests and educator evaluations. This will help you quickly identify resources for specific communication needs.

All fact sheets can be accessed on the Communications website: [www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs)

Other resources on the Superintendent and Principal Tools page: [www.cde.state.co.us/communications/superintendentandprincipaltools](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/superintendentandprincipaltools)

### Communicating about the Colorado Academic Standards

Resource	Description	Ideas for how to use
<a href="#">Standards Drop-in article</a>	This newsletter article helps school leaders or teachers describe what is different about the Colorado Academic Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the content in full, edit as needed, add stories about standards-based learning at your school/district.</li><li>• Download from the CDE website; copy into an email, newsletter or website; personalize and send</li></ul>
<a href="#">Standards Brochure</a>	This tri-fold brochure is a brief introduction to the Colorado Academic Standards, which provide a grade-by-grade road map to help ensure students are successful in college and careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer to the brochure when answering questions from parents</li><li>• Link to them in email communications for more information</li><li>• Hand out during parent/teacher conferences</li></ul>
<a href="#">Standards Key Messaging</a>	These key messages were developed to help school leaders describe the Colorado Academic Standards in a variety of communications for parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include these messages when drafting emails/newsletters, preparing presentations, and discussing the standards at parent/teacher conferences</li></ul>
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a>	Here are some frequently asked questions and answers on the new Colorado Academic Standards, including the Common Core State Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer to these Qs and As when responding to parent questions or preparing for a presentation about the new standards</li></ul>
<a href="#">Colorado Academic Standards Video</a>	This three-minute video explains how learning in Colorado is guided by the Colorado Academic Standards that define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in 10 different content areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share with parents via email or show during parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings or parent education nights</li><li>• Use as a discussion-opener with School Improvement Teams or District Accountability Committees</li></ul>
<a href="#">Guides to the Colorado Academic Standards</a>	These user-friendly guides to the K – 12 Colorado Academic Standards help families better understand the goals and outcomes of the standards. Available in English and Spanish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Send this link to parents via email and newsletters, or print out and provide at parent/teacher conferences</li><li>• Share with members of the School Improvement Team</li></ul>



## Communicating about the Colorado Measures of Academic Success

Resource	Description	Ideas for how to use
Assessment Drop-in articles ( <i>see links in the description</i> )	These newsletter articles help school leaders or teachers communicate with parents about the Colorado Measures of Academic Success tests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Background on CMAS and participation requirements</a></li><li><a href="#">Issues with implementation</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use the content in full, edit as needed, add information about test dates and logistics at your school/district.</li><li>Download from the CDE website; copy into an email, newsletter or website; personalize and send</li></ul>
<a href="#">CMAS Parent Handout</a>	Short document that provides everything parents need to know about CMAS including: what tests their child will take, how much time is spent on testing, the testing windows and how they can help their child prepare for the tests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refer to these to help answer questions from parents</li><li>Link to them in email communications for more information</li><li>Hand out during parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings, etc.</li></ul>
<a href="#">Assessment Key Messaging</a>	These key messages were developed to help school leaders and educators describe the new state tests in a variety of communications for parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Include these messages when drafting emails/newsletters, preparing presentations, and discussing the standards at parent/teacher conferences</li></ul>
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a>	Here are some frequently asked questions and answers on the new Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refer to these Qs and As when responding to parent questions about the new tests</li></ul>
<a href="#">Colorado Measures of Academic Success Video</a>	This two-minute video explains how the new tests allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the skills they need in science, social studies, math and English language arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Share with parents via email or show during parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings or parent education nights.</li><li>Use as a discussion-opener with School Improvement Teams or District Accountability Committees</li></ul>
<a href="#">Sample letter</a>	This letter is a sample for how principals or superintendents can respond to parent opt-out requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use the content in full or edit as needed to address parent concerns about testing</li></ul>
<a href="#">Suggested talking points</a>	These talking points help teachers have a conversation with parents about the new state tests. These include some points about how the new tests set the expectations higher compared to past tests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use as a reference at parent/teacher conferences</li><li>Refer to these when responding to parent questions about the new tests</li></ul>
<a href="#">National PTA's Guide to Assessment</a>	Overview of assessments in Colorado produced by the National PTA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Share with parents via email, parent newsletters or during back to school night or parent/teacher conference</li><li>Share with members of the School Improvement Team</li></ul>



## Communicating about Educator Effectiveness

Resource	Description	Ideas for how to use
<a href="#">Educator Effectiveness Drop-in article</a>	This newsletter article helps school leaders or teachers communicate with parents about educator effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the content in full or edit as needed</li><li>• Download from the CDE website; copy into an email, newsletter or website; personalize and send</li></ul>
<a href="#">Educator Effectiveness Fact Sheets</a>	These short documents provide a high-level understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Senate Bill 10-191</li><li>• Colorado State Model Evaluation System</li><li>• Evaluations for Specialized Service Professionals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer to these to help answer questions from parents</li><li>• Link to them in email communications for more information</li><li>• Hand out during back to school night or parent/teacher conference</li></ul>
<a href="#">Educator Effectiveness Key Messaging</a>	These key messages were developed to help school leaders and educators describe educator effectiveness efforts in a variety of communications for parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They can aid in drafting emails/newsletters, preparing presentations, and discussing the standards at parent/teacher conferences</li></ul>
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a>	These frequently asked questions and answers on educator effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer to these Qs and As when responding to parent questions</li></ul>
<a href="#">Educator Evaluations Video</a>	This two- and a half-minute video explains how helping teachers to be the best they can be – helps students be the best they can be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share with parents via email or show during parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings or parent education nights.</li><li>• Use as a discussion-opener with School Improvement Teams or District Accountability Committees</li></ul>