



Below is a potential event that your district/BOCES may consider hosting to help parents better understand the new state tests, Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS). CDE is providing these ideas to help support districts/BOCES in this transitional phase. These are optional ideas for consideration.

Before the Event

1. Send an invitation to parents announcing the time and place of the event. You can use this template:

Email subject: Parent Workshop -- Preparing for State Tests

Join us for a parent workshop on preparing for state tests!

This spring our third- through 11th-grade students will take Colorado Measures of Academic Success tests in English and math. In addition, fourth- and seventh-graders will take the social studies test and fifth- and eighth-graders will take the science test.

Join us for an interactive evening to help your child prepare. We'll discuss tips for setting your child up for success and we'll offer a chance to take the practice tests in English and math. These new tests are more interactive and engaging than the tests you'll remember from your own school years!

2. Identify several classrooms or computer labs that have adequate devices for parents to experience CMAS tests. Work with your district assessment coordinator (if available), to ensure technology meets the requirements of the testing platforms.

Event Night

1. Begin the event by having the principal discuss why we have new state tests, why they are different, why they are an improvement from old tests, etc.
 - You may want to use this PowerPoint presentation
www.cde.state.co.us/communications/takethetestpp
 - You may want to play this foundational video on CMAS at the beginning of the event:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr93PxkVZ6U#t=124>
2. Then, dismiss the group and ask them to experience taking a test. You may decide to dedicate a classroom to a specific content area so that parents can choose which subject they want to experience.
 - To access the practice tests for all four content areas (math, English language arts, science and social studies), visit: www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/CMASPracticeTest
3. Have an educator available in the classrooms to answer questions or walk through practice items together.
 - You may want to have your staff use these talking points as a resource:
www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/cmastalkingpoints-parentteacher
4. Encourage parents to take home information on the new tests.
 - Handout on new state tests:
www.cde.state.co.us/communications/cmasparenthandout
 - National PTA's Guide to Assessment
www.cde.state.co.us/communications/assessmenttoolkitptaguide
 - Denver Post article on hours spent on state tests:
<http://blogs.denverpost.com/coloradoclassroom/2015/02/03/many-hours-devoted-testing-easy-answer/4398/>