

# Individual Career and Academic Plans in CO

(excerpted from CO Department of Education, ICAP webpage)

## History and Context

### 2008- CAP4K

In response to the “widening achievement gap, unacceptably high dropout rates throughout the state, unacceptably low numbers of high school graduates who continue into and successfully complete higher education and an unacceptably high need for remediation among those who continue into higher education,” the Colorado legislature passed the most sweeping reform law in its history, Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K). The goal of CAP4K was to align Colorado’s preschool through postsecondary education system calling for new standards and assessments for Colorado’s children, with a focus on both school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness.

### 2009 – Senate Bill 09-256

Additional laws were passed, which led to the creation of several education reform initiatives to be implemented by school districts across the state. In 2009, Senate Bill 09-256 was enacted into law with a requirement all students grades 9 - 12 would have access to a process within their high school to create and manage an individual career and academic plan (ICAP.)

### 2010 – Rules for ICAP

The state board of education adopted rules to define the requirements and processes for districts, which included the mandate that all school districts develop an ICAP implementation plan by September 2011.

### 2011 – Milestones and Survey

To guide and assist districts in the development and implementation of the ICAP, ICAP milestones and indicators were developed for each grade level grades 9 – 12.

### 2013 – Graduation Guidelines and the ICAP work group

The state board of education adopted Colorado’s graduation guidelines in May 2013. ICAP is embedded in these guidelines. Authorized by CDE, an ICAP work group was formed. The work group, including stakeholders from across the state, was charged with accomplishing the following tasks:

- Identify opportunities, challenges and best/promising practices
- Develop implementation recommendations
- Explore and outline resources and tools
- Align skills, abilities and knowledge that are valued by business, industry and higher education.
- Outline systematic pathways for students to explore and develop these skills
- Identify stakeholder connections and messages
- Maintain a written record of implementation recommendations, tools and resources, best/promising practices and relevant discussions

CDE began researching current and promising practices and compiled resources and tools for ICAP implementation. A survey was conducted to gauge the status of ICAP in districts across the state.

## **2014 – ICAP Refresh and Recommendations**

The work and recommendations of the ICAP work group were presented to the State Board in December 2014.

ICAP has a strong, intentional connection with readiness for career and college. Also, ICAP is aligned with other postsecondary workforce readiness (PWR) programs in Colorado.

ICAP is:

- An expectation for high school graduation beginning in the 2014-15 academic year with graduation guidelines
- A key element of PWR that many districts and high school reference as a tool within their unified improvement plan (UIP)
- Required for all students and reinforced by programs, including concurrent enrollment, Accelerating Students through Concurrent ENrollment (ASCENT) and initial career and technical education (CTE)
- Connected with the Colorado Academic Standards through the academic and 21st century skills; components
- Embedded in multiple educator effectiveness rubrics as a student artifact and educator process
- Benchmarked by employers; companies across Colorado continually reinforce their high expectations of student's ability to articulate their transferable skills
- Connected with individualized education programs (IEP), advanced learning plans (ALP) and career and technical education and integrated with students' industry career pathways

## **A Meaningful ICAP for all Colorado Districts and Charter Schools**

- Begins in ninth grade as an annual process; schools can voluntarily choose to begin ICAP in sixth grade.
- Is captured in an electronic or paper format to be saved with the student's record.
- Encompasses individual/self-discovery, career exploration, academic planning and personal financial literacy.