



# Stallion Times

Carbon Valley Secondary Academy's Online Newsletter

February 2009

## The CSAPs are Coming, the CSAPs are Coming!



CSAP testing is coming soon, beginning March 11<sup>th</sup>, and we are looking forward to showing off our talented CVSA students. CSAP testing gives us an important set a data that will be used to evaluate the strengths of our students and our curriculum. Teachers have been working to prepare our students all through the year and we are intensifying our efforts to help students focus on the impending tests.

Ms. Judson has been helping students understand their specific data that was gathered from MAP testing and what the students can do to help raise their scores. We believe our students are well prepared to be very successful. To help them out, we would like to make sure that they come to school rested and on time, having eaten a nutritious breakfast, and focused on doing well. Through good support, our students will know the success they deserve.

See page 3 of this newsletter for additional CSAP information and a testing schedule.

## CSAP Testing Volunteer Opportunity

We would like to have some good snacks at the school in the morning to help the kids get ready for testing. We are asking the parents for some donations and some volunteer time as well. You could do simple crackers, fruit, milk and juice or if anyone out there is inspired to do a pancake feast, breakfast dishes, or burritos, feel free to do so. Please contact Michelle Bolitho at bolithom@cvamail.com if you have any questions. We ask that you bring your donations in the day before so that we can have them ready that morning. Please bring your kids to school by 7:30 am so they can partake in the food and feel relaxed and ready to go.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

There will be no school on Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup> in order to have parent/teacher conferences. Parents must make an appointment to speak with the teachers. Parents can either drop by Mrs. Bolitho's CVSA office or email her at bolithom@cvamail.com with the time they wish to do conferences.

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## From Principal Trautwein's Desk

February is the beginning of the busy season for schools. Students and teachers are working hard to cover a lot of material. We also begin ramping up our efforts for preparing for CSAPs next month. I begin planning for next year with schedules and class requests. Soon we will begin asking parents and students to renew their commitments to CVA and CVSA for next year.

With all the activity going on at school, it is easy to get tired and forget about what makes our school strong – community. We are successful because of the support we give one another, students helping students, parents helping teachers, teachers helping students. It is important that we take full advantage of our community and pull together to better the education of our students.

The easiest way to show your support is to keep the lines of communications open. Take the time to talk with your child about school and school work and provide a positive role model for them. Talk with their teachers about how things are going, and listen to them and give them your opinions. Finally, come talk with me; my “door” is always open.

I strongly encourage you to drop by for ‘T’ Time at JJ’s Corner (formerly The Perfect Cup) on Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. I’ll buy the coffee and discuss whatever is on your mind. It is a great way to network with other parents and talk about the school’s future. I hope you will join me.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Trautwein - Principal  
Carbon Valley Secondary Academy

## Important Feb. Dates

**Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>** – Parent/Teacher Conferences – No School

**Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>** – ‘T’ Time with Trautwein – 8:30 am at JJ’s Corner

**Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>** – Parent Information Meeting with Mr. Trautwein and Dr. Murphy – CVA – 6:00 pm

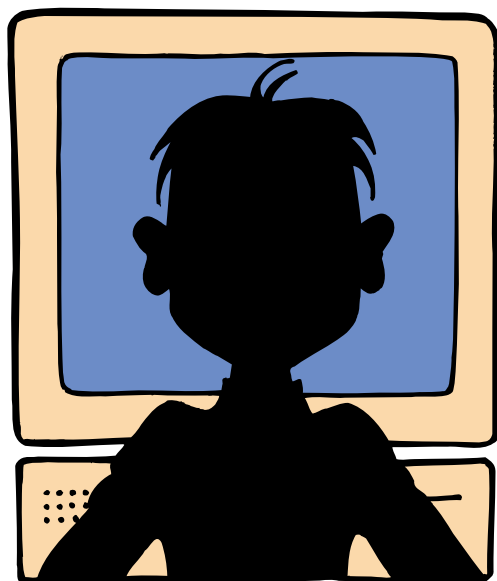
**Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>** – First Annual Sweet Skates Dance – 5:00 – 9:00 pm in the CVA gym.

**Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>** – President’s Day – No School

**Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>** – Student Government – 3:00 – 4:00 pm (Students and parents are encouraged to attend)

**Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>** – ‘T’ Time with Trautwein – 8:30 am at JJ’s Corner

**Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Board of Directors Work Session Meeting at 6:00 pm; Board of Directors Regular Meeting at 7:00 pm in CVA Harvard Room



## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Websites

Students in Mr. Tate's 9<sup>th</sup> grade technology class have created their first websites using Dreamweaver. Each student was tasked with creating a CVSA promotional website. Students discussed the school as a whole, the teachers, the classes offered, student life, and extra-curricular activities.

Students had a great time planning, designing, and posting these sites. They are truly something for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to be proud of!

In time, there will be links to these student websites from the CVSA website so make sure to check the CVSA website often.

## Additional CSAP Testing News and Schedule

Dear Parents,

Believe it or not, CSAP testing is right around the corner. For your convenience, the calendar for CVSA testing is shown below.

Please help us by getting your student(s) to school on time and avoid scheduling appointments or vacations during this time. As always, it is so important for your student to get a good night sleep and eat a hearty breakfast each morning. It fuels the brain!

In order to keep parents informed and involved, I've attached a useful tool from the Colorado Department of Education website (see page 5 of this newsletter). By using the "Preparing Your Child for the CSAP" you will be helping your student succeed. Your student's teacher is doing all he or she can at school to ease stress, anxiety, and teach curriculum, which prepares students for these exams. In addition, there is much that parents can do at home. My hope is each of you will find encouraging ways of talking to your student about tests and help him or her be successful.

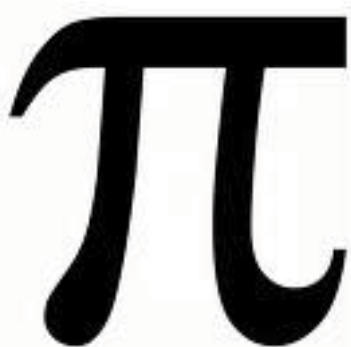
The attached pamphlet should answer many of your questions, but if you have additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me via email or phone.

Thank you. It is a pure pleasure to work with your children.

Sincerely,

Stacy Judson  
Instructional Data Specialist  
judsons@cvamail.com

CVSA CSAP Testing Schedule		
Date and Time	Subject	Grade(s)
Wednesday, March 11 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:30 am	Writing	6 – 9
Wednesday, March 11 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 – 11:00 am	Writing	6 – 9
Thursday, March 12 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:30 am	Writing	6 – 9
Tuesday, March 17 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:30 am	Reading	6 – 9
Tuesday, March 17 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 – 11:00 am	Reading	6 – 9
Wednesday, March 18 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:30 am	Reading	6 – 9
Wednesday, March 18 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 – 11:05 am	Math	6 – 9
Thursday, March 19 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:35 am	Math	6 – 9
Thursday, March 19 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 – 11:05 am	Math	6 – 9
Tuesday, March 24 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:35 am	Science	8
Tuesday, March 24 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 – 11:05 am	Science	8
Wednesday, March 25 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30 – 9:35 am	Science	8
Thursday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	Makeups	all



### Pi Day

Pi Day this year is on March 14<sup>th</sup>, which is on a Saturday. So, we are planning our celebrations for Friday March 13<sup>th</sup>. After lunch we will have pi day activities going on in all of our classrooms for the kids to cycle through. We will all get to eat pie . . . and if everyone is willing . . . we could let the kids have target practice again! We encourage all parents to join us for this fun event. Additional information will be coming soon but mark your calendars now!

## Sweet Skates Dance

Dear Parents,

We will be having our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual "Sweet Skates Dance" on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm in the gym at CVA.

We would like to create a special time for parents and kids so they can get to know each other while having fun at the same time. While we are a school that focuses on high academic achievements, we know how to relax and have a good time!

However, we need you . . . yes, we need volunteers to help us make this a great night for our kids. There is a lot to do—we need volunteers and donations in the areas of drinks and snacks. We would appreciate help in setup and cleanup as well.

We will also need volunteers for our "Picture Booth". If any of you have photography skills, we need you!!

Tickets will be on sale starting Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, with Mrs. Bolitho, secretary at CVSA. The tickets will be sold for \$2.00. This is the entry fee for the dance.

What a fun and exciting way to get some volunteer hours. If you would like to be a part of this exciting event please contact me at [juanita.silva@mesanetworks.net](mailto:juanita.silva@mesanetworks.net) or feel free to call CVSA at 303-485-7729

Thank you,

Juanita Silva  
Volunteer Coordinator



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2008/2009 Honor Roll

### **GOLD Honor Roll (4.0 & above GPA):**

Amanda Bagnall	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Samantha Garcia	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade

### **High Honors Roll (3.5 – 3.9 GPA):**

Joseph Rener	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Alexander Kochheiser	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Dominique Connolly	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Theron Friss	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
McKina Jewell	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Acacia Stephen	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Kaela Ursich	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Andrew Biggs	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Noah Bolitho	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Samantha Garcia	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Kirsten Kochheiser	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Cristel Lemming	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Antonia Villani	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade

### **Honor Roll (3.0 – 3.4 GPA):**

Silvana Berdiales	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Conner Ashley	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Angel Silva	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Christopher Yancey	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Christopher Davis	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Daniel Hess	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Abrianna Judson	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Rory Loveridge	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Angel Rangel	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Robert Rexroad	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Thomas Wallace	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade

## **Congratulations Students and Teachers!**



## Preparing Your Child for the CSAP

### Information Strategies

- Make sure that you understand why schools give the CSAP and how the information will be used. This pamphlet answers some questions that you may have about the CSAP.
- Find out when the school gives the CSAP so that you can ensure that your child is present for the test.
- Ask whether the school gives students practice in taking the CSAP. If so, be sure that your child participates in these practice sessions.
- Ask your child's teacher for information about activities that you can do at home to help your child learn academic content.

### Homework Aids

- When your child has homework, make sure that it gets done.
- Plan a time and a space for your child to study.
- Have your child sit at a table or desk with good light when he/she studies, not in front of the television.
- If your child never or rarely brings work home, find out why. Arrange a meeting with your child's teacher to discuss the homework policy.
- Help your child understand that spacing studying over days or weeks is better preparation than trying to "cram" the night before.

### Physical Preparation

- Make sure that your child gets a good rest the nights before the test. Children who are tired are less able to pay attention in class or to handle the demands of the test.

- Feed your child a nourishing breakfast on the mornings of the test. Hunger can detract from good test performance.
- Plan ahead to ensure that your child is present and on time for the test. Do not plan any medical or dental appointments on testing days.

### Ask Your Child To:

- Read the directions carefully when the teacher gives out the test.
- Read the questions carefully and all of the answer choices.

### Remind Your Child:

- If you don't know an answer to a question, skip it and go on to the next question.
- If there is time at the end of the test, return to the unanswered question.
- It is helpful to eliminate some of the answer choices that you think are wrong.
- It is better to tackle each question one-at-a-time, rather than thinking about the whole test at once.
- If you finish early, check your answers.

**The best preparation for the CSAP is to ensure that your child masters the Colorado Model Content Standards on which the test is based.**

### You can help by:

- Monitoring your child's performance during the year. Ask questions if you don't understand the reasons why your child received a certain grade.
- Obtaining information about the Colorado Model Content Standards. Your child's teacher or guidance counselor can provide you with this information.
- Telling your child that you believe that he/she can do well and succeed in school. Stress that students get good grades by hard work and not just because "some students are smart." Offer praise and encouragement for achievement and improvement.
- Using television wisely. Limit viewing to 2 hours or less on a school night.
- Establishing a daily routine for meals, homework, chores, bedtime, and family talk.



## Contributing Agencies:



### Colorado Department of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203  
Phone: 303-866-6929  
Fax: 303-866-6680  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us>

### Colorado State Board of Education

Jared Polis, Chairman  
Randy DeHoff, Vice Chairman  
Christine Baca  
Evie Hudak  
Peggy Littleton  
D. Rico Munn  
Clair Orr  
Pamela Jo Suckla

William J. Moloney, Secretary to the State Board of Education, Commissioner of Education



## A Guide for Parents

"The Colorado Department of Education, the Student Assessment Unit, and Colorado educators are working in partnership with parents to ensure that all children will excel."



## What is CSAP?

CSAP stands for Colorado Student Assessment Program. It is a test designed to measure student achievement in relationship to the Colorado Model Content Standards. These standards are expectations specifying what students should know at particular points in their education. As a result, CSAP provides a series of snapshots of student achievement in reading, writing, math, and science as they move through grades 3–10.

## Who writes the CSAP assessments?

CSAP is developed collaboratively by the testing contractor and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Teachers, curriculum specialists, and community members from across the state are involved in constructing each new assessment.

## How long does the test take?

Each subject area of the CSAP (reading, writing, math and science) takes three testing sessions. Third grade reading and writing are the exception, which take two testing sessions. Testing sessions last about an hour.

## Who scores the tests?

Multiple choice questions are machine-scored. The open-ended written responses are scored by well-trained certified scorers. All the scorers have college degrees.

## How did the State decide who would be advanced, proficient, partially proficient, or unsatisfactory?

The performance levels were established by Colorado teachers from across the state. Each question/item was discussed in order to specify knowledge, skills, and abilities that students should have to correctly answer the question or item. *A complete examination of this question is available on CDE's website: [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us).*

## Is my child required to take the CSAP?

Yes, every student enrolled in the grades for which there is a CSAP assessment is expected to take it.

## My child is a special needs student. Does he/she have to take the CSAP?

Appropriate accommodations are allowed to assist students with special needs in taking the assessment. Each school district determines when it is not appropriate to administer the CSAP to certain students. Students with significant disabilities may have a different level of expectations and would not benefit by taking the CSAP. In Spring 2001, an alternate assessment program (CSAP-A) was available for grade 4 students. Alternate assessments for all other grades will be added in the future.

## Can I see or get a copy of the test my child takes?

Before the test—No! Only those involved in developing and giving the test can see it before the students take it.

After the test—Twenty-five percent of the items are released to the public so one can see actual examples of CSAP test questions. A supervised review of the test can be arranged by the Student Assessment Unit, Colorado Department of Education.

## My child tells me that the test was too hard and too long. How can that be fair?

All CSAP questions are based on the Colorado Model Content Standards. These standards in turn are a part of schools' curricula. As a result, the skills students need to master to be successful on CSAP should be a part of each student's daily school experiences. One reason some students comment on the difficulty of the test is that CSAP measures high standards which makes it more difficult than many other tests students take.

## If my child does not make an effort to do well on his/her test, how does it affect his/her grade?

This decision is made at each school or district. However, no matter what decision the school or district makes, it is important that all students give their best on this test so they can demonstrate what they know and can do.

## Why do schools take so much time to get kids ready for and to take the CSAP? Are teachers just teaching to the test and ignoring other important skills and subjects such as social studies, art, music, and physical education?

Because CSAP was designed to assess how well students have met the Colorado Model Content Standards, teachers should be preparing students for

CSAP through their everyday curriculum. It is expected that teachers will teach all content areas for which there are state standards. The skills in one subject area, such as reading, are supported by the standards in all other content areas. These content areas include reading, writing, math, science, history, geography, civics, economics, foreign language, music, and physical education. As an example of curriculum integration, while students are reading in any of the content areas such as math, history, or art, they use this information to understand a math problem or to write reports about history or art or to reflect on their learning. This information in turn may be a point for classroom discussions.

## I am disappointed that my child scored "Partially Proficient." Does that mean he/she failed the test and is below grade level in that subject?

The Colorado Model Content Standards are rigorous standards. Colorado educators who set the performance levels held very high expectations for all students. Many students who perform at the partially proficient level are demonstrating considerable academic skills and abilities; however, their performance on CSAP was not consistently high enough to meet the CSAP rigorous standards.

## New State Testing Schedule

		Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006
Grade 3	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Grade 4	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Grade 5	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Science*	✓	✓	✓
Grade 6	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Grade 7	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Grade 8	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Science	✓	✓	✓
Grade 9	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Grade 10	CSAP Reading	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Writing	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
	CSAP Science*	✓	✓	✓
Grade 11	ACT Assessment	✓	✓	✓

\*Under current legislation (HB 02-1306) grades 5 and 10 in Science will be assessed in the 2006 CSAP administration.

## What happens with the results of the CSAP? Who gets to see my child's CSAP score?

Results will generate information about how well schools and students are performing statewide, using a common yardstick—the Colorado Model Content Standards. The Colorado Department of Education is required by law to report CSAP results for the state and for all local school districts. Individual student scores are released only to the school and school district. Teachers are encouraged to share this information with each student's parents. School, district, and statewide scores are public records; individual scores are not public records.

## Which test is most important: CSAP, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)/ TerraNova? My child did well on one and not the others. Which tests should we believe in?

The tests should be used in a body of evidence to determine a child's academic achievement. Norm-referenced tests such as the ITBS or TerraNova give parents and teachers an idea about how students compare to other students in the nation. The CSAP evaluates each individual student's knowledge of Colorado Model Content Standards and his/her ability to apply that knowledge.

## What are accommodations?

An accommodation allows students to have access to the CSAP without changing the expectations. A student can use an accommodation if he/she has received that same accommodation in class for at least three months. For example, a teacher may read a math problem to a student. The accommodation is allowed for math because the student is not being tested on his/her reading ability. The accommodation is not allowed for reading because the student is being tested on his/her reading ability.

## Is CSAP available in Spanish?

The CSAP assessments are available in Spanish for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading and writing.

## What happens if a school does not score well on the CSAP?

According to recent legislation, low-performing schools can obtain assistance from the Colorado Department of Education in the development of a School Improvement Plan. Consistently low-performing schools eventually will be converted to charter schools.