

SUPPORTING all Students

Introduction to the Colorado Academic Standards

The standards reflect why we teach and can embolden, validate, and/or transform our collective efforts to create the education we want for all students.

Design Principles of the Standards

- **Created** by Coloradans for Colorado students, the Colorado Academic Standards provide a road map to help ensure students are successful in college, careers, and life.
- **Aimed** at improving what students learn and how they learn in ten content areas (Comprehensive Health and Physical Education; Dance; Drama and Theatre Arts; Mathematics; Music; Reading, Writing, and Communicating; Science; Social Studies; Visual Arts; World Languages).
- **Constructed** backwards, starting with the competencies of prepared high school graduates, to create learning expectations for what students should understand, know, and be able to do at each grade level and in each content area

Instructional Priorities of the Standards

Rigor - Systematic, methodical, and deep engagement to:

- ❖ develop concepts and skills in each content area.
- ❖ compel the use of inquiry, critical thinking, and creative processes.

Relevancy-Authentic and meaningful experiences that:

- ❖ include real world scenarios that necessitate individual and group problem-solving.
- ❖ require the application and transfer of knowledge, concepts and skill across situations and contexts.

Disciplinary Literacy-Content-specific texts and communication processes/strategies that:

- ❖ facilitate working, thinking, talking, arguing as mathematicians, artists, scientists, readers/writers, historians, etc.

Ultimate Goals of the Standards

The Standards prioritize:

All content areas
Rigor
Relevancy
Disciplinary Literacy

So that every student's educational experience is:

→ Comprehensive
→ Challenging
→ Connected
→ Choice-broadening

Background/Timeline

- **2008** Colorado Legislature enacts Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids mandating revised preschool through high school standards
- **2008-2009** Hundreds of Coloradans author and provide feedback on the new standards in ten content areas
- **Dec 2009** Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) adopts the Colorado Academic Standards
- **Aug 2010** Colorado SBE adopts the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to be incorporated into Colorado's Mathematics and Reading, Writing, and Communicating (RWC) standards
- **Dec 2010** Colorado SBE adopts the improved Colorado Academic Standards for Mathematics and RWC which include the CCSS
- **2011-2013** Colorado school districts and teachers prepare for implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards
- **2013-2014 school year** Full implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards

Summaries of the content-area specific goals of the Colorado Academic Standards

The Arts (Visual, Music, Drama/Theatre, Dance)

The Arts Standards reflect the innate creativity and rigorous cognition, required to produce a work of art, all students deserve to experience. The standards challenge the elitist perception sometimes associated with the arts, asking all students to stretch their thinking and participate in the creative process inherent in each arts discipline (Know/Comprehend, Create, Perform/Present, and Refine/Critique).

Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

The Comprehensive Health and Physical Education standards focus on personal decision-making around emotional and social well-being, positive communication, healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco, drug, and alcohol abuse prevention and violence prevention. The standards underscore important skills for navigating today's society with its complex and often confusing messages around health, beauty, and happiness.

Mathematics

The Mathematics standards compel us to make mathematics relevant to students by moving beyond mere answer getting to doing the work of mathematicians. The standards emphasize the development of students' abilities to use mathematics to represent their lived experiences and to simplify and explain complex phenomena.

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

The Reading, Writing, and Communicating standards invite students to use texts to better understand others' experiences in the world and to command language in order to articulate their own perspective on the human experience. The standards intentionally reflect the read-write connection and the relationship between critically consuming texts to build knowledge and producing texts to convey knowledge.

Science

The Science standards reflect a new vision for science education that connects scientific knowledge, in authentic ways, to real-world problem solving and innovation. The standards forefront scientific practices that use and go beyond the inquiry process to arrive at reasoned and justifiable rationales for interpretations of phenomena/events.

Social Studies

The Social Studies standards guide students in developing the knowledge and skills to make sound judgments, understand historical and contemporary experiences/events, analyze interpersonal and global tensions, and actively participate in the complex world in which they live. The standards support the use of reasoned and reflective thinking to engage and collaborate with others in an increasingly diverse and interdependent world.

Where can I learn more?

- **The Office of Standards and Instructional Support website (www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction) provides a variety of resources for those wishing to learn more about the Colorado Academic Standards.**
- **Content specific resources are available on individual subwebs (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas>)**
- For any additional questions, contact Brian Sevier at Sevier_B@cde.state.co.us