



Colorado Academic Standards

The Colorado Academic Standards help ensure that every Colorado student has access to a high-quality education. The standards describe what students should know and be able to do to prepare them to be active citizens and successful in higher education and/or the workforce. By setting rigorous and relevant standards across a range of content areas, Colorado's schools set high expectations for students while providing them with opportunities to become well-rounded students who are ready for the workforce and active participation in a democracy.

Standards and Accountability

Standards are the foundation of Colorado's educational accountability system, established by the 2008 legislation known as Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K). Other elements of the accountability system include Colorado's assessment system, school readiness, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and diploma endorsements.



Standards Review and Revision

The Colorado State Board of Education has authority over the Colorado Academic Standards. Colorado statute also requires local school boards to adopt local standards that meet or exceed the state's academic standards, along with curriculum aligned with those standards. The local board may choose to adopt the state's standards as its own. The State Board of Education is required to review and revise the academic standards every six years, with about one-third of the content areas being revised every two years. With each revision, the State Board must ensure that the standards are aligned with postsecondary and workforce readiness and comparable in scope, relevance, and rigor to the highest national and international standards. Colorado revises its standards in staggered six-year cycles:

2022 & Every 6 Years After	2024 & Every 6 Years After	2026 & Every 6 Years After
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dance• Drama & Theatre Arts• Music• Social Studies• Visual Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computer Science• English Language Proficiency• Physical Education• World Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive Health• Mathematics• Reading, Writing, and Communicating• Science

Staff at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) facilitate the State Board's review and revision of the Colorado Academic Standards. CDE follows six principles for standards revision, believing the process should be (1) transparent, (2) inclusive, (3) research-informed, (4) consistent, (5) substantive, and (6) improvement-oriented.

CDE engages a wide variety of stakeholders in the review and revision process. The process includes meeting with interested persons throughout the state, soliciting information from schools and school boards, collaborating with state and national organizations, and convening revision committees.

Content Areas

The Arts (Dance, Drama & Theater Arts, Music, and Visual Arts)

The arts standards reflect the innate creativity and rigorous cognition required to produce a work of art that 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.

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.

Computer Science

The computer science standards focus on high school-level computer science principles, such as computation thinking, coding, systems hardware and software, and ethical use of technology. The implementation of these standards is voluntary for districts.

Mathematics

The math standards compel us to make math relevant to students by moving beyond mere answer and instead getting to do the work of mathematicians. The standards emphasize the development of students' abilities to use math 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 solve real-world problems and innovate. The standards' forefront scientific practices 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 to develop 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. These standards also include expectations for personal financial literacy.

World Languages

The world language standards guide students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to progress through various levels of language proficiency.