



Preschool

To support families, communities, and teachers in realizing the goals of the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), this guide provides an overview of the learning expectations for preschool. This guide offers some learning experiences students may engage in at school that may also be supported at home.



The comprehensive health standards in the elementary years focus on developing individual skills to enhance physical, emotional, and social wellness and using those individual skills in family, school, and community environments. In each grade, the standards ask students to investigate healthy eating and living habits, explore positive communication strategies, examine effective decision-making, and identify ways to ensure personal and community safety.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Physical and Personal Wellness:** Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy foods; develop self-management skills for personal hygiene.
- **Social and Emotional Wellness:** Develop healthy relationships and interactions with adults; develop self-concept, self-efficacy, and regulation skills; develop healthy expression of emotions.
- **Prevention and Risk Management:** Identify ways to be safe while at play; respect personal space and boundaries.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Distinguishing foods on a continuum from most healthy to least healthy.
- Demonstrating the ability to identify and choose healthy food.
- Completing personal care tasks such as using clean tissues, washing hands, handling food hygienically, brushing teeth, and choosing appropriate clothing for the weather.
- Demonstrating socially appropriate behavior with peers and adults, such as helping, sharing, and taking turns.
- Resolving conflict with peers alone and/or with adult intervention as appropriate.
- Demonstrating age-appropriate independence in decision making regarding activities and materials.
- Expressing a range of emotions appropriately.
- Following basic safety rules in the classroom.
- Seeking help from a parent or trusted adult for help and support.



The dance standards in the elementary years focus on general dance knowledge and skills to ensure a solid foundation for more specialized dance studies. In each grade, students explore various dance forms, gain body awareness and movement skills, develop problem-solving skills through dance making, and respond to dance performances.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Movement, Technique, and Performance (Perform/Present):** Participate in dance activities such as watching or exploring dances; perform dance steps with purpose by responding to rhythms and patterns; use movement to express what they are feeling.
- **Create, Compose, and Choreograph (Create):** Work together or alone to create and improvise (explore) movement to a variety of stimuli.
- **Historical and Cultural Context (Know/Comprehend):** Experience simple folk dances with guidance from a teacher.
- **Reflect, Connect, and Respond (Critique/Evaluate/Refine):** Express personal reactions to viewed or performed dances; recognize when/where dance is seen in daily life; describe a dance step from 2-3 different dance forms.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Copying movements demonstrated by others; participating in dance games.
- Moving expressively (showing emotion through gestures and/or facial expressions).
- Demonstrating physical awareness by moving freely and creatively; experimenting with a variety of dance movements (skip, dance, jump, gallop, side steps).
- Performing simple folk dances; describing dance steps from varying dance styles and discussing how various dance performances make them feel.
- Discussing dance in everyday life.
- Respectfully watching/listening/responding to recorded and live dance production.



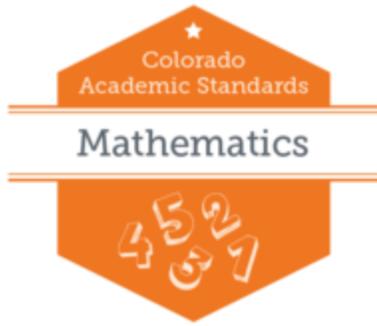
The drama and theatre arts standards in the elementary years focus on general drama knowledge/skills and basic theatre elements to ensure a solid foundation for more specialized study in later grades, including technical theatre, creative movement, improvisation, acting/writing/directing, and film studies. Students discover techniques; perform theatrical works; explore characters, plot, and themes; investigate dramatic texts; discover and describe personal theatre preferences; and explore constructive ways to reflect and respond to various dramatic works.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Create (Create):** Use facial expressions and movement to express thoughts and feelings about one's self, various characters, or environments; use dialogue, movements, facial expressions, and objects to tell a story.
- **Perform (Perform/Present):** Use creativity and imagination to manipulate materials (use classroom chairs as trees in a forest or a pencil as a magic wand); use background knowledge and imagination to take on different roles in dramatic play situations.
- **Critically Respond (Know/Comprehend and Critique/Evaluate/Refine):** Respond to dramatic experiences through reflective questions, relate theatre terms to everyday life (characters-people, costumes-clothes, sets-locations), and connect personal experiences to dramatic play.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Using a variety of vocal sounds (loud and angry, soft and meek) to imitate characters from stories or movies.
- Showing how people use their bodies and faces to show how they feel (happy, sad, excited, etc.).
- Using pantomime (body movements and facial expressions) to tell a story without words.
- Expressing how they felt or what they thought while watching or performing in a creative drama experience.



The mathematics standards in the elementary years focus on number and operations. Ideas from measurement and geometry help students learn about numbers and quantities. In each grade, students make sense of problems, explain their thinking, and describe their world with mathematics.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Number and Quantity:** Count verbally up to at least 20; answer "How many?" questions for 10 objects; associate a quantity with written numerals up to 5.
- **Algebra and Functions:** Understand addition as adding more to a group and subtraction as taking away from a group.
- **Data, Statistics, and Probability:** Use language like shortest, heavier, biggest, or later to compare quantities, sizes, and times; put up to five objects in order of their size.
- **Geometry:** Name circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles and describe them in terms of their number of sides, angles, or their relative size ("the square is bigger than the circle").

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Practicing counting out loud or answering questions like, "What comes after three?"
- Playing games that require counting the number of spaces to move on a game board.
- Comparing groups of objects by the relative number of pieces ("more" or "fewer") or comparing objects by their size ("bigger," "taller," "heavier," etc.).
- Answering simple word problems given verbally, like, "If you have three crackers and you eat one, how many crackers will you have left?"
- Sorting blocks, tiles, or other objects by their sizes and shapes.



The music standards in the elementary years focus on general music knowledge and skills to ensure a solid foundation for the opportunity for more specialized musical study in later years. In each elementary grade, students investigate and perform various music styles and genres, examine the language of music through identifying and writing simple music notation, consider simple musical composition processes, and develop the ability to describe their own musical preferences as well as critique the music of others.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Expression of Music (Perform/Present):** Respond to music, perform simple songs, and respond to teacher feedback to improve musical skills.
- **Creation of Music (Create):** Improvise music and sound responses to music.
- **Theory of Music (Know/Comprehend):** Recognize a wide variety of sounds and sound sources (voice, instruments); describe and respond to musical elements such as beat (rhythm), tone, speed of music; identify musical opposites-loud/soft, high/low, long/short.
- **Aesthetic Valuation of Music (Appreciate and Understand):** Express feelings experienced when performing or listening to music; recognize music in daily life.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Reacting to different types of music rhythms and patterns through clapping, moving, and playing; demonstrating musical awareness by moving freely and creatively.
- Speaking, chanting, and singing expressively; participating in singing games.
- Experimenting with a variety of instruments (maracas, rhythm sticks, bells, tambourines, drums, sand blocks, and shakers).
- Listening to music from diverse genres (Popular, Blues, Folk, Patriotic); describing music and sources of sound (drums, stringed instruments).
- Discussing or describing connections between music and feelings; discussing music heard in different places (cars, homes, and stores).



The physical education standards in the elementary years focus on enhancing movement concepts and skills, understanding basic health-related components and skill-related components of fitness and how it relates to personal fitness, demonstrating respect, and the ability to follow directions. In each grade, students demonstrate various movement concepts; assess personal behaviors; connect fitness development to body systems; demonstrate respect for self, others, and various physical activity environments; and utilize safety procedures during physical activities.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Movement Competence and Understanding:** Travel in a variety of directions using basic locomotor skills and demonstrate an understanding of personal and general space.
- **Physical and Personal Wellness:** Recognize the positive feelings experienced during an after physical activity.
- **Social and Emotional Wellness:** Demonstrate an understanding of positive social interaction with teachers and peers.
- **Prevention and Risk Management:** Understand basic safety rules and principles.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Moving safely in a large group without bumping into others.
- Performing movements to the rhythm of music.
- Demonstrating the relationship of under, over, behind, next to, through, right, left, up, down, forward, backward, and in front of by using the body and an object.
- Participating in activities that increase the heart rate.
- Participating in activities that require stretching the muscles.
- Demonstrating listening to the teacher during group activities.
- Recognizing basic class rules and protocols.
- Following teacher directions for safe participation in physical activity.



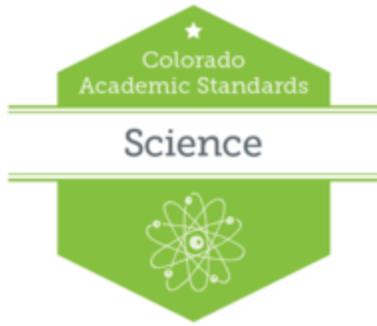
The reading, writing, and communicating standards in preschool are aligned to the expectations within Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines and the latest revision of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. They outline development expectations and indicators of progress for preschool age students in receptive and expressive language; understanding and obtaining meaning from stories and information from books and other texts; phonological awareness; concepts of early decoding; names and sounds associated with alphabetic knowledge; emerging skills to communicate through written representations, symbols, and letters; and asking a question to identify and define a problem and its possible solution.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Attend to language during conversations, songs, stories or other learning experiences; comprehend complex and varied vocabulary; follow two- to three-step directions; participate in conversations of more than three exchanges with peers and adults; use language to express ideas and needs; understand the difference between a question and a statement; practice asking questions and making statements; and, speak in sentences of five or six words.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Show interest in shared reading experiences and looking at books independently; recognize how books are read, such as front-to-back and one page at a time, and recognize basic characteristics such as title, author, and illustrator; identify and discriminate between words in language, separate syllables in words, and sounds and phonemes in language, such as attention to beginning and ending sounds of words and recognition that different words begin or end with the same sound; and, recognize patterns of sounds in songs, storytelling, and poetry through interactions and meaningful experiences.
- **Writing and Composition:** Experiment with writing tools and materials; recognize that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes, such as giving information, sharing stories, or giving an opinion; use scribbles, shapes, pictures, and letters to represent objects, stories, experiences, or ideas; and, copy, trace, or independently write letters or words.
- **Research Inquiry and Design:** Differentiate between questions and statements; and, Identify problems and search for solutions by asking questions during collaborative explorations of the topic; begin to state facts about the topic.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Demonstrating interest in different kinds of literature, such as fiction and nonfiction books and poetry, on a range of topics;
- Making predictions based on illustrations and beginning to identify key features of reality versus fantasy in stories, pictures, and events
- Retelling stories or information from books through conversation, artistic work, creative movement, or drama.
- Asking and answering questions and make comments about print materials.



At an early age, all children have the capacity and the natural desire to observe, explore, and discover the world around them ([NRC, 2012](#)). Mastery of these standards will result in young learners who have a deep understanding of how scientific knowledge can provide solutions to practical problems we see in our world.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Physical Science:** Make observations and describe properties of materials. Recognize the cause and effect relationships between matter and energy.
- **Life Science:** Recognize that all living things have unique characteristics and basic needs and that living things develop in predictable patterns.
- **Earth Science:** Learn about the world around them by observing patterns related to changes in weather, seasons, and day and night. Explore natural objects, like rocks, soil, and sand and their different uses.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Investigating different types of energy by exploring shadows and light, observing the sounds different musical instruments make.
- Discovering what makes an object move faster or slower.
- Looking at patterns in the weather, and keeping track of how the weather changes from day to day.
- Observing and engaging with live animals and plants and toys/stuffed animals and discuss the difference between living and nonliving things.
- Making observations about animals and plants they might see in their local environment.
- Using their senses and simple tools to explore natural materials.
- Making observations about daily weather conditions.



The social studies standards in the elementary years begin with individuals and families and move from there to explorations of neighborhoods, communities, the state of Colorado, and the United States. In each grade, students investigate historical events, examine geographic features and resources, consider economic decision-making processes, and define civic roles and responsibilities.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- Recognize change and sequence over time.
- Develop a spatial understanding of the world around them.
- Understand that individuals have many wants and have to make choices.
- Understand one's relationship to the family and community.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Differentiating between past, present, and future; identifying family or personal events that happened in the past.
- Identifying aspects of the environment such as roads, buildings, trees, gardens, bodies of water, and land formations.
- Explaining how people make money and use that money to make choices among their various wants.
- Discussing similarities and respective differences among people within their classroom and community.



The visual arts standards in preschool focus on experiences and exploration in art-making and with art materials. This helps to develop a foundation and appreciation for visual art. In preschool, students identify art in their daily surroundings, experience that art can be used to represent stories and ideas, explore various art-making processes, and begin to see how art is a part of their community.

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- **Observe and Learn to Comprehend (Know/Comprehend):** Identify art in their day-to-day life and surroundings.
- **Envision and Critique to Reflect (Critique/Evaluate/Refine):** Know that art can be used to represent people, places, things, and ideas. Art can be used to tell a story.
- **Invent and Discover to Create (Create/Present):** Use a range of traditional and non-traditional art materials to create drawings, pictures, or other objects that have personal relevance.
- **Relate and Connect to Transfer (Connect/Apply/Transfer):** Understand that art and artists have an important role in communities.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Bringing attention to patterns, shapes, lines, or colors found in objects and design inside as well as in nature and the outdoor environment; commenting or drawing attention to a feature of a food item or packaging at snack time; noticing and discussing the illustrations in picture books, posters, or art in hallways as inspiration for making original art; helping decide which of their artworks should be displayed; pointing out images of personal preference and connect to stories about their life.
- Telling the story of their own work; showing or telling the steps used in making their own art; using the illustrations of books as inspiration to create their own story.
- Exploring and experimenting with a combination of materials and trying a variety of techniques; describing their artwork; listening to stories and creating a work of art that represents the story; learning by discovery, such as by finding out what happens when colors are mixed rather than being told ahead of time; making choices about their artwork and envisioning what might happen if they make changes or additions to a work of art.
- Explaining what an artist does; identifying some of the activities in which artists participate and materials artists might use; requesting and using names for art materials while working on art (such as, but not limited to, paint, colored pencils, pastels, clay, yarn, wooden blocks, crayons, fabric, etc.).



The world language standards are organized in language proficiency range levels. Language proficiency refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language to understand, speak, read, write, and listen in real-life situations. Colorado's standards provide guidance for the introduction of a new language (novice-low) through the minimum proficiency range deemed postsecondary and workforce ready (advanced-low).

Expectations for Preschool Students:

- Understand and answer a few simple questions on very familiar topics using practiced or memorized words in the **Interpersonal Mode**.
- Understand the general topic in a very familiar context by recognizing practiced or memorized words in texts that are spoken, written, and supported by visuals in the **Interpretive Mode**.
- Name very familiar people, places, and objects using practiced or memorized words, phrases, and with the help of visuals in the **Presentational Mode**.

Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:

- Recognizing greeting, farewells, and other expressions of courtesy.
- Following routine oral instructions and direction by responding appropriately.
- Listening attentively and responding with words or appropriate gestures to songs, poems, and short stories.
- Responding nonverbally to oral directions and routine requests in the classroom and public places.
- Reproducing short memorized responses for classroom activities and beyond.