

# 2020 Colorado Academic Standards



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## Fact Sheet

### SUPPORTING all Students

Colorado Academic Standards reflect instructional priorities valued by Coloradans and provide a road map to help ensure students are successful in college, careers and life.

#### Design Principles of the Standards

- **Created** by Coloradans for Colorado students.
- **Aimed** at improving what students learn and how they learn in 10 content areas (comprehensive health and physical education; dance; drama and theatre arts; math; 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

**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:*

*So that every student's educational experience is:*

All Content Areas	→	Comprehensive
Rigor	→	Challenging
Relevancy	→	Congruent
Relationships	→	Connected
Disciplinary Literacy	→	Choice-broadening

#### Background/Timelines

**2008** Colorado Legislature enacts Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids mandating revised preschool through high school standards

**2008-09** Hundreds of Coloradans author and provide feedback on the new standards in 10 content areas

**December 2009** Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) adopts the Colorado Academic Standards

**August 2010** Colorado SBE adopts the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to be incorporated into Colorado's math and reading, writing, and communicating standards

**2011-13** Colorado school districts and teachers prepare for implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards

**2013-2014** Full implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards

**2016** Standards revision begins with public feedback

**June 2018** The SBE adopts the revisions to the Colorado Academic Standards and approves high school Computer Science standards.

**2018-20** Colorado school districts and teachers prepare for implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards

**2020-21** Full implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards

## **The Arts (Visual, Music, Dance, Drama/Theater)**

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.

## **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 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.