

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

Colorado's Description of 21st Century Skills

Colorado's description of 21st century skills is a synthesis of the essential abilities students must apply in our rapidly changing world. Today's students need a repertoire of knowledge and skills that are more diverse, complex, and integrated than any previous generation. Comprehensive health and physical education are inherently demonstrated in each of Colorado's 21st century skills, as follows:

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Health and physical education are disciplines grounded in critical thinking and reasoning. Developing and maintaining lifelong wellness habits involves decision-making and communication skills that sometimes can determine life-and-death outcomes. The skills and knowledge gained in health and physical education provide the structure that makes it possible to prevent risk behavior and adopt healthy lifestyles. Without good health and physical activity, critical thinking and reasoning are compromised.

Information Literacy

The disciplines of health and physical education equip students with the tools and habits of mind to organize and interpret a multitude of rapidly changing information resources. Students who are literate in health and physical education can analyze effectively primary and secondary sources, detect bias, use learning tools, including technology and media, and clearly communicate thoughts using sound reasoning.

Collaboration

The health and physical education content areas directly involve students in teams, problem-solving groups, and community connections to support the overall health of the individual and the community. Students offer ideas, strategies, solutions, justifications, and proofs for others to evaluate. In turn, students use feedback to improve performance and interpret and evaluate the ideas, strategies, solutions, and justifications of others.

Self-Direction

Understanding and participating in health and physical education requires a productive disposition, curiosity, personal motivation, and self-direction. Health and physical education are more than passive learning. Individual active participation, practice, and competence are underlying principles of these content areas.

Invention

The health and physical education disciplines are a dynamic set of content area disciplines, ever expanding with new research, ideas, and understandings. Invention is the key element of the expansion as students make and test theories and skills, create and use tools, search for patterns and themes, and make connections among ideas, strategies, and solutions.