

2020-2021 Comprehensive Health Instructional Guidance for Diverse Learning Settings

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Credits

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Full Document and Other Support

For the full version of this document that contains all content areas, and for other standards, content, and instructional support, see [the website for the Office of Standards and Instructional Support](#).

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Purpose

When CDE describes **best, first instruction**, it is assumed that instruction is occurring in a traditional environment: teachers and students gathered together in a classroom, working in small groups, large groups, and individually, and that there are no safety risks posed by having people in close proximity of each other or touching shared objects. Due to COVID-19, we can no longer assume that this traditional environment is possible or preferable under the current circumstances. Districts and schools have had to consider other options, including hybrid/blended learning, online-only options, or switching to remote learning on an emergency basis when circumstances require it. For most educators, this has created challenging teaching conditions—not only is teaching under these non-traditional settings challenging compared to the classroom environments teachers are accustomed to, but the uncertainty of the moment makes long-term planning and preparation especially difficult.

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance under these uncertain times for each of the content areas addressed by the Colorado Academic Standards. While some compromises are inevitable when shifting instruction to non-traditional settings, maintaining high-impact instruction (or the highest-impact instruction under the circumstances) requires adherence to certain principles, practices, and strategies. Teaching is a very complex endeavor and while it isn't possible to cover every approach, tool, or practice for every situation, this document aims to inform educators about what teaching should ideally look like given a variety of instructional settings.

Teaching and Learning in Diverse Learning Settings

In March of 2020, schools in Colorado made on-the-fly decisions and took quick action to change the way teaching and learning worked across the state. Several terms emerged to describe the different settings school was happening in, such as *online*, *virtual*, *remote*, and *at home*. To attempt to clarify the language used to describe these settings, this document refers to the following categories:

- **In-person learning:** Face to face instruction within a brick and mortar structure.
- **Hybrid/blended learning:** A combination of in-person learning and remote learning.
- **Online-only learning:** Online learning in Colorado refers to schools that are providing online course offerings on a full or part-time basis. Students who engage in online learning in this context are enrolled in an approved school or program or may be taking an online course to supplement.
- **Remote learning:** Education that occurs away from a school building in response to emergency situations such as COVID-19 or natural disaster. Remote learning seeks to offer continuous educational opportunities that may or may not build upon previously taught content. Remote learning is both a temporary and longer-term option. Remote learning may include digital resources and/or hard copy resources and may include synchronous or asynchronous instruction and/or self-paced independent study work.

Even with these categories and definitions, other variations are possible. For example, in-person learning *with* an enforcement of social/physical distancing will certainly have some constraints that in-person learning *without* social/physical distancing. Similarly, online and remote learning looks very different when it is conducted synchronously rather than asynchronously.

Content-Specific Resources to Support Diverse Learning Settings

CDE's top priority continues to be the health and safety of all students, educators, and communities in Colorado. To help schools plan for educational continuity while the suspension of in-person learning is in effect, we have curated a list of best practices for remote learning and teaching including free web-based resources to help keep students academically engaged. We recognize that the multitude of resources for remote learning can be overwhelming so we have collected and organized material by content area and grade level that may be useful as educators develop plans for their students. While remote learning through the Internet provides a great deal of flexibility in learning opportunities, educators should also consider utilizing hard copy resources (e.g., packet work, textbooks).

There is no requirement for districts to offer remote learning via the Internet, but if educators decide to go this path, they should strive to include equitable access to instruction for all students. Equitable access does not require that all students receive instruction in the same format e.g., online instruction). Districts should consider the individual learning needs of students in determining how to best meet individual needs. Click [here](#) for a curated list of resources across content areas.

Equity Considerations for Learning Across Settings

Regardless of the instructional setting, or how it changes in 2020-2021, we suggest you consider the following do support students and their families:

- Support **flexible scheduling and limited technology access when shifting to hybrid/blended or remote** learning settings. Student learning should not be solely dependent on access to devices and the internet. Encourage approaches that can be pursued without technology and/or asynchronously to set students up for success.
- Engage students in **meaningful** explorations, investigations, inquiries, analysis, and/or sense-making. Equitable learning experiences should be both responsive to the current need as well as meaningful to learners.
- When in remote or hybrid settings, encourage students to engage in **activities that already happen in their homes with materials that families already have** (especially so families do not need to purchase additional supplies). Families in poverty may be experiencing several of the considerations described above, along with additional concerns including regular access to meals, utilities, health services, or shelter. Undocumented students and students receiving special education services may face challenges in accessing resources that they need. Encourage educators to prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of all students.
- Help students make **explicit connections to their interests and identities**.
- **Invite family members to be a partner** in students' learning. Students and families may need to juggle home, caretaking, school, and work responsibilities. Consider a menu of options for learning experiences that allow for different types and levels of engagement during remote learning.
- Provide students with **choices for how they engage, what they investigate/research, or how they demonstrate learning**.
- Support students in **self-reflection** related to content and process to support their learning.
- **Exercise sensitivity** when referencing the current pandemic as a topic for instruction.

- Encourage, support, and facilitate **first-language family participation** in the learning across multiple settings. Take steps to bridge the gap in access to bilingual and native language resources that support learning for students and their families.

General Considerations for Standards-Aligned Instruction

The guidance provided below gives educators insights into “traditional” teaching practices and how shifts in those teaching practices can lead to student learning experiences that are more authentic and engaging in diverse learning settings. These shifts support instructional alignment with the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards.

Learning experiences should look less like...	Learning experiences should look more like...
<p>An attempt to recreate school at home during learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assuming a strict “school day” schedule • requiring special materials (e.g. materials not commonly found at home) • pacing with the planned scope and sequence in remote learning environment • assigning readings to stay “caught up” • packet of worksheets and busy-work • all learning experiences happen virtually 	<p>Flexible goals and structures for learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended time for learning and reflection • use of commonly available materials • purposeful selection of learning targets • allowing students to explore their interests • meaningful, manageable tasks and projects • opportunities to learn without the use of devices or the internet
<p>Teacher-centered instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • virtual lectures/classes that all students synchronously attend • teachers delivering information and assignments • teacher instruction and feedback as the primary mode of facilitating learning 	<p>Purposeful teacher-student interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optional opportunities to connect with teachers and peers virtually and at a variety of times • teachers providing coaching, feedback, and encouragement • encouraging students to engage in learning and reflection with their families and communities • encouraging self-reflection on what students learn and how they learn it
<p>Assignments to “get through” content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasizing memorizing content or “checking off” tasks on lists • asking students to complete tasks that are irrelevant, lack authenticity, or are redundant in nature (e.g., “busy work”) • trying to cover content through a volume of activities or skipping from topic to topic 	<p>Assignments that promote authentic learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connecting experiences to household activities, like cooking, fixing things, or gardening, community interactions • asking students to identify relevant problems in their lives and leverage content knowledge to address them • allowing students to deeply explore concepts, topics, phenomena (science), and/or problems of interest through investigation, analysis, research, and other sense-making strategies to build understanding and practice over time

Instructional Guidance by Content Area

CDE's Office of Standards and Instructional Support stands behind the saying, "All Students, All Standards." The Colorado Academic Standards define learning goals in each content area. By providing a high-quality, standards-based educational experience for students in each of the content areas, schools open doors of opportunity to students' futures. By experiencing high-quality teaching and learning in a variety of content areas, upon graduation students should be prepared to seek out and find success in multiple career fields, college majors, or other future endeavors connecting to any one or more of the content areas for which Colorado has academic standards.

Unlike other sources of guidance for the 2020-2021 school year, the guidance below gives equal preference to each content area. **This is not a guide for narrowing the curriculum down to mathematics and English language arts.** Instead, it is our goal that schools consider the guidance provided and strive to offer well-rounded, enriching, opportunity-creating educational experiences for all students, regardless of the instructional setting.

Comprehensive Health

Instructional strategies and learning experiences should be student centered, interactive, and experiential. The strategies include group discussions, cooperative learning, problem solving, role playing, and peer-led activities. Learning experiences correspond with students’ cognitive and emotional development and help them personalize information and maintain their interest and motivation while accommodating diverse capabilities and learning styles. Instructional strategies and learning experiences include methods for the following:

1. Addressing key health-related concepts
2. Encouraging creative expression
3. Sharing personal thoughts, feelings, and opinions
4. Developing critical thinking skills

Curricular materials, strategies and instruction should be free of culturally biased information but also include information, activities, and examples that are inclusive of diverse cultures and lifestyles, such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, physical/mental ability, and appearance. Strategies promote values, attitudes, and behaviors that support the cultural diversity of students; optimize relevance to students from multiple cultures in the school community; strengthen the skills that are necessary to engage intercultural interactions; and build on the cultural resources of families and communities. The table below contains content-specific instructional strategies and tools to help health educators provide high-quality learning experiences.

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Tools to Try
Rote memorization of facts, concepts, and terminology	Facts and terminology learned as needed while developing explanations and designing solutions supported by evidence-based reasoning and arguments. Focus on building key health skills, accessing information, analyzing influence, communication, decision making, goal setting, self-management, and advocacy skills.	Health Skills Development Investigation/Inquiry Project Based Learning Problem-Based Learning Teacher Modeling Think-aloud	Health Skills Investigation/Inquiry Project Based Learning Problem-Based Learning Teacher Modeling Think-aloud
Concepts and skills are taught once with little to no practice of the skills	Students are practicing skills across various health topical areas and across multiple content areas. Focusing on introduction, reinforcement (practice), and mastery of skills over a period of time.	Simulated Practice Role Play/Simulations	Health Skills Simulated Practice Role Play/Simulations

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Tools to Try
Learning ideas disconnected from questions or real-world situations	Systems thinking and modeling to give context for the ideas to be learned. Build in culturally responsive examples and opportunities to connect with health concepts and skills providing opportunities for students to make content real, relevant, and right now.	Case Studies Mock Trial Cooperative Learning	Case Studies Mock Trial Cooperative Learning Examples of Cooperative Learning Collaborative Learning
Teachers providing information to the whole class	Students conducting investigations, solving problems, and engaging in discussions with teachers' guidance. Learning experiences correspond with students' cognitive and emotional development that help them personalize information and maintain their interest and motivation while accommodating diverse capabilities and learning styles.	Investigation/Inquiry Cooperative Learning	Investigation/Inquiry Cooperative Learning POGIL
Addresses individual influences, pressures, and norms.	Instructional methods explore relevant personal and social pressures that influence risky behaviors, such as the influence of the media, peer pressure, social barriers. They provide opportunities for students to accurately assess the level of risk-taking behaviors, and correct misperceptions while reinforce health enhancing attitudes and beliefs.	Socratic Seminar Investigation/Inquiry Cooperative Learning	Socratic Seminar Investigation/Inquiry Cooperative Learning POGIL
Teachers posing questions with only one answer	Students discussing open-ended questions that focus on the strength of evidence used to generate claims.	Socratic Seminar Discipline-based Questions Roleplay & Simulation	Socratic Seminar Question Formulation Technique Roleplay & Simulation Discussion

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Tools to Try
		Document Based Questions Discussion Voice Thread	Voice Thread
Students reading textbooks and answering questions at the end of the chapter, or the use of worksheets as the sole route of knowledge transfer.	Instructional methods which allow students to actively engage with the content in a more inclusive manner. Direct textbook instruction, or the use of worksheets as the sole method of knowledge transfer do not consider the many different learning styles seen in students. Students reading multiple sources, including content-related magazine and journal articles and web-based resources; students analyzing the information for validity and reliability; and developing summaries of information.	Problem/Project Based Learning Document Based Questions Accessing Information	Project Based Learning Problem-Based Learning Document Based Questions Accessing Information
Pre-planned outcomes for “cookbook” activities	Multiple investigations driven by student’s questions/interests with a range of possible outcomes that collectively lead to a deep understanding of established core ideas	Problem Based Learning Project Based Learning	Project Based Learning Problem-Based Learning
Oversimplification of activities for students who are perceived to be less able than their peers	Provisions for support so that all students can engage in sophisticated lessons and practices.	Authentic Learning Problem-Based Learning Socratic Seminar Stereotype Threat Mitigation Culturally Responsive Teaching Universal Design for Learning	Authentic Learning Problem-Based Learning Socratic Seminar Stereotype Threat Universal Design for Learning
Use scare tactics to change behavior	Use trauma sensitive practices that support behavior change. Provide medically accurate	Accessing Information	Accessing Information

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Tools to Try
	information with students and build their skills to identify valid and reliable resources. Scare tactics have not been shown to change behavior.		
Provides limited opportunities to make connections with other influential persons beyond the teacher	Expand linkages for students to other influential persons who affirm and reinforce health-promoting norms, beliefs, and behaviors. Instructional strategies build on protective factors that promote healthy behaviors and enable students to avoid or reduce health risk behaviors by engaging peers, parents, families, and other positive adult role models in student learning.	Authentic Learning Problem-Based Learning Socratic Seminar Stereotype Threat Mitigation Culturally Responsive Teaching Universal Design for Learning	Authentic Learning Problem-Based Learning Socratic Seminar Stereotype Threat Universal Design for Learning