

The process the Colorado Department of Education used to revise the Colorado Model Content Standards in 2008-09 was designed to be research-based, inclusive, and transparent.

Research and Benchmarking Process

CDE engaged WestEd and national content area experts to provide research-based analyses and reports for CDE to inform the standards revision process.

WestEd provided:

1. A report on key components of the new standards including considerations when defining 21st century skills, college readiness, postsecondary and workforce readiness and determining how to approach grade level articulation of standards.
2. A review of each content area within the Model Content Standards for rigor and clarity.
3. Benchmarking and gap analysis reports for each content area on high achieving states (MA and VA) and nations (Singapore and Finland) and standards reports from prominent education groups (ACHIEVE, Fordham, IB, AP, ACT, College Board, Alignment Council, etc.).

National content area experts provided reports to the department on drafts of the standards during the revision process.

Advisory Process

CDE created an inclusive process for guiding revisions to the standards by engaging a Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

The Stakeholder Advisory Committee was convened bi-monthly to advise CDE and the State Board of Education on the revision process. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee was appointed by the Commissioner and comprised of members representing preschool, business, career and technical, K-12 grades, university, rural, urban, special education and demographically diverse interests.

CDE provided monthly updates to the State Board of Education related to the standards development process and input from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

Standards Development Process

CDE conducted an open and transparent standards development process by engaging educators, business, higher education, and community members in standards revision sub-committees.

Background

- **2008** Colorado Legislature passed SB 212 requiring revision of standards and alignment of the P-12 educational system. The bill required the State Board of Education to adopt descriptions of school readiness, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and standards to ensure students can demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness upon graduation.
- **2009** The Colorado Department of Education conducted a three-phase standards revision process. The Colorado State Board of Education adopted standards in 10 content areas and for English Language Proficiency.
- **2010 (August)** Colorado State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics and Reading, Writing, and Communicating (RWC).
- **2010 (December)** CDE reissued the Colorado Academic Standards for Mathematics and RWC incorporating the CCSS.

- CDE solicited sub-committee participation through an online application process. Applicants were required to demonstrate their content area expertise and willingness to serve.
- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee reviewed the applications using a blind-review process, considering only the applicants' qualifications.
- The standards sub-committees chose co-chairs to guide the meetings. CDE content specialists staffed the sub-committees, met with co-chairs to plan meetings, provided resources, ensured consistency across sub-committee work plans, and took notes for each of the meetings.
- Sub-committees were provided gap analysis and benchmarking resources to guide the standards revision work.
- Following the completion of the first draft of each content area standards, CDE engaged national experts to provide a review of the draft standards. Each review included a gap and benchmarking analysis summarized in a report to the department. Reports were posted on the CDE website.
- Following public input and content area reviews by national experts, sub-committees were reconvened to finalize the standards.

Public Engagement Process

CDE actively sought public input on the standards revision process through news releases, online communication, regional public meeting, and regular information dissemination to superintendents.

Prior to the standards review process:

- CDE conducted 5 regional meetings conducted to solicit public input for Colorado's definitions of school readiness and postsecondary workforce readiness. CDE utilized this input to inform the State Board of Education on these definitions.
- CDE conducted a 13 city "Teacher Tour" to solicit Colorado educator feedback on the impact of CAP4K on their work and input on the standards revision process. CDE published the findings of the tour in May 2009.

During the standards sub-committee review process:

- CDE conducted open standards review sub-committee committee meetings in over a dozen cities across the state to allow the public to observe the process.
- All notes for the sub-committee meetings were shared with the State Board of Education and posted on the CDE website.

Following the sub-committee review process:

- After each of the three phases of the review process, CDE (1) posted the draft standards to the CDE website and solicited online public feedback, and (2) conducted a 10 city regional feedback tour to solicit public feedback.
- Following the public feedback period, the sub-committees reconvened to review public feedback. The sub-committees responded to each public comment either accepting the suggested revision or providing rationale for rejecting the proposed revision.
- CDE posted the final drafts of the standards to the CDE website for final public feedback before presentation of the standards to the State Board for approval.