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Purpose of Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

“In the great work of education, our physical condition, if not the first step in point of importance, is the first in order of time. On the broad and firm foundation of health alone can the loftiest and most enduring structures of the intellect be reared.” ~Horace Mann

"We know what the Greeks knew: that intelligence and skill can only function at the peak of their capacity when the body is healthy and strong, and that hardy spirits and tough minds usually inhabit sound bodies." ~John F. Kennedy

Preparing students for the 21st century cannot be accomplished without a strong and sustained emphasis on all students’ health and wellness. It no is longer acceptable to think of “gym class” and “hygiene lessons.” Today’s world has exploded with physical, mental, and social influences that affect not only learning in school, but also the lifelong health of the citizens that schools are preparing for graduation. Health and physical education prepare students to function optimally as students, global citizens, and workers who demonstrate personal responsibility for one’s health and fitness through an active, healthy lifestyle that fosters a lifelong commitment to wellness. These standards encourage physical literacy, which is the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person\(^1\), as well as, health literacy, which is the ability of individuals to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.\(^2\)

Health education and physical education are separate disciplines, each with a distinct body of knowledge and skills. However, the two disciplines are naturally interdisciplinary and clearly complement and reinforce each other to support wellness. Schools have a unique role and responsibility to address both health and physical education from preschool through twelfth grade to instill and reinforce knowledge and skills needed to be healthy and achieve academically.

Colorado’s comprehensive health and physical education standards lay out a vision for these vitally important disciplines, and describe what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level through eighth grade and in high school. The authors of this document were preschool through twelfth-grade educators, higher education professors, business representatives, and community members. The group developed a set of competencies starting with "the end in mind." What concepts and skills would a "prepared graduate" in the 21st century possess when he or she left high school? The answers to this question framed the work that led to the development of four standards in comprehensive health and physical education for preschool through twelfth grade.


Prepared Graduates in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

1. Apply knowledge and skills to engage in lifelong healthy eating.

2. Apply knowledge and skills necessary to make personal decisions that promote healthy relationships and sexual and reproductive health.

3. Apply knowledge and skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance.

4. Utilize knowledge and skills to enhance mental, emotional, and social well-being.

5. Apply knowledge and skills to make health-enhancing decisions regarding the use of marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

6. Apply knowledge and skills that promote healthy, violence-free relationships.

7. Apply personal safety knowledge and skills to prevent and treat injury.
Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

Standards are the topical organization of an academic content area. The four standards of comprehensive health and physical education are:

1. **Movement Competence and Understanding**
   Includes motor skills and movement patterns that teach skill and accuracy in a variety of routines, games, and activities that combine skills with movement; demonstrates the connection between body and brain function; and creates patterns for lifelong physical activity.

2. **Physical and Personal Wellness**
   Includes physical activity, healthy eating, and sexual health and teaches lifelong habits and patterns for a fit, healthy, and optimal childhood and adulthood; examines society, media, family, and peer influence on wellness choices; practices decision-making and communication skills for personal responsibility for wellness; and identifies the consequences of physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, and early sexual activity. Includes health promotion and disease prevention, and teaches responsibility and skills for personal health habits as well as behavior and disease prevention; sets personal goals for optimal health; examines common chronic and infectious diseases and causes; and recognizes the physical, mental, and social dimensions of personal health.

3. **Social and Emotional Wellness**
   Includes mental, emotional, and social health skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop care and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, handle challenging situations constructively, resolve conflicts respectfully, manage stress, and make ethical and safe choices; examines internal and external influences on mental and social health; and identifies common mental and emotional health problems and their effect on physical health.

4. **Prevention and Risk Management**
   Includes alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention; violence prevention; and safety; teaches skills to increase safe physical and social behavior in at home, in school, in the community, and in personal relationships; provides specific knowledge on avoidance of intentional and unintentional injuries; and practices decision-making and communication skills to avoid drug use, bullying, and dating violence.

The four standards are organized across comprehensive health and physical education in the following manner:

**Comprehensive Health** standards:
- 2. Physical and Personal Wellness
- 3. Social and Emotional Wellness
- 4. Prevention and Risk Management

**Physical Education** standards:
- 1. Movement and Competence Understanding
- 2. Physical and Personal Wellness
- 3. Social and Emotional Wellness
- 4. Prevention and Risk Management
General Considerations for Health Education:

There has been a shift in the focus of health education instruction in the last few years. In the past, health education was very much focused on health knowledge. The current state of health education encourages comprehensive skills-based health education that addresses multiple behaviors through instruction that ensures that information is medically accurate and developmentally appropriate, while allowing students to have multiple opportunities to learn, practice, and reinforce their learning and skills to support transfer beyond the classroom. The essential health skills of accessing information, analyzing influences, decision making, goal setting, interpersonal communication, self-management, and advocacy are foundational component to the comprehensive health education standards. These standards ultimately focus on supporting healthy behaviors, life-long health, and wellness.

In revising the health education standards, the authors fully acknowledge that local school districts may need to make modifications based on local courses, infrastructure, and available resources. The standards and evidence outcomes are intended to guide the health education experience of students’ PK-12 and are not intended to be a checklist, but are used to frame objectives for a standard and to provide guidance for teaching health concepts and skills. As part of the revision process, the committee identified the key health skills for each grade level expectation. This provides a specific skill focus across all grade levels.

It is important to note that local data and students’ needs should drive the focus of the health education at the local level. With constantly changing health concerns regarding behaviors and drug use, it is up to the local communities to address their specific local needs regarding priority behaviors and drug use. The standards related to drug use prevention are intended to guide specific skills regarding the prevention of drug use. The specific drugs identified in the standards are not limiting, prioritized, or, comprehensive, and local schools and districts should identify their areas of focus on based on local data.
Prepared Graduates:
1. Apply knowledge and skills to engage in lifelong healthy eating.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Demonstrate the ability to make good decisions about healthy eating behaviors.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Access valid information pertaining to fat, salt and sugar content in order to maintain good health and improve food choices.
b. Analyze the food and beverage choices of self or others to inform healthy behaviors.
c. Use current federal nutrition standards and guidelines to plan healthy meals and snacks.
d. Demonstrate how to politely advocate for foods that are more nutritious.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:

1. Eating healthy involves good decision-making skills, access to accurate information about healthy eating, and access to healthy foods. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Explore how as the body matures, the amount of food and key nutrients change to support healthy systems and growth. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Examine how healthy eating is a personal responsibility and is challenged by the choices available to us. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)

Inquiry Questions:

1. How will you take control of your own healthy eating behaviors?
2. If broccoli were deep-fried, would it still be nutritious?
3. Is sugar bad? Why or why not?
4. Why do people tend to eat too much sugar, fat, and salt?
5. Is caffeine a healthy or unhealthy ingredient in foods and drinks?

Health Skills:

1. Accessing Information
2. Decision-Making
3. Advocacy
Prepared Graduates:
2. Apply knowledge and skills necessary to make personal decisions that promote healthy relationships and sexual and reproductive health.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Explain the structure, function and major parts of the human reproductive system.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Summarize the anatomy of the reproductive system, including functions of the male and female reproductive systems.
b. Describe the purpose of the menstrual cycle and its relationship to fertilization.
c. Explain that after fertilization, cells divide to create an embryo and then a fetus that grows and develops inside the uterus during pregnancy.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:
1. Analyze why in nature, different animals have different gestation cycles.
   (Entrepreneurial Skills: Inquiry/Analysis)
2. Analyze the influences on the physical, social, and emotional changes that occur at puberty, including hormones, heredity, nutrition, and the environment. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Inquiry/Analysis)

Inquiry Questions:
1. What is optimal growth and development of a fetus?
2. How do twins occur?
3. What causes acne?

Health Skills:
1. Accessing Information
Prepared Graduates:
2. Apply knowledge and skills necessary to make personal decisions that promote healthy relationships and sexual and reproductive health.

Grade Level Expectation:
3. Describe the physical, social, and emotional changes that occur at puberty.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Discuss why puberty begins and ends at different ages for different people, and that variance is considered normal.
b. Identify how personal hygiene practices can impact health and safety during puberty.
c. Determine factors that influence the purchase of health care products and the use of personal hygiene practices.
d. Discuss how changes during puberty affect thoughts, emotions, growth patterns, and behaviors.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. There are many influences on one’s physical, social, and emotional development at puberty, including hormones, heredity, nutrition, and the environment. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)
2. Analyze why the onset age of puberty has changed over time due to factors that include changes in nutrition, access to medical care, and exposure to chemicals in the environment. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Demonstrate how tolerance, appreciation, and understanding of individual differences are critical during times of change. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
4. Analyze factors influence on one’s physical, social, and emotional development at puberty, including hormones, heredity, nutrition, and the environment. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)

Inquiry Questions:
1. Why are some aspects of puberty “embarrassing”?
2. What is “normal”?
3. During puberty, what causes body hair to grow and a male’s voice to change? What causes acne?

Health Skills:
1. Analyzing Influences
2. Accessing Information
Prepared Graduates:
3. Apply knowledge and skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance.

Grade Level Expectation:
4. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills needed to discuss personal health problems to establish and maintain personal health and wellness.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Access valid and reliable sources of information including parents or trusted adults to answer questions about personal health.
b. Demonstrate effective communication strategies to talk to someone such as a parent, trusted adult, or health care provider.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Clearly communicating with a health care provider regarding needs is critical to receiving the best care possible. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Communication)
2. Identify why web-based health information sites can be useful, but should be examined for accuracy to avoid misinformation. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)
3. Identify why interpersonal communication about health conditions and concerns is critical for prevention of disease and maintaining good health. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Communication)
4. Individuals need support when making decisions about when and with whom to discuss healthcare questions or concerns. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)

Inquiry Questions:
1. What could happen if I did not tell someone about my health condition?
2. Why is it important to ask for what I need?

Health Skills:
1. Accessing Information
2. Interpersonal Communication
Prepared Graduates:
3. Apply knowledge and skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance.

Grade Level Expectation:
5. Comprehend concepts and identify strategies to prevent the transmission of disease.

Evidence Outcomes

*Students Can:*
- a. Differentiate between communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- b. Describe how the body fights germs and diseases naturally, with medicines, and through immunization.
- c. Describe ways to prevent the spread of germs that cause infectious diseases through food, water, air, blood, touch, and animals.
- d. Describe the effects of HIV infection on the body.
- e. Explain how HIV is and is not contracted.
- f. Explain that it is safe to be a friend of someone who has a disease or conditions that cannot be easily transmitted.

**Academic Context and Connections**

*Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:*
1. Explore how technological advances assist with disease tracking and prevention. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Creativity/Innovation)
2. Identify how strategies to prevent transfer of germs and disease transmission and to control the severity of illnesses are available and have changed over time. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Creativity/Innovation)

*Inquiry Questions:*
1. Why did people die at a younger age in the early 1900s?
2. How can you avoid contact with germs?
3. How can you help your body fight germs?
4. How can you be sure not to spread germs?

*Health Skills:*
1. Accessing Information
2. Self-Management/Personal Responsibility
Prepared Graduates:
4. Utilize knowledge and skills to enhance mental, emotional, and social well-being.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Analyze internal and external factors that influence mental and emotional health.

Evidence Outcomes

**Students Can:**
- a. Describe how feelings and emotions are portrayed in the media.
- b. Identify how society, media, and the use of modern technology can influence mental and emotional health.
- c. Explain how families and peers can influence mental and emotional health.
- d. Identify ways to counteract negative influences that impact mental and emotional health.
- e. Identify when it is appropriate to seek help/support during times of strong emotions/feelings.

Academic Context and Connections

**Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:**
1. Analyze how family, peers, and the media can influence a person’s mental and emotional health. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
2. Creating art and reflecting on the art products and processes, people can increase awareness of self and others and better cope with stress and traumatic experiences. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
3. Examine how mental and emotional health can be affected by many influences so it is important to be able to recognize both positive and negative influences on our feelings and behavior. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)

**Inquiry Questions:**
1. How can you control what you are feeling?
2. In what ways can others affect how you feel?
3. How does the media show us both appropriate and inappropriate models for feelings and emotions?
4. What is mental health?

**Health Skills:**
1. Analyzing Influences
Prepared Graduates:
5. Apply knowledge and skills to make health-enhancing decisions regarding the use marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Demonstrate the ability to make good decisions about drug use marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Identify sources of accurate information about the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.
b. Analyze the dangers of use or experimentation with marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
c. Demonstrate a decision making process to make good decisions about the use of marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
d. Describe the proper use of over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:
1. Explore how technology has influenced credibility and availability of information. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)
2. Identify key behavior associated with early mortality. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Compare and contrast varying cultural and religious beliefs surrounding alcohol and tobacco use. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
4. Identify why making good health decisions requires the ability to evaluate reliable resources. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)
5. Evaluate research on the benefits and harmful effects of marijuana, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)

Inquiry Questions:
1. What would advertising look like if the media wasn’t allowed to omit relevant, but revealing negative information about their product?
2. Are over the counter drugs safer than prescription drugs?
3. How would tobacco use or exposure affect your ability to exercise or play sports?
4. Why might someone else who uses marijuana want others to do so as well?
5. If adults can legally drink alcohol, how can it be harmful?
6. Can your body system continue to operate with a malfunctioning part (e.g. liver)?
7. How do new technologies influence drug use?

Health Skills:
1. Accessing Information
2. Decision Making
Prepared Graduates:
6. Apply knowledge and skills that promote healthy, violence-free relationships.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Demonstrate pro-social behaviors that reduce the likelihood of physical fighting, violence, and bullying.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Identify factors that influence both violent and nonviolent behaviors.
b. Explain the impact and the short- and long-term consequences of bullying, physical fighting, and violence.
c. Demonstrate pro-social communication skills and strategies to diffuse conflict and avoid violence.
d. Describe how to use social media to promote positive relationships.
e. Identify resources, including safe people, parents, or adults, who can help prevent or intervene in unsafe situations in the school and community.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:

1. Explore how nonviolence has been used in conflicts. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
2. Assess how bullying and violence can have long term emotional and physical consequences. (Entrepreneurial Skills: Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
3. Critique how culture, media and social influences affect violent and nonviolent behavior. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Global/Cultural Awareness)
4. Investigate why and how individuals can take personal responsibility to develop, maintain, and enhance healthy behaviors. (Personal Skills: Personal Responsibility)
5. Identify the importance of evaluating reliable sources when analyzing influences. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)

Inquiry Questions:

1. Why do people become violent?
2. Why is it important to report incidents of bullying and other unsafe situations?
3. What types of communication can help you avoid conflict?
4. How can we demonstrate appreciation and value for differences?
5. How do I know who to tell about an unsafe situation?
6. What are stereotypes? Why do people stereotype others?
7. Can making assumptions about people influence behavior?

Health Skills:

1. Interpersonal Communication: Conflict Resolution/Negotiation Skills
2. Analyze Influences
3. Self - Management/Personal Responsibility
Prepared Graduates:
7. Apply personal safety knowledge and skills to prevent and treat injury.

Grade Level Expectation:
3. Demonstrate basic first aid and safety procedures.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Identify ways to reduce the risk of injuries from animal bites and insect stings.
b. Explain what to do, such as calling 911 or a poison control center, if someone is injured or is poisoned by products such as household cleaners or other substances.
c. Describe first aid procedures for a variety of situations, including insect stings, bites, poisoning, and choking.
d. Develop and apply a decision-making process for avoiding situations that could lead to injury.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills and Real-World Application:
1. Explore community resources that are available for basic first aid training. (Professional Skills: Information Literacy)
2. Knowing what to do in an emergency situation including providing basic first aid and/or seeking help is a lifelong skill that supports communities. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills: Civic Engagement)

Inquiry Questions:
1. Which animals and insects can be dangerous?
2. What steps should you take to save someone from choking?
3. How do you decide what is dangerous to ingest?

Health Skills:
1. Self-Management/Personal Responsibility
2. Decision-Making