**What are the most significant changes in the Colorado standards?**

The most significant changes from the current standards relate to three key ideas:

First, the standards were revised to explicitly include the 21st century skills of innovation, critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, self-direction and collaboration. These skills were woven into each component of the new Colorado Academic Standards, including the prepared graduate competencies, grade level expectations, evidence outcomes, inquiry questions, relevance and application, and nature of statements.

Second, the new standards articulate the concepts and skills students are to master at each grade level, preschool through eighth grade. At the high school level, the mastery expectations are organized by standard and represent what high school graduates should know and be able to do in order to be well prepared for any postsecondary options.

Third, the revised standards document was designed to focus on the few essential concepts and skills, effectively defining all expectations as power standards.

**When should districts plan to start teaching to the Colorado Academic Standards? What is the deadline to implement all of** **the revised standards documents?**

By December 15, 2011, each local education agency is required by statute (CRS 22-7-1013) to review its standards in comparison with the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). Following the review, local education agencies must revise its standards as necessary to ensure the standards meet or exceed the CAS.  To accomplish this, districts may choose to adopt the CAS verbatim or to revise their current standards.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is committed to supporting Colorado school districts in the transition to the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS).  CDE is following a standards implementation support plan that includes four phases: (1) awareness, (2) transition, (3) implementation, and (4) transformation.  Awareness involves communication about the revised standards; transition involves making curriculum changes based on the revised standards; implementation involves adjusting instructional practices to the revised standards; and transformation involves innovation in teaching and learning based on the standards.

CDE recommends that districts use the 2011-12 school year to design curriculum based on the CAS and 2012-13 school year to begin implementation of the standards-based curriculum with full implementation in the 2013-14 school year. By using the two school years to design and begin implementation of a standards-based curriculum, districts can support a thoughtful standards transition process. A detailed description of standards transition recommendation can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/Downloads/Standards%20Intro/transitioningtocas.docx>

The standards implementation recommendations are well coordinated with the state’s assessment transition plan. The state will replace the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) with a transitional assessment during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, which will be called the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP). The TCAP will assess only content that is shared by the Colorado Model Content Standards and the Colorado Academic Standards. The TCAP will provide Colorado with uninterrupted growth data for districts while transitioning to the Colorado Academic Standards. The state standardized summative assessment will contain only CAS content beginning in the 2013 – 2014 school year.

**If we start teaching to the revised standards now, will it affect our TCAP test scores?**

The TCAP will be similar to the CSAP with items that align to both the Colorado Model Content Standards and the new Colorado Academic Standards, where possible. In many cases, the new standards are higher than the old; so there will not be negative impact on test scores for districts teaching to the new standards. Due to technical requirements, there will be some items which only correspond to the old standards without a relationship to the new standards. The intent is to release a document identifying the relationship by early next school year.

**Are districts required to adopt the state standards?**

According to CRS 22-7-1013(b) “in revising its preschool through elementary and secondary education standards, each local education provider shall ensure that it adopts standards, at a minimum, in those subject matter areas that are included in the state preschool through elementary and secondary education standards, including but not limited to English language competency and visual arts and performing arts education.”

Thus each district is required to adopt standards that meet or exceed the state standards and develop a plan for revising curriculum and programs of instruction to ensure that each student will have the educational experiences needed to achieve the adopted academic standards. CDE will provide professional development opportunities and online resources to help in new standards implementation. Online resources and information on professional development opportunities can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/StandardsImplementation.html>

**Do charter, magnet, or turnaround schools have to adopt all of the standards?**

Standards, assessments, and other accountability measures are required of all public schools.

**Will CDE be giving out an implementation timeline?**

CDE recommends that districts use the 2011-12 school year to design curriculum based on the CAS and 2012-13 school year to begin implementation of the standards-based curriculum. By using the two school years to design and begin implementation of a standards-based curriculum, districts can support a thoughtful standards transition process.

The recommendations are well coordinated with the state’s assessment transition plan. The state will replace the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) with a transitional assessment during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, which will be called the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP). The TCAP will assess only content that is shared by the Colorado Model Content Standards and the Colorado Academic Standards. The TCAP will provide Colorado with uninterrupted growth data and support districts in transitioning to the Colorado Academic Standards by the 2013-14 school year.

A detailed transition overview for districts can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/Downloads/Standards%20Intro/transitioningtocas.docx>

**Should districts implement the currently tested content areas first?**

The Colorado Department of Education is advising districts to implement all revised standards following the adoption schedule given in CRS 22-7-1013 and in the department’s transition guidelines found in <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/Downloads/Standards%20Intro/transitioningtocas.docx>

With the anticipated five-year standard revision cycle, districts that implement new standards on a staggered timeline will find the timeline for revision difficult to manage. Subject areas that are implemented later in a staggered timeline would have less time with the revised standards before the next revision cycle begins.

CDE is developing standards implementation support materials and tools to assist districts in the implementation of all content areas. For instance, to support elementary teachers in the implementation of all content area standards, the standards are available in an online searchable format, allowing easy viewing of all expectations at any particular grade level. Also, the CDE content specialists have identified unifying ideas for each elementary grade level allowing teachers to organize instruction around interdisciplinary themes.

The new assessment system is currently being developed which may change the definition of tested content areas. Pursuant to SB 08-212, the revised Colorado standards include definitions of school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness. These definitions go beyond what has been historically assessed in Colorado.

**Can districts adopt the revised standards document or do they need to develop their own standards?**

Districts are responsible for adopting standards that meet or exceed state standards, and therefore are free to adopt the revised standards document “as is” or to develop their own.

**Which standards are the power standards?**

The revised standards document has been intentionally designed around fewer concepts and skills. In essence, the revised expectations *are* the power standards. This revision involved a shift of focus from broad benchmarks articulated by grade band, to fewer mastery expectations. With the learning progression and specificity of concepts and skills articulated by the revised expectations, no standard or expectation stands out as more important than another.

***Questions related to assessment***

**What will the assessment be like?**

The Colorado Department of Education is currently in the process of developing a new system of student assessments to be implemented in 2013-2014 that will reflect the expectations of the revised Colorado Academic Standards and the requirements of Senate Bill 08-212, which calls for both school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness (PWR) assessments. Progress on the work related to assessment revision can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/asmtrev/home.htm>.

**What does mastery of the standards look like?  How will a teacher know when a student has mastered a standard?**

CDE defines mastery as the ability to apply and transfer the knowledge and skills of a grade level expectation to unique situations. The revised standards are so new that all educators in the state will be exploring together what mastery really looks like.  CDE will be collecting exemplars of mastery for the standards from the field. This collection and the concept of mastery will evolve over time as we see exactly what teachers and students are able to do with the standards. Educators will need to develop performance-based tasks as formative assessments where students can show this level of knowledge and skill.

**When will we know the format of the high school test?**

CAP4K calls for the revision of the entire assessment system, which also includes school readiness and PWR measures. CDE recognizes the importance of high school assessments and seeks to improve the quality, relevance and utility of these assessments. This will be an important piece of fulfilling the goal of CAP4K, which is, that all students graduate from high school ready for college or career.

CDE created an Assessment Stakeholders group to make recommendations to the State Board of Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Five subcommittees with 78 members from across the state, aided this work . These groups presented a specific set of design features, including high school assessments, to the public for comment. In, December 2010, the State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education approved these specifications. Progress on the work related to the assessment revision can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/asmtrev/home.htm>

**Can we have sample assessment tasks?**

Sample assessment tasks have not yet been released. As part of the assessment revision process decisions related to the release of sample assessment tasks will be made by the Office of Standards and Assessments. Progress on the work related to assessment revision can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/asmtrev/home.htm>

**When will CDE replace CSAP with an assessment designed to evaluate the new Colorado Academic Standards?**

The current plan is to administer the new summative assessments aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards in 2013-2014.

For 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) will be administered. TCAP will meet the current blueprint. Where possible, items will align to both the Colorado Model Content Standards and the new Colorado Academic Standards.

This transition was created for the following benefits:

* Offers gradual familiarization
* Can be aligned year-by-year during the transition
* Provides teachers time and experience to change instruction
* Removes speculation from district curriculum, instruction and assessment planning
* Assures that use of the new Colorado Academic Standards begins on time

**What are the assessment expectations for content areas that do not have a state summative assessment at all or at a particular grade level?**

CDE is working toward developing an assessment system that includes postsecondary and workforce readiness assessments embedded within state summative assessments, interim assessments and formative assessments. Districts will be key partners in developing and providing samples of assessments at all levels.Local education providers are encouraged to assess students in all the aspects of the standards on a formative, interim, and summative basis. These assessments should measure a student’s progress toward attainment of mastery of either the state grade level expectation or the local standards. CDE is currently working to develop formative and interim assessment tools and resources to support the transition to and implementation of the revised standards.

***Questions related to curriculum***

**What is the State’s role in curriculum decisions?**

It is helpful to distinguish between a curriculum, which is an organized plan of instruction that engages students in mastering the standards, and instructional materials, resources, and programs, which typically are commercially produced.

Colorado does not have a state curriculum. As part of CDE’s ongoing commitment to service and support, CDE is working to assist districts in designing or redesigning curriculum based on the Colorado Academic Standards. First, CDE has been working with curriculum leaders from across the state to develop optional curriculum development tools which districts may choose to use to design local curriculum. Second, CDE plans to spotlight model curricula from Colorado districts which other districts may use to guide their curriculum development and alignment process.

Selection of instructional materials and resources are district level decisions. CDE will be developing tools and processes to support districts in identifying instructional materials, resources, and programs that are aligned with research and standards, proven to deliver results, and supported through vendors that are competent providers of technical support.

**The grade level expectations in each discipline are numbered; does this mean the expectations should be taught in numeric order?**

No. The numbering of the grade level expectations (GLEs) within the standards document allows for easy reference. The document was not designed to suggest a sequential order for instruction. Districts should create curricula from the standards to provide a scope and sequence for instruction. In some cases this may mean teaching several GLEs at once or breaking apart a GLE in order to teach it over the course of a year.

**How can districts plan curriculum without knowing what the state assessment will look like?  In standards based planning doesn't assessment come before curriculum?**

A curriculum is a course of study, or the scope and sequence of learning for the educational institution. Multiple approaches related to developing a curriculum exist, but typically all approaches entail a four-step process: define learning goals (standards), develop learning experiences, sequence learning experiences to have a cumulative effect, and evaluate student learning. As part of the development of curriculum, school districts should be asking themselves, "How will we know when students have mastered the standards?" This question is not necessarily the first step in curriculum planning but it is an essential part of curriculum development at some point in the planning process.

By its very nature, a state level assessment cannot be comprehensive enough to guide curriculum development.  The state level summative assessment provides a snap shot of what students should know and be able to do and gives districts independent, yet comparable, data about their programs and students. Formative and interim assessments, developed by the district and corresponding to their unique scope and sequence, will help provide the feedback needed to inform instruction as student’s progress towards the standards.

**Do districts need to teach the content at the grade level specified in the standards?**

Grade level expectations and evidence outcomes define mastery expected at a specific grade level. Districts are responsible for meeting or exceeding grade level mastery of concepts and skills by the grade level specified in the revised standards document. Districts are encouraged to consider implications for vertical and horizontal coherence of content within their district and the state if grade level expectations are rearranged.

Grade level designation is more complex in elective content areas so consideration of points of entry is important. Understanding that many elective course structures vary from district to district, it is a district’s decision on how to accommodate the mastery level needed when courses may not be offered at each grade level in a progressive structure.

**Can districts change the grade levels of the standards?  What might be some implications for switching grade levels?**

Grade level expectations represent the grade level where a particular concept or skill is expected to be mastered.  Mastery of the grade level expectation is expected to happen at or before the grade level specified in the standards.

There are implications for addressing expectations at grade levels different from those articulated in the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). The Colorado Academic Standards are interrelated across content areas, such as the relationship between social studies and mathematics with regard to personal financial literacy. Addressing personal financial literacy expectations at a grade level different from the CAS would result in a disconnected treatment of the subject. Also, the elementary CAS have concepts that appear in multiple content areas within a each grade. For instance, the concept of claims and evidence is common across multiple content areas in fourth grade. CDE recommends districts carefully consider the interconnectedness of the Colorado Academic Standards before deciding on a different sequencing of content.

**Should only content in the standards be taught at a particular grade level?**

The revised Colorado Academic Standards are high-level indicators of learning progress. The purpose of the revised standards document is to define mastery for a given grade. Grade level expectations are key indicators of learning progress toward prepared graduate competencies, not the scope and sequence of all content in a grade level.

The role of locally developed curriculum is to scaffold learning up to the grade where mastery is expected and provide opportunity for practice of previously learned concepts and skills in subsequent grades. A balanced curriculum ensures mastery of grade level expectations, develops the foundation for expectations of future grades, reinforces previously learned concepts, and provides interdisciplinary connections.

**What does it mean for planning and assessment if there is not a grade level expectation (GLE) for a standard in every grade level?**

Grade level expectations (GLEs) delineate benchmarks for mastery of skills and concepts that build toward the progression of the prepared graduate competency (PGC). When a GLE is not explicitly articulated for a grade level, educators should look at previous grade level expectations to ensure that the prerequisite skills are still accessible to each student as well as look at future grade level expectations to determine what scaffolding is needed in order to prepare their students for mastery at the next grade level. For example, Emotional and Social Wellness in Health does not articulate a second grade expectation. This does not mean that second grade curriculum should not include emotional and social wellness concepts and skills. Instead, the second grade curriculum will provide opportunities for students to practice and apply the first grade expectation, "Demonstrate how to express emotions in healthy ways" and support their progression toward learning the third grade expectations, "Utilize knowledge and skills to treat self and others with care and respect" and "Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills to support positive interactions with families, peers, and others." Documents depicting the progression of learning for each PGC can be found here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/DesignTools.htm>

**Are districts required to teach all of the standards?**

SB 08-212, Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids, called for Colorado’s next generation of standards to “consider the needs of the whole student by creating a rich and balanced curriculum.” As such, Colorado revised all content area standards in 2009 to ensure districts would have high quality standards from which to develop curriculum to ensure that all students are well prepared for active citizenship in the 21st century. SB 08-212 states that “shall design the curricula to ensure that each student receives a program of study that will enable the student to demonstrate attainment of each of the preschool through elementary and secondary education standards.” The Colorado Department of Education encourages districts to provide rich educational programming for all students including electives delineated within the Colorado Academic Standards to the greatest degree possible and as fiscally practicable.

**Will CDE monitor district adoption of the Colorado Academic Standards?**

CRS 22-7-1013 states that by December 15, 2011, each local education provider shall review its standards in comparison with state standards. Following the review, each local education provider must revise its standards, as necessary, to ensure that local standards meet or exceed the state standards.

**How are districts to ensure grade level mastery when a district or school does not have a dedicated PK-12 program for every content area?**

CRS 22-7-1013(2) states: “The local education provider shall design the curricula to ensure that, beginning in preschool or kindergarten and continuing through elementary and secondary education, each student receives a program of study that will enable the student to demonstrate attainment of each of the preschool through elementary and secondary education standards.”

This statute requires all local education providers to design and adopt curricula that enable students to master the standards in all content areas. However, Colorado is a local control state. Thus, each district has the liberty to determine its own course structure based on their community’s resources, priorities, and strategies to meet the shared goal and definition for postsecondary workforce readiness for all of Colorado’s students.

Throughout 2011-2013, CDE will be developing and identifying instructional resources to assist districts in offering a rich and balanced program for all students.

**What might be the impact of phasing in the standards in different content areas at different times over the next three years?**

The Colorado Academic Standards are interrelated across content areas. Implementing using a staggered approach could lead to some misalignment of expectations across content areas within a grade level. For example, personal financial literacy is embedded in both social studies and mathematics at each grade level. Implementing these two content areas on a separate timeline would result in a disconnected treatment of personal financial literacy.

Also, the elementary CAS have concepts that appear in multiple content areas within a each grade. For instance, the concept of claims and evidence is common across multiple content areas in fourth grade. CDE recommends districts carefully consider the interconnectedness of the Colorado Academic Standards before deciding on a different sequencing of content.

**What other legislative components should districts consider in What other legislative components should districts consider in standards implementation?**

There are additional requirements related to personal financial literacy, social studies, the arts, and comprehensive health education.

1. *Personal Financial Literacy*

CRS 22-7-404.

This statute requires each local education provider to adopt the personal financial literacy standards, which are embedded in the mathematics and social studies standards, to revise its curricula as necessary, and to adopt aligned assessments.

1. *Social Studies*

CRS 22-1-104. Teaching of history, culture, and civil government.

This statute requires the teaching of history, culture, and civil government of the state of Colorado be taught in all public schools of this state. The history and civil government of the United States, which includes the history, culture, and contributions of minorities, including but not limited to, the American Indians, the Hispanic Americans, and the African Americans, shall be taught in all the public schools of the state. Satisfactory completion of a course on the civil government of the United States and the state of Colorado shall be a condition of high school graduation in the public schools of this state.

1. *The Arts*

CRS 22-1-104.5. Teaching of visual arts and performing arts. This statute defines the above terms and strongly encourages the provision of “courses in visual arts and in performing arts, which courses shall be based on content standards for visual arts and performing arts and provided in compliance with state and federal law…[and] to explore and implement innovative delivery mechanisms for performing arts and visual arts courses, including but not limited to using on-site technology and software, online education, and collaboration among community colleges, other school districts or public schools, boards of cooperative services, and regional service areas.”

1. *Comprehensive Health Education*

CRS 22-1-110. Effect of use of alcohol and controlled substances to be taught.

This statute requires that students, kindergarten through grade twelve, study the effects of alcohol and controlled substances on the human system should be included in other branches of study and taught thoroughly and comparably to other branches of study.

CRS 22-1-110.5. Education regarding human sexuality.

This statute requires the curriculum and instruction on human sexuality maintain standards for the curriculum that are based on scientific research and:

1. Encourage family involvement and communication;
2. Emphasize abstinence and teach that sexual abstinence is the only certain way and most effective way to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and infections, including but not limited to instruction regarding HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, the link between human papillomavirus (HPV) and cancer, and the availability of the HPV vaccine;
3. Help students develops skills for making responsible and healthy choices;
4. Include discussion of how alcohol and drug use impairs responsible and healthy decision-making;
5. Is age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and medically accurate according to published authorities upon which medical professionals generally rely;
6. Include the health benefits and potential side effects of using contraceptives and barrier methods to prevent pregnancy, including emergency contraception and the availability of contraceptive methods; and
7. Promote any established character education program pursuant to CRS 22-29-103.

***Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness and 21st Century Skills***

**What is Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR)?**

The Colorado State Board of Education defines Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) as the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential for high school graduates to be prepared to enter college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy (adopted June 2009). The Colorado Academic Standards represent the knowledge and skills needed to be postsecondary and workforce ready. Additional skills and behaviors included in PWR are Colorado's 21st century skills, creativity and innovation, work ethic, civic responsibility, communication, personal responsibility, and global and cultural awareness.

**What are Colorado's 21st century skills?**

Five skills have been identified by Colorado as necessary for all students to be post-secondary and workforce ready.  These 21st century skills are: Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Self Direction, Collaboration, Information Literacy, and Invention.  Additional information on these 21st Century Skills can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/ExploreTheKeyElements.htm>

Each content area in the Colorado Academic Standards provides additional information about how the 21st Century Skills are demonstrated within that content area. This information can be found starting on the following pages in the listed content area (click on the content area to go to the standards document):

Page 18 -- [Dance](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Dance_Standards_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 16 -- [Drama and Theatre Arts](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Drama_&_Theatre_Arts_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 13 -- [Comprehensive Health & Physical Education](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Health_PE_Standards_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 43 -- [Mathematics](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Revised%20Mathematics%20Standards%2011.29.10.doc) (Reissued December 2010)

Page 19 -- [Music](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Music_Standards_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 22 -- [Reading, Writing and Communicating](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Revised_RWC_Standards_11.29.2010.doc) (Reissued December 2010)

Page 23 -- [Science](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Science_Standards_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 21 -- [Social Studies](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Social_Studies_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 20 -- [Visual Arts](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Visual_Arts_Standards_adopted_12.10.09.doc)

Page 21 -- [World Languages](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/World_Languages_Standards_Adopted_12.10.09.doc)

**Where are the postsecondary and workforce readiness content and skills found in the Colorado Academic Standards?**

The concepts and skills found in Colorado's definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness are woven throughout the standards.  The concepts and skills do not live in any one place. However, by going through the learning progression represented in the standards toward becoming a prepared graduate, students will meet or exceed all aspects of Colorado's postsecondary and workforce readiness.

**Where are the 21st century skills in the Colorado Academic Standards?**

The 21st century skills were carefully and intentionally woven within the Grade Level Expectations, Evidence Outcomes, Inquiry Questions, Relevance and Application, and Nature of statements in every content area.  CDE recommends educators, parents, and interested community members go through the following activity with the standards to understand how the 21st century skills are woven into the tapestry of the standards. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/ExploreTheKeyElements.htm>

**Being technology proficient is also an important skill? Why is it not included in the Colorado Academic Standards?**

Technology proficiency **is** important. However, technology supports the teaching and learning process and is therefore embedded within the standards. For example, an inquiry question from the World Languages standards asks "What communication strategies help maintain communication?" While this question does not explicitly suggest the use of social media, electronic devices (e.g., smart phones, iPads, or netbook computers), and online conferencing, these are the communication tools of the 21st century and therefore should be used to develop postsecondary and workforce ready students. Because technology is necessary to apply much of the content in any discipline in the 21st century, many technology-related statements can be found in the "Relevance and Application" section on the right hand of the standards document.

***DOK- Depth of Knowledge***

**What is DOK?**

DOK stands for depth of knowledge and refers to a hierarchy of cognitive demand or complexity across all subject areas and grade levels. Understanding the depth in which a student must be able to work with a concept or skill provides critical guidance for classroom instruction. The Colorado Academic Standards utilized Webb’s DOK scale outlined below:

Recall Level 1

Skills & Concepts Level 2

Strategic Thinking Level 3

Extended Thinking Level 4

For more information on Norman Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels and alignment tool (1997, 2002, 2005), see [www.wcer.wisc.edu?WAT/index.aspx](http://www.wcer.wisc.edu?WAT/index.aspx). For more on how DOK is utilized in the CAS, see [www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Online\_Standards.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Online_Standards.html)

**Why is DOK important?**

DOK levels illuminate the intent of the standards and enable teachers to ensure mastery. DOK levels will also inform the development of new assessments so that the depth of the concept or skill is aligned from standards to assessment. DOK levels also illustrate the rigor, application, and higher order thinking required by the Colorado Academic Standards.

**How can I access the DOK levels of the Colorado Academic Standards?**

The DOK levels are listed after each evidence outcome in the searchable standards version of the Colorado Academic Standards. The revised reading, writing, and communicating and mathematics standards’ DOK levels are forthcoming. Click the following link to access the [searchable standards webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Online_Standards.html).

***The Standards and English Language Learners***

**What do the standards documents mean to English Language Learners (ELLs)?**

All students are expected to meet or exceed the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), including English language learners (ELLs). All teachers are expected to provide access to the CAS for all students, including ELLs. The Colorado English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, also known as the ELP Standards, should be used by all teachers to help ELL’s learn academic English and ensure access to the CAS.

**Where can we purchase WIDA aligned materials?**

CDE does not endorse any set of materials. Rather, CDE provides districts with information that will allow them to make informed decisions about materials designed for English language learners and meet the specific needs of the local district and community.

The WIDA consortium website recently added support for the selection of instructional materials that correlate to WIDA ELP standards. See the following link for additional information: <http://prime.wceruw.org/index.aspx>.

***The Standards and Gifted Learners***

**What do the standards documents mean to gifted learners?**

The Colorado Academic Standards should not be viewed as the ceiling for learning. The role of instruction is to differentiate curriculum for individual student needs and abilities. The Colorado Academic Standards are designed to support the learning of all students in Colorado.  The standards represent a progression of mastery expectations that lead to the prepared graduate competencies.

***The Standards and RtI***

**How does RtI (Response to Intervention) fit with the Colorado Academic Standards?**

RtI provides a framework for designing structures and practices in an educational system. Within this framework, curriculum and instruction is one of the six critical components of a multi-tiered model designed to meet student needs. The Colorado Academic Standards, along with the learning steps to reach them, provide the foundation of a solid curriculum, allowing students, parents, and educators to track a student’s progress toward being a prepared graduate. Students that are not making progress need extra support (interventions) to make sure they progress toward the prepared graduate competencies. The more a student is struggles or the further behind a student is, the more intense the intervention should be. The revised Colorado Academic Standards act as one benchmark to measure student progress within the RtI model. For more information on RtI and the latest resources please visit the [Colorado Department of Education's RtI webpage.](http://www.cde.state.co.us/RtI/)

***The Standards and Students with Disabilities***

**How do the revised standards documents address students with disabilities?**

The general education curriculum is the curriculum base for all students. As such, the revised academic standards continue to be for all students. The standards themselves are not designed to support nor discriminate against any population of students. They represent a progression of mastery expectations that lead to Prepared Graduate Competencies. The Colorado Academic Standards should be taught within a curricular framework that supports differentiated instruction that includes appropriate accommodations for accessibility and modifications of content.

**What are examples of how the Colorado Academic Standards would be taught within a curriculum framework that includes appropriate accommodations?**

Accommodations are practices and procedures that provide equitable access during instruction for students. The purpose of accommodations is to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability by giving the student access to the content. Accommodations do not, however, reduce learning expectations. Examples of accommodations for students with disabilities include: instructional materials in braille, the use of a word processing device with word prediction, math manipulative, and/or student reads aloud to self. These accommodations allow the student to have access to the standards-based curriculum. Accommodations used for both instruction and state assessments must be documented on the student’s Individualized Education Program and/or 504 Plan.

For more information about accommodations, please refer to the Colorado Accommodations Manual: Selecting and Using Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment, which can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csapa/2010/2010\_Accommodations\_Manual.pdf

**What are examples of how the Colorado Academic Standards would be taught within a curriculum framework that includes appropriate modifications?**

All students should be held to high expectations and taught accordingly. For some students with disabilities, the instructional team will determine the need for curricular modifications. Modifications are changes or a reduction of the learning or assessment expectations. Some examples of modifications include: requiring a student to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems), reducing assignments and assessments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items, and/or providing the student with guidance to scaffold to the correct answer on an assignments and tests. Modifications for students with disabilities should be determined by the educational team and based on careful progress monitoring procedures of how the student is progressing with grade-level curriculum expectations.

**What are Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs) and who uses them?**

The EEOs are alternate achievement standards that are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who qualify for the alternate assessment. Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs) are appropriate for a small number of students (approximately 1% of the total population) whose IEP team has determined that the student requires an alternate curriculum. For these learners, the focus is still on the general education curriculum, but with alternate evidence outcomes that allow for incorporated learning progressions.

**Where can the new Extended Evidence Outcomes be found?**

The EEOs are alternate achievement standards that are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Extended Evidence Outcomes have not yet been adopted by the State Board of Education. A draft of the Extended Evidence Outcomes can be viewed at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/ExpandedBenchmarks.html>

**Why were the Extended Evidence Outcomes not adopted at the same time as the revised Colorado Academic Standards?**

The revision process to the Colorado Academic Standards included multiple drafts before their currently adopted form.  To ensure sufficient time to align Extended Evidence Outcomes to the adopted standards, the State Board of Education approved an extension of the adoption deadline.

**Will Extended Evidence Outcomes be developed for all academic areas?**

The Extended Evidence Outcomes Subcommittee work is focused on mathematics; science; social studies; and reading, writing and communicating. This work must be completed prior to the alternate assessment development.

***General Questions for the Arts***

**Please give an overview of the new arts legislation passed in May, 2010.**

[House Bill 10 – 1273](http://www.michie.com/colorado/lpExt.dll?f=templates&eMail=Y&fn=main-h.htm&cp=coals/1/6056/86d7/86db), “Concerning Improved Workforce Development Through Increased Participation in Arts Education in Public Schools,” was signed into law on May 18, 2010 recognizing the vital role of creativity in postsecondary and workforce readiness. The law provides a state definition for visual and performing arts and strongly encourages each local education provider to provide standards-based courses in visual arts and in performing arts and “to explore and implement innovative delivery mechanisms for performing arts and visual arts courses, including but not limited to using on-site technology and software, online education, and collaboration among community colleges, other school districts or public schools, boards of cooperative services, and regional service areas.”

**Arts Teachers have always taught higher level thinking and depth of knowledge. Why was it necessary to revise standards with these elements?**

It is true that 21st Century skills are innately present in arts classrooms. All content areas embedded the 21st century skills and postsecondary and workforce readiness skills (PWR) to explicitly communicate the presence of these concepts and skills within classrooms, promote intentional and focused teaching opportunities, and to develop a statewide understanding of the importance of these skills.

***Performing Arts Questions***

**What is the purpose of two pathways in high school in the performing arts disciplines?**

Enrolling in a performing arts program offers many opportunities, such as becoming a performer or a member of the ever-growing arts, entertainment and creative industries. The concepts and skills required for these opportunities vary. Each content area has summarized the intent of the two pathways in high school on the following pages of the standards documents.

Pathways description in Dance- Page 13

Pathways description Drama and Theatre Arts-Page 12

Pathways description in Music- Page 12

***Visual Arts Questions***

**Why are the Principles and Elements of Design not specified in the new standards?**

The elements and principles of design represent a western view of visual art; they are not utilized globally. The visual arts standards writing committee felt the use of elements and principles of design within the standards implied curricular requirements. It is not the intention of state standards to mandate these smaller, granular level skills, typically that is the purview of local curriculum documents. The ideas and conceptual focus of the standards document needed a broader perspective, which led to the use of “characteristics and expressive features of design” in the document. The detailed skills were left for districts and teachers to determine.

**Do the new standard names imply a cycle of learning?**

Yes. The visual arts standards writing subcommittee chose the four standards names to represent the cyclical creative process that occurs in an arts classroom. As students create art, they are simultaneously thinking, observing, reflecting, and connecting historical and cultural context.

***Comprehensive Health & Physical Education Questions***

**Because health education and physical education are addressed in one set of standards, does this mean they must be taught together?**

Comprehensive health and physical education are distinct disciplines with distinct prepared grade competencies (with the exception of one regarding safety), grade level expectations, evidence outcomes, and 21st century skills and readiness competencies. The two disciplines are contained in one standards document because they complement one another in their contribution to postsecondary workforce readiness. Both disciplines engage students in the knowledge and skills they need to develop and maintain their own health, fitness, and overall wellness in order to become successful learners and healthy and productive adults. This does not imply that districts should teach the content together; however, connections should be intentionally made to ensure mastery of the concepts.

**What if districts do not teach health education now? Do districts need to start?**

The Comprehensive Health Education standards are part of the Colorado Academic Standards and need to be adopted, along with all of the other content areas. CRS 22-1-1013 states that “each local education provider shall design the curricula to ensure that each student receives a program of study that will enable the student to demonstrate attainment of each the standards”.

**If we already have adopted the national health education standards, do we have to adopt the Colorado standards as well?**

Yes. Although Colorado used the National Health Education Standards as references for writing the evidence outcomes, the Colorado standards are unique and local education agencies should use the Colorado standards, as opposed to the national standards, as their reference when preparing to “meet or exceed” the state’s standards.

**How much time will full implementation of the comprehensive health and physical education standards require?**

The Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards recommends that students in Pre-K to grade 2 receive a minimum of 40 hours and students in grades 3 to 12 receive a minimum of 80 hours of instruction in health education per academic year. www.aahperd.org/aahe/advocacy/positionStatements/upload/factSheet-ACS-AHA-ADA.pdf

The Physical Education standards were written based on the National Association for Sport and Physical Education’s recommendations that schools provide 150 minutes of instructional physical education for elementary school children and 225 minutes for middle and high school students per week for the entire school year.

[www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/nationalGuidelines/PEguidelines.cfm](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/nationalGuidelines/PEguidelines.cfm)