2020-2021 Dance and Drama & Theatre Arts Instructional Guidance for Diverse Learning Settings

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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

Table of Contents

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…
An attempt to recreate school at home during learning: • 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**	**Flexible goals and structures for learning** • **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**
Teacher-centered instruction • virtual lectures/classes that all students **synchronously** attend • teachers **delivering information and assignments** • teacher instruction and feedback as the **primary mode** of facilitating learning	**Purposeful teacher-student interactions** • **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
Assignments to "get through" content • **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	**Assignments that promote authentic learning** • **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.

Dance and Drama

Strategy	In-Person	Hybrid/Blended	Online only	Remote
Brainstorming or Developing Artistic Vision	Encourage students to use their imaginations for envisioning dance works, character development, scene work, or production elements. Allow students time to independently brainstorm.	Students may demonstrate movement, character choices, or share production ideas in person, or using an online platform.	Encourage students to view other artistic works that inspire them to create. Ask them to share what they have found. (To structure students with less experience, give students an online resource bank with guided handouts to access.)	Students may collect photos or video clips. Students may develop a power point presentation
Inquiry-Based Learning	Triggering and activating students' curiosity of an artistic question or idea. This may be accomplished by grouping students to gather information based on the needs of the task or project. Always practice safe social distancing.	In a hybrid situation, the teacher may introduce the students to the content of the task or unit project. During the time of remote learning, the students may be preparing their findings to movement sequences, monologues or scene performances to present to the teacher when in person.	Allow students to explore and discover artistic inspirations in which they would like to create. Ask students to share video clips, sketches and/or movement concepts. Students may previously video their creative ideas.	The same strategies for online learning work here for remote learning.

Strategy	In-Person	Hybrid/Blended	Online only	Remote
Demonstration or Modeling	No special considerations, demonstrating movement, or blocking for a scene would continue as it has. Always practice safe social distancing.	During times of remote learning, students may rehearse what was demonstrated or modeled to them when in person.	There are many strategies for modeling not only dramatic instruction, but movement techniques. Please access either the Educational Theatre Association or the Dance Magazine for resources.	There are obviously many online dance and theatre resources for students to access. Making sure those resources are appropriate is a priority. Asking students to select a dance work, a monologue, scene or set design and to replicate a segment of that video is a great way to utilize a resource as a model or demonstration.
Cooperative Learning	No special considerations, teachers may group students in collaborative teams for choreographing and scene work as usual. Always practice safe social distancing.	Again, during times of remote learning, the students may connect with each other online to rehearse.	Please access either the Educational Theatre Association or the National Dance Education Organization for resources.	During remote learning, it is suggested to continue encouraging students to work collaboratively. When using online platforms, utilize breakout rooms, giving small student groups structured tasks to complete.

Strategy	In-Person	Hybrid/Blended	Online only	Remote
Role Play	No special considerations, teachers may encourage students to role play characters, or even to role play leadership roles within the creative process. Students may work independently or in small groups. Always practice safe social distancing.	During the hybrid model, the teacher may guide students in selecting appropriate roles that are at the student's ability level. Once the remote learning begins, the students then may continue to develop the role, rehearse, then perform for the teacher and/or class.	Please access the Educational Theatre Association for resources.	In a remote learning situation, the teacher may encourage students to use different modalities while role playing. Also allow students to select roles that are at the appropriate ability level.
Improvisation	No special considerations, teachers may allow students to use improvisation techniques when developing movement, scene work, or designing sets. Always practice safe social distancing.	In the hybrid model students may work independently on improvising, or with a small group. Once the students have to the remote portion, they may record their improvisations to share with the teacher, and or class.	Please access the Educational Theatre Association for resources or access this article for Keeping Improv Alive During Coronavirus For dance students, this resource from DanceSpirit has some great points.	Encouraging students to continue to build relationships and community is imperative during remote learning. Asking theatre students to focus on listening skills by paying attention to what is being said by other student actors is key.

Strategy	In-Person	Hybrid/Blended	Online only	Remote
Close Reading Protocol	In small groups students read through monologues, scenes or inquiry-based information three times to gain deeper understanding of the content. Always practice safe social distancing.	In a hybrid situation, the students may begin the activity either independently, or in small groups. Once students have moved to their remote learning, they may experiment with 2-3 different ways of bringing the character to life. Dance students may develop 2-3 short movement sequences based on the overall themes from the reading.	Close reading protocol may not be "intuitive" for dance instruction, but is easy to do when students are given structured resources such as short stories or fairytales to adapt into movement sequences, or dance works.	This strategy works well for scoring scripts for dramatic activities. Students may upload their scored scripts into an online platform, such as a Google drive. Teachers may comment on the scored script to help students go deeper into the playwright's meaning.
Reflecting on the Creative Process	Students may write or discuss in small groups their reflections of their learning during the process of creating. Always practice safe social distancing.	Teachers may blend both in person and remote learning strategies for reflecting on the creative process.	Students may write journal entries or discuss reflections in small groups as they answer structured questions of the creative process.	Students may upload journal entries into an online platform, such as a Google drive. Journal entries may include written, oral, sketched reflections.

Strategy	In-Person	Hybrid/Blended	Online only	Remote
Evaluations and Critiques	Students view performances and evaluate/critique final outcomes. Teachers may ask students to evaluate their personal performances, or to evaluate how the ensemble worked together.	Teachers may blend both in person and remote learning strategies for evaluating and critiquing self, the creative process, or an ensemble performance.	Students may evaluate their own performances, or give constructive critiques guided by a structured rubric.	Students may give an oral critique in the form of an interview, answering guided questions.

Notes to consider for Dance and Drama/Theatre Arts instruction: Instruction works best when the concepts of Imagine, Create, Perform, Evaluate and Discuss are implemented. When a student is able to express their art form while imagining, creating, performing, writing and discussing, they have utilized five different ways of expressing their artistic craft. Using these five strategies during the creative process will reach many different types of learners.

Educational Theatre Association Guide for Reopening School Theatre Programs