

Reading, Writing, & Communicating Highlights

Design Principles & Instructional Shifts of the Colorado Academic Standards

Focus, Coherence, Rigor

- The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) emphasize what students need in order to be postsecondary and workforce ready. The CAS articulate grade level expectations every student should master at each grade level.
- The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) establish vertical and horizontal connections. Grade level expectations build vertical connections for achieving the prepared graduate statements in each content area. In addition, interdisciplinary relationships in the standards connect content areas horizontally across grade levels.
- The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are written for mastery. The standards require deeper student understanding in content and skills leading to mastery: fluency, application, and transfer of that content knowledge and skill.
- Instructional shifts emphasize using content-rich nonfiction to build knowledge, drawing on evidence from texts to develop an analysis or craft an argument, and using academic vocabulary across content areas while meeting the challenge of reading complex texts.

All Students, All Standards

- The Colorado Academic Standards form the core of Colorado's public education system by defining what every graduate at a public school in Colorado should know, understand, and demonstrate. Getting the standards right relies on the participation of all those with a stake in the quality of education Colorado students receive. Therefore, the Office of Standards and Instructional Support believes it is necessary to build educator capacity and literacy of the Colorado Academic Standards.

Standards Literacy

A standards literate educator:

- Possesses a working knowledge of the terms, categories, and meaning of the elements of the standards;
- Can effectively apply standards to develop or revise curriculum; and,
- Demonstrates best, first instruction through high impact strategies inherent within curriculum aligned to the standards.

In other words, educators understand how each element in the CAS is interwoven to provide a road map that ensures every student has an opportunity to be successful in college, a career, and life.

Common Core State Standards

The CAS in Reading, Writing, and Communicating are grounded in the Common Core State Standards. Teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators may find the following resources helpful, as we continue our transition to full implementation of the revised 2020 CAS:

- [Office of Standards and Instructional Support](http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction) which contains information, resources, training modules, and electronic versions of the 2009-10 and 2020 Colorado Academic Standards <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction>
- [International Reading Association](http://www.ira.org) (IRA) provides information on text complexity, guidance for literacy standards implementation, and other literacy resources.
- [National Council of Teachers of English](http://www.ncte.org) (NCTE) offers support for the key instructional shifts while keeping students at the center of instruction.
- [Edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org) includes information on implementation, lesson planning, and assessment as well as articles and research exploring the Common Core.
- [Google searches](https://www.google.com/search?q=CCSS+coding) allow you to type in the CCSS coding to find resources for specific standards. For example, to find information on argument writing in 6th Grade, type "W.6.1a" in the Google search bar. Such a search would produce [this result](#).

What's Next?

- Two-year implementation of the 2020 CAS (beginning fall 2018)
- Full implementation of 2020 CAS starting in 2020-2021 school year
- Ongoing Training and Resources for Standards Implementation, Educator Effectiveness, and Assessment

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"If you cannot write well, you cannot think well, and if you cannot think well, others will do your thinking for you."

-- George Orwell

Helpful Links:

Reading, Writing and Communicating Webpage:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/coreadwriting>

Reading, Writing, and Communicating Standards:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/coreadwriting/statestandards>

Standards Implementation Support:

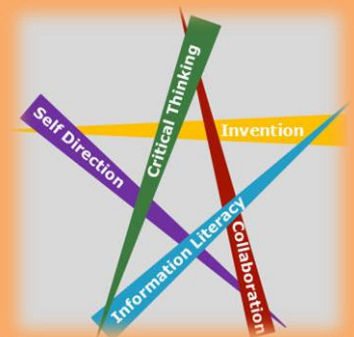
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction>

Colorado Academic Standards Online Tool:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/apps/standards/>

Assessment Resource Bank:

www.coloradopl.org/assessment



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