

**COLORADO  
MODEL CONTENT STANDARDS  
FOR  
DANCE**

*Voluntary Dance Standards*

# INTRODUCTION

## Colorado Model Content Standards for Dance

### Dance Is Important to Life and Learning

**Dance serves as one of humanity's deepest rivers of continuity. It connects each new generation to those who have gone before. Students need dance to make these connections and to express the otherwise inexpressible.**

Dance education benefits the student because it cultivates the whole person, gradually building many kinds of literacy while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity into unique forms of expression and communication. If dance education is to serve its proper function, each student must develop an understanding of such questions as these: What is the dance? How do dance artists work and what techniques do they use? How do traditional, popular, classical, and modern dance forms influence one another? Why is dance important to me and my society? As students seek the answers to these questions, they develop an understanding of the essence of dance, and of the knowledge and skills that enliven it. The content and the inter-relatedness of the Standards, especially, go a long way toward producing such understanding. But meeting the Standards cannot, and should not, imply that every student will acquire a common set of artistic values. Ultimately, students are responsible for their own artistic values. Standards provide a positive and substantive framework for those who teach young people why and how dance is valuable to them as persons and as participants in a shared culture.

The affirmations below describe the values that can inform what happens when the Standards, students and their teachers come together. These expectations draw connections among dance, the lives of students, and the world at large:

- Dance has both intrinsic and instrumental value; that is, it has worth in and of itself and can also be used to achieve a multitude of purposes (e.g., to present issues and ideas, to teach or persuade, to entertain, to design, plan, and beautify).
- Dance is a way of knowing. Students grow in their ability to comprehend their world when they learn the dance. As they create dance works of art, they learn how to express themselves and how to communicate with others.
- Dance is indispensable to freedom of inquiry and expression.
- Dance provides forms of nonverbal communication that strengthen the presentation of ideas and emotions.
- Dance plays a valued role in creating cultures and building civilizations.
- Dance has values and significance for daily life. It provides personal fulfillment, whether in vocational settings, avocational pursuits, or leisure.

- Lifelong participation in dance is a valuable part of a life fully lived and for life-long fitness and should be cultivated.
- Appreciating dance means understanding the interactions among the various professions and roles involved in creating, performing, studying, teaching, presenting, and supporting the dance, and in appreciating their interdependent nature.
- Openness, respect for work, and contemplation when participating in dance as an observer or audience member are personal attitudes that enhance enjoyment and should be developed.
- Because dance offers the continuing challenge of situations in which there is no standard or approved answer, those who study dance become acquainted with many perspectives on the meaning of "artistic value."
- The modes of thinking and methods of the dance disciplines can be used to illuminate situations in other disciplines that require creative solutions.
- Attributes such as self-discipline, the collaborative spirit, and perseverance, which are so necessary to dance, transfer to the rest of life.
- Awakening to folk arts and their influence on dance deepens respect for one's own and for others' ethnic communities.
- Each person has a responsibility for advancing civilization. The dance encourages taking this responsibility and provide skills and perspectives for doing so.

As students work at increasing their understanding of such promises and challenges presented by dance, they are preparing **to make their own contributions to the nation's storehouse** of culture. The more students live up to these high expectations, the more empowered our citizenry will become. Indeed, helping students to meet the standards is among the best possible investments in the future of not only our children, but also of our country and civilization.

# **Colorado Model Content Standards**

## **DANCE**

- 1. Students will understand and demonstrate dance skills.**
- 2. Students will understand and apply the principles of choreography.**
- 3. Students will create, communicate, and problem solve through dance.**
- 4. Students will understand and relate the role of dance in culture and history.**
- 5. Students will understand the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness.**
- 6. Students will understand the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines.**

# Colorado Model Content Standards DANCE

## Standard 1:

**Students will understand and demonstrate dance skills.**

### RATIONALE

*The study of dance builds strength, coordination, musicality, and flexibility, contributing to lifelong fitness and well being. As students achieve proficiency in dance skills, they experience increased self-esteem, contributing toward their physical, mental, and emotional development as productive, healthy people.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-A what students know and are able to do includes

- observing and demonstrating a series of movements in a given order that create a movement phrase through basic non-locomotor and locomotor movement
- demonstrating accuracy in moving with a rhythmic beat and responding to changes in tempo
- demonstrating awareness of spatial dimensions by moving and creating shapes within each dimension

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- demonstrating accurate memorization and reproduction of movement sequences using different styles
- transferring a rhythmic pattern from the auditory to the kinesthetic, and a spatial pattern from the visual to the kinesthetic
- identifying and demonstrating mechanical movement skills
- identifying and demonstrating a range of dynamic energies and movement qualities

*Ninth & Twelfth students will:*

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- defining and demonstrating more complex mechanical movement skills

- identifying and demonstrating longer and more complex movement combinations in a broad dynamic range from different dance styles/traditions
- demonstrating rhythmic accuracy
- demonstrating performance skills

## **Standard 2:**

**Students will understand and apply the principles of choreography.**

### **RATIONALE**

*A nonverbal idea can be expressed through choreography. The ability to put together a dance depends on finding appropriate movements to communicate an idea. These movements can then be put into dances which show an understanding of the choreographic craft.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- creating simple movements phrases through improvisation
- developing variations of phrases

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- creating complex movement phrases through improvisation
- developing variations of movement phrases
- using a variety of sources to structure a complete dance study

*Ninth & Twelfth students will:*

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- creating more complex movement phrases through improvisation
- using a variety of sources to structure a complete dance showing and understanding of form and craft
- contributing creative ideas to group choreography

## **Standard 3:**

**Students will create, communicate, and problem solve through dance.**

### **RATIONALE**

*Dance develops imagination, perception, appreciation, and tolerance through non-verbal experiences. Movement transcends language and cultural barriers while developing a respect for the work of others. This non-competitive atmosphere allows students to explore, discover, and realize various solutions to creative problems.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- discovering solutions to a movement problem and discussing reasons for that solution
- discussing how dance is different from other forms of movement
- presenting and discussing dances with peers

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- creating and evaluating movement while justifying artistic choices
- demonstrating the difference between literal and non literal movement
- comparing and contrasting dance compositions
- creating a dance that communicates a topic of personal interest

*Ninth & Twelfth students will:*

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- establishing, applying, and evaluating artistic criteria in one's own work and that of others
- discussing how personal experiences influence the creation and interpretation of dance
- understanding how movement choices communicate abstract ideas in dance
- observing and explaining how musical accompaniment, lighting, and costuming can affect and contribute to the meaning of a dance

## **Standard 4:**

**Students will understand and relate the role of dance in culture and history.**

### **RATIONALE**

*Dance has been interwoven in society throughout history, helping to create and define all cultures. By understanding dance as an integral part of history, the student learns how artistic creation is influenced by society and how society is reflected in and changed by art. Through the study of dance students learn to understand their own expression in relation to the expression of others.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- performing and discussing dances from various cultures
- describing dance in relation to historical periods

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- performing and evaluating dances from various cultures
- performing, describing, and comparing dance in relation to historical periods

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- performing and discussing the tradition and techniques of dance
- discussing the historical perspectives of dance and dancers in all historical periods
- analyzing how dance is viewed throughout history

## **Standard 5:**

**Students will understand the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness.**

### **RATIONALE**

*Dance is one of the few fitness activities that students can participate in during their entire lives. Students learn to improve dance skills and abilities and prevent injuries through an understanding of how the body works. Dance addresses the mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the student which improves self-image and promotes overall fitness in a non-competitive environment.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying fitness components and their relation to dance
- discussing how warmup activities prepare the body and mind for an activity

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying personal goals and methods to improve dance skills and fitness levels
- describing a logical class progression based on principles of fitness
- communicating how lifestyle choices affect the dancer

*Ninth & Twelfth students will:*

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- comparing and contrasting the training of dancers and other athletes in fitness activities
- evaluating strategies to increase fitness, improve dance skills, and prevent dance injuries
- comparing and analyzing historical and cultural images of the body in dance as depicted in all media

## **Standard 6:**

**Students will understand the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines.**

### **RATIONALE**

*The study of dance incorporates the movement of a human body in relationship to gravity, time and space, and with the use of energy. These fundamental elements of dance are also fundamental elements of other disciplines showing how dance crosses the boundaries to many other areas of study. In studying dance, students are challenged to take universal principles which are theoretical and apply them to practical and physical experiences.*

*Kindergarten & Fourth students will:*

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- creating a dance that combines an idea from another discipline
- responding to a dance by creating an image, discussing an idea or concept that relates to that dance

*Fifth & Eighth students will:*

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- creating a project that reveals similarities and differences between dance and the other arts
- discussing examples of similar concepts used between dance and other disciplines outside of the arts

*Ninth & Twelfth students will:*

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- creating an interdisciplinary project based on a theme using dance and other disciplines to create a desired solution
- identifying commonalities between dance and other disciplines
- demonstrating and discussing how technology can be used to impact a dance idea in an interdisciplinary project

# GLOSSARY

## Colorado Model Dance Content Standards for Dance

**Abstract.** To remove movement from a particular or representative context and (by manipulating it with elements of space, time and force) create a new sequence or dance that retains the essence of the original.

**Artistic Criteria.** Standards on which to make judgments about the merits of a work of art.

**Auditory.** The sense of hearing.

**Choreography.** A dance sequence that has been created with specific intent.

### **Communication:**

**Literal.** Movement which is created having to do with a particular story **line, theme,** or idea.

**Non-Literal.** Movement which is created simply for the sake of movement.

**Non-Verbal.** Having to do with posture, gesture, body position, facial expression, use of space, and attitude.

**Verbal.** To engage in oral form of presentation.

**Culture.** Characteristics of a particular group of **people--their** beliefs, customs, traditions, ceremonies.

**Dance Composition.** A sequence of movements created with a specific thematic structure.

**Dynamics.** The expressive content of human movement sometimes called qualities or efforts. Dynamics manifest the interrelationships among the elements of space, time and **force/energy.**

**Elements of Dance.** Space, Time, Force/Energy. Dance moves in and through space; progresses through time, at various speeds or tempos; and requires the body to use energy in a wide range of movements from very light and minimal to very big and strong.

**Energy.** That which gives various movements their specific characteristics of force, either strong or light, such as **kicking** or running, and floating or turning.

**Fitness.** The ability of the body to work efficiently under various situations. Fitness includes flexibility, strength, endurance (both muscular and cardiovascular), and percentage of body fat.

**Improvisation.** Movement that is created spontaneously, and is both choreography and performance simultaneously.

**Kinesthetic.** The ability of the body's sensory organs in the muscles, tendons, and joints to respond to either external or internal stimuli.

**Locomotor.** Movement which takes a person from one point to another, through space (i.e., walk, run, leap, jump, hop, crawl, slide).

**Mechanical Movement Skills.** Skills relating to aspects of balance, alignment, weight shift, elevation, landing, fall and recovery, articulation of isolated body parts, and initiation of movement.

### **Movement:**

**Quality.** The identifying attributes created by the release, follow-through, and termination of energy, which are key to making movement become dance. Typical terms denoting qualities include sustained, swinging, percussive, collapse, suspended, and vibratory; and effort combinations such as float, dab, punch, and glide.

**Sequence.** A series of movements which have a logical progression from beginning to end.

**Theme.** A complete idea in movement that is manipulated and developed within a dance.

**Non-locomotor.** Movement which is performed in one spot or small area (i.e., turn, spin, stretch, bend, lunge, jump, hop)

**Phrase.** A brief sequence of related movements that has a sense of rhythmic completion.

**Rhythmic Accuracy.** The ability to transfer the rhythm from an auditory stimuli into a kinesthetic movement while maintaining the tempo and energy of the rhythm.

**Spatial Dimensions.** One of the elements of movement. Movement occurs in and through space and includes size, shape, direction, level, focus, floor pattern, locomotor, and nonlocomotor movements.

**Style.** A distinctive manner of moving, the characteristic way dance is done, created, or performed that identifies the dance of particular performer, choreographer, historical period or culture.

**Technique.** The learning of movement skills; the ability to use choreographic craft.

**Tempo.** The speed of movement as it progresses faster, more slowly, or on a pulse beat.

**Traditional Dance.** Dances and dance forms that have come from the traditions of a people or culture. (i.e. folk dance)

**Warm-up Activities.** Movements and/or movement phrases designed to raise the core body temperature and bring the mind into focus for the dance activities to follow.

**A Matrix for Integrating the Colorado Model Content Standards for Dance  
With Specific Colorado Standards in other Subjects**

Reading/Writing

Mathematics

Science

History

Geography

Dance

Visual Art

Music

Foreign Language

Physical Education

#4	#1,2,4, 5,6	#1,2,5, 6	#4,5,6	#3,5,6	-----	#1,2,4, 5	#1,3,4, 5,6	#1,5	#1,2,3
#4	#1,2,4, 5,6	#1,2,3, 5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	-----	#1,2,3, 4,5	#1,3,4, 5,6	#1,2,5	#1,2,3
#4,5	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#2,3,4, 5,6	-----	#1,2,3, 4,5	#1,3,4, 5,6	#1,2,3, 5	#1,2,3
#5,6		#5	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	-----	#1,2,3, 4,5	#1,3,4, 5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5	
#5		#3,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,6	#2,3,4, 6	-----	#1,2,4, 5	#1,5,6	#1,3,5	#1,2,3
#3,4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5,6	-----	#1,2,3, 4,5	#1,3,4, 5,6	#1,2,3, 4,5	#1,2,3

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Students will understand and demonstrate dance Skills.

**Standard 2**  
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**Standard 3**  
Students will create, communicate, and problem solve through dance.

**Standard 4**  
Students will understand and relate the role of dance in culture and history.

**Standard 5**  
Students will understand the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness.

**Standard 6**  
Students will understand the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines.

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