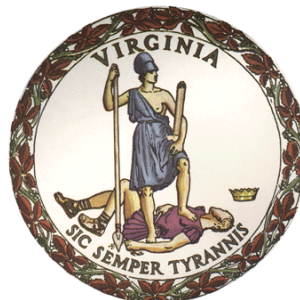


Health Education Standards of Learning

for

Virginia Public Schools



Health Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools

**Adopted January 2020 by the
Board of Education**

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Preface

The 2020 Health Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools utilize the best practices from the 2015 Standards of Learning and elevate them to meet the health challenges facing today’s youth. Students will learn essential health concepts, develop understanding of health information, and actively advocate for their own health, as well as the health of their peers, families, and communities.

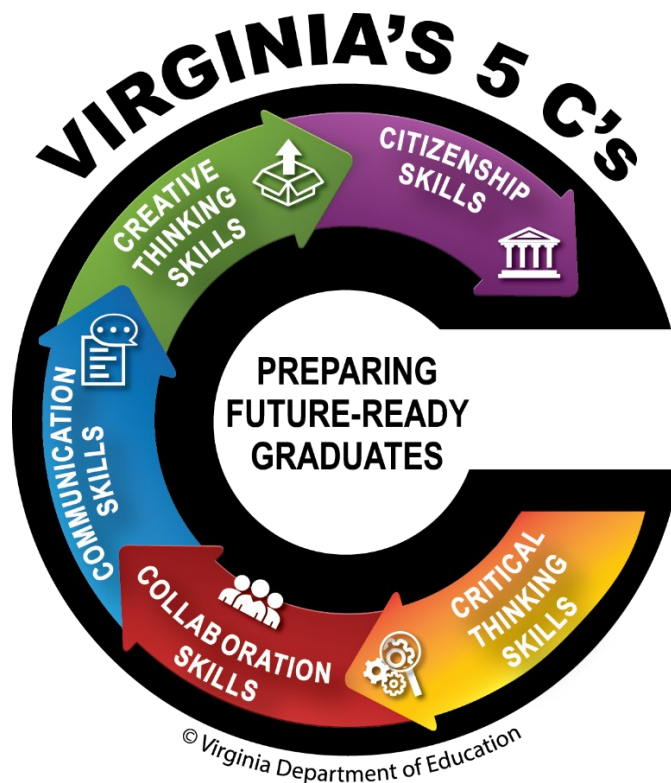
The 2020 Standards of Learning reflect age-appropriate knowledge and abilities, increasing in depth and complexity as students mature. The standards are designed to provide a core body of knowledge (i.e., Body Systems, Nutrition, Physical Health, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion, Substance Abuse Prevention, Safety/Injury Prevention, Mental Wellness/Social and Emotional Competence, Violence Prevention, Community/Environmental Health), while also allowing flexibility for students to develop personal values and beliefs and shared positive group norms and for individual school communities to address local health issues and emerging health concerns.

The standards follow the research-based recommendations of mental, social, emotional and behavioral health, substance abuse prevention, nutrition, and public health subject matter experts and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for health education curricula by teaching functional health information; shaping personal values and beliefs that support healthy behaviors; shaping group norms that value a healthy lifestyle; and developing the essential health skills necessary to adopt, practice, and maintain health-enhancing behaviors. The standards are also designed to support the social and emotional development of students (<https://casel.org/core-competencies/>), enhancing students’ capacity to integrate skills, attitudes, and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily tasks and challenges, understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The standards articulate learning goals in the terms of what students should know, understand, and do. Standard 1, Essential Health Concepts, provides foundational health knowledge—what students should know. Standard 2, Healthy Decisions, broadens student understanding of health content at the same time it develops skills to allow students to transfer information in a variety of contexts to make healthy and safe life choices—what students should understand. Standard 3, Advocacy and Health Promotion, provides relevance for student learning and opportunities for students to demonstrate or design realistic outcomes for application of health information—what students should be able to do to advocate for their health and the health of others. The standards enable students to immerse themselves in a health topic from content to understanding to application and advocacy. As a result, Virginia students will be better prepared to make healthy decisions for themselves and influence others to do the same.

Profile of a Virginia Graduate

The 2020 Health Standards of Learning support the Profile of a Virginia Graduate through the development and use of communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and civic responsibility skills necessary to adopt and maintain health-enhancing behaviors, manage feelings, build healthy relationships, successfully navigate social environments, make safe life choices and advocate for personal health and the health of others.

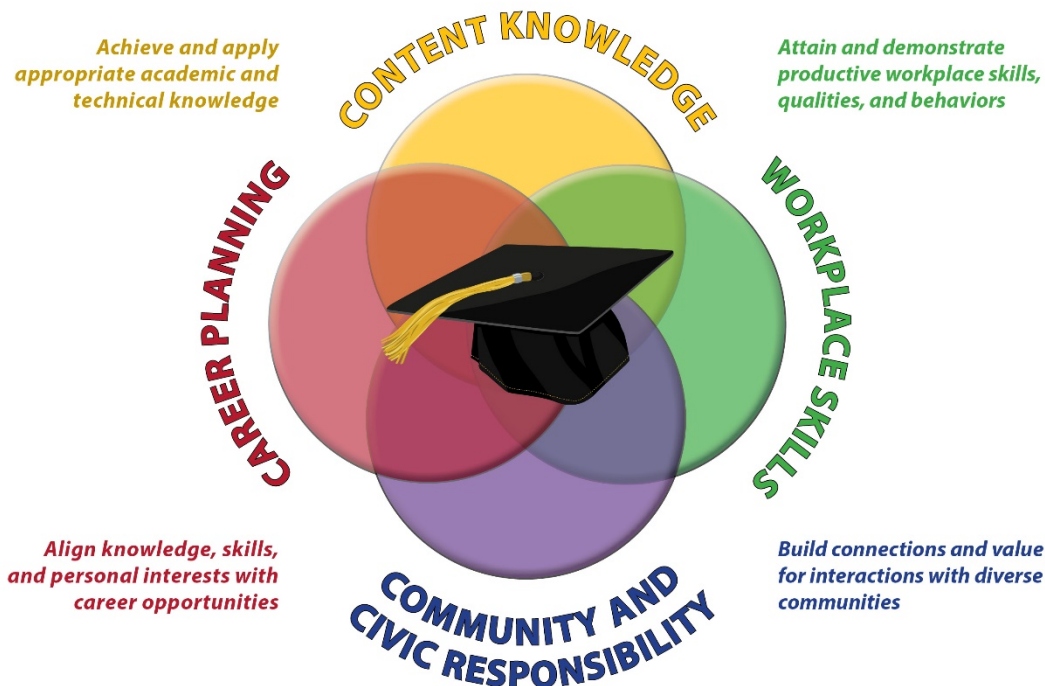


Through Health Education, students will

- ✓ *Acquire, interpret, and understand health concepts; and develop and apply a range of health skills needed to make appropriate health decisions (Content Knowledge)*
- ✓ *Acquire and practice effective communication, relationship-, cooperation-, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and stress-management skills (Workplace Skills)*
- ✓ *Engage in home, school, and community projects to enhance physical, mental, social, emotional, and environmental health (Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility)*
- ✓ *Explore a variety of health-related career opportunities in health promotion, disease, injury, and substance abuse prevention, mental health, nutrition, and community health (Career Exploration)*

Profile of a Virginia Graduate

In Virginia, the Life Ready Individual Will
During His or Her K-12 Experience:



INTRODUCTION

Health education increases health literacy, helps students understand how to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and fosters the motivation, skills, and self-efficacy necessary to make informed and healthy choices, avoid high-risk behaviors, and build healthy families, relationships, schools, and communities. The *Health Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* identify the concepts, processes, and academic, social and emotional skills for a continuum of learning experiences for students from kindergarten to grade ten. The standards provide school divisions and teachers with a guide for creating aligned curricula and structured learning experiences in health education that will provide students with the necessary knowledge, processes, and skills to make healthy choices (goal-setting and planning skills, communication and assertive skills, responsible decision making), prevent chronic disease, and avoid health-risk behaviors identified by the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (e.g., tobacco use, dietary patterns that contribute to disease, sedentary lifestyle, alcohol and other drug use, behaviors that result in intentional and unintentional injuries).

The standards for each grade level are grouped into three content strands—Essential Health Concepts, Healthy Decisions, and Advocacy and Health Promotion—that align with the overarching learning goals of the *Health Education Standards of Learning*. The content strands identify a core set of concepts and skills that facilitate the formation and promotion of healthy behaviors and practices. Indicators that align with the three content strands and address four dimensions of health (i.e., physical, emotional, social, environmental), as well as health careers,

are embedded at each grade level. These indicators identify the minimum standards for a sequential course of study within a comprehensive health education program. The indicators are sequenced to progress in complexity from grade level to grade level across several topic areas (i.e., Body Systems, Nutrition, Physical Health, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion, Substance Abuse Prevention, Safety/Injury Prevention, Mental Wellness/Social and Emotional Skills, Violence Prevention, Community/Environmental Health).

Goals and Strands

The purpose of health education is to develop health-literate students—students who acquire an understanding of health concepts and the skills needed to make healthy decisions to improve, sustain, and promote personal, family, and community health. These skills align with core competencies (i.e., self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship building, responsible decision making) identified in the CASEL framework for social and emotional learning (<https://casel.org/core-competencies/>). As a result of health education instruction, students will be able to:

- Access, evaluate, and synthesize information to protect, enhance, and advocate for their own and others' health, well-being, and safety across their lifespan;
- Critically analyze health information from a variety of sources (e.g., credible scientific and institutional sources, health brochures, media messages, websites) to make appropriate health decisions and access services needed to prevent or treat illness; and
- Develop and use personal, behavioral, social, and cognitive skills and strategies to promote a sense of personal identity and well-being and to build and manage respectful relationships.

The content for the Standards of Learning for health education is organized around the following three essential strands:

1. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to make healthy decisions that reduce health risks and enhance the health of oneself and others. **(Essential Health Concepts)**

The intent of this goal is for students to become health-literate, self-directed learners who recognize the relationship between personal behavior and personal health and can skillfully apply health-promotion and disease-prevention strategies as a foundation for leading healthy and productive lives. This includes the development of the capacity to acquire, interpret, and understand health concepts and the development and application of a range of health skills. Instruction will focus on the topics of hygiene, communicable and noncommunicable disease prevention, dental health, nutrition, sleep, mental wellness and social and emotional skills, drug use, physical activity, body systems, safety, intentional and unintentional injury and violence prevention, Internet safety, gangs, bullying, and preventive health care. As a result, students will have a comprehensive understanding of essential health concepts related to health promotion and risk/disease prevention, self-awareness and social awareness, and an enhanced ability to engage in lifelong health behaviors.

2. Demonstrate the ability to access, evaluate, and use health information, products, and services that influence health and wellness in a positive manner. **(Healthy Decisions)**

The intent of this goal is for students to demonstrate the ability to identify valid and accurate health information, products, and services. This ability is critical for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of most health problems. Valid health information raises awareness of the long-term consequences of unhealthy decisions and enables students to make decisions that support lifelong health. Students will experience many opportunities across their school years to use information-analysis and responsible decision-making skills as they compare, contrast, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate materials, products, and services related to a variety of health issues. As they become informed consumers, students will become aware of and able to analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health. Upon the completion of the health education program, students will be able to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms, and accept responsibility for personal health practices and engage in healthy decision making.

3. Demonstrate the use of appropriate health practices and behaviors to promote a safe and healthy community when alone, with family, at school, and in other group settings. **(Advocacy and Health Promotion)**

The intent of this goal is for students to become responsible, health-literate citizens who demonstrate an understanding of how to create and maintain an environment that serves to protect and promote the health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities. Students will develop awareness of social and media influences that affect their decision making and develop skills to effectively navigate and resist negative influences while building positive, healthy rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. Students will develop healthy habits for managing emotions including stress, anger, and impulse control, and learn how to effectively advocate for themselves and their communities, which also supports equity. Specifically, upon completing their health education program, students will demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors and advocate for ways in which peers, families, and community groups can work together to promote safe and healthy communities.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students recognize basic facts and concepts about their bodies and begin to acquire health skills and practices, including social and emotional skills, that keep them safe and healthy. Students learn to seek help and advice from parents/guardians and other trusted adults and begin to learn how to seek reliable health information. They understand how to make good decisions about simple health issues, respect others, follow school safety rules, and be responsible.

Essential Health Concepts

K.1 The student will identify and describe key health and safety concepts.

Body Systems

- a) Identify major body parts (e.g., head, torso, arms, legs, hands, feet, muscles, bones).
- b) Describe the five senses (i.e., sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch).

Nutrition

- c) Identify the MyPlate food groups (i.e., dairy, proteins, vegetables, fruits, grains) and a variety of foods and beverages from each group.
- d) Explain what it means to have a food allergy.

Physical Health

- e) Describe different types of physical activity and recognize the need for regular physical activity.
- f) Recognize the importance of a regular bedtime routine and enough sleep.

Disease Prevention/Health Promotion

- g) Define germs and describe how germs (e.g., bacteria, viruses) may cause common diseases (e.g., cold, flu).
- h) Describe the function of the teeth, how to take care of them, and the health professionals that help care for teeth (e.g., dentist, hygienist).

Substance Abuse Prevention

- i) Identify medicine as a pill or liquid that can be taken to feel better when sick but can cause harm if misused.
- j) Describe how medicine and other substances can be helpful or harmful, and recognize poison warning labels.

Safety/Injury Prevention

- k) Describe pedestrian, bike, bus, and playground safety practices.
- l) Describe emergency and nonemergency situations.
- m) Identify household products that are harmful or poisonous.

Mental Wellness/Social and Emotional Skills

- n) Identify a variety of feelings (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger, fear, frustration, calmness).
- o) Describe what it means to be a friend and how to show kindness, consideration, and concern for others (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills).
- p) Describe personal space.

Violence Prevention

- q) Recognize that classroom rules are important for school (e.g., sharing, respecting others).

Community/Environmental Health

- r) Identify items and materials that can be reused (e.g., grocery bags, paper, water bottles, other containers).

Healthy Decisions

K.2 The student will identify healthy decisions.

Body Systems

- a) Recognize how the major body parts work together to move.
- b) Identify situations that require the use of each of the five senses.

Nutrition

- c) Describe healthy meal, snack, and beverage options that include food from the MyPlate food groups (i.e., dairy, proteins, vegetables, fruits, grains).
- d) Identify foods that most often cause allergies.

Physical Health

- e) Identify positive physical activity options and the benefits of being physically active every day.
- f) Describe alternatives to screen time.

Disease Prevention/Health Promotion

- g) Explain how hand washing helps remove bacteria and viruses that can make people sick, and describe situations where it is important to wash hands.
- h) Discuss the benefits of personal hygiene practices (e.g., tooth brushing, flossing, hand washing, grooming).

Substance Abuse Prevention

- i) Describe consequences of taking medications unsupervised.
- j) Identify the meaning of safety signs, symbols, and warning labels and understand the dangers of white powder and other unknown substances.

Safety/Injury Prevention

- k) Describe how safety choices can prevent injuries (e.g., wearing a helmet, tying shoelaces, using seat belts and safety seats, sitting in the back seat of vehicles with airbags).
- l) Identify people who can help in an emergency and in non-emergency situations.
- m) Recognize that not all products advertised or sold are healthy or safe.

Mental Wellness/Social and Emotional Skills

- n) Describe how feelings can influence actions.
- o) Identify strategies for making friends and how to show kindness, consideration, and concern for others, including how to cooperate and share with others.
- p) Identify ways to tell someone they are entering one's personal space.

Violence Prevention

- q) Explain how classmates can support one another at school.

Community/Environmental Health

- r) Describe ways to reuse items and materials in the classroom.

Advocacy and Health Promotion

K.3 The student will describe and demonstrate behaviors that promote health and prevent injury and disease.

Body Systems

- a) Describe the different body parts involved in one movement (e.g., jumping, walking, biking).
- b) Describe ways to protect the five senses.

Nutrition

- c) Create a shopping list that includes foods from each MyPlate food group.

- d) Describe how to help people with food allergies (e.g., being respectful of restrictions in the classroom and cafeteria, not sharing food, getting help from an adult).

Physical Health

- e) Describe ways to participate regularly in physical activities inside and outside of school.
- f) Describe ways to calm down before bed to prepare for sleeping.

Disease Prevention/Health Promotion

- g) Demonstrate proper hand washing.
- h) Demonstrate how to brush and floss teeth correctly.

Substance Abuse Prevention

- i) Discuss why medicines should only be taken under the supervision of a parent/guardian.
- j) Identify adults to ask for help and assistance with harmful and unknown substances.

Safety/Injury Prevention

- k) Describe common safety rules and practices at home, at school, and in communities.
- l) Describe why it is important to ask adults for help in an emergency, how to ask for help, and how to call 911.
- m) Recognize that some household products are harmful if touched, ingested, or inhaled and the importance of asking adults before touching, ingesting, or inhaling white powder or other unknown substances.

Mental Wellness/Social and Emotional Skills

- n) Demonstrate how to use words to express feelings.
- o) Demonstrate strategies for making friends and showing kindness, consideration, and concern for others.
- p) Demonstrate how to tell someone they are entering one's personal space and when to ask an adult for help.

Violence Prevention

- q) Demonstrate acceptable behavior in classrooms and during play, including showing respect for the personal space of others.

Community/Environmental Health

- r) Share the importance of reusing items and materials with school and family.