

Supporting Student Success

Academic Advice for Parents, Families, Caretakers, and Communities

Supporting student learning is a shared effort between caregivers and educators. Many things can influence how students develop, learn, and perform in school. A strong support system can make a meaningful difference in their success.

This guide provides ideas and questions to help strengthen the connection between home and school, helping students receive the support they need to thrive.

To get the most from this resource, think about how the suggestions fit into your daily routines and conversations. These prompts can spark meaningful discussions with your child and their teachers.

About This Guide and the Colorado Academic Standards

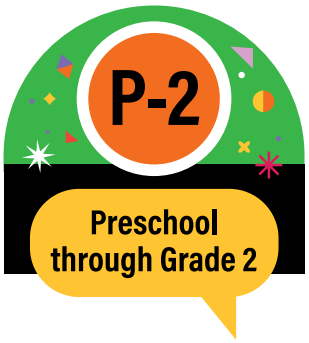
This guide was developed by academic content specialists at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) with input from CDE's Office of Family, Community, and School Partnerships, CDE's Office of Migrant Education Program, and other family and student advocacy groups.

The Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills provide educators with a road map to help students find success in college, careers, and life. The essential skills, as outlined in Colorado law, include creativity, problem solving, social and cultural awareness, civic engagement, character and leadership, and the use of technology to gather, evaluate, and communicate information.

The best place to learn about what your child is learning is from your child's teacher and school. The standards are written for professional educators and your child's teacher can help you understand what the standards mean for your student. In Colorado, teachers and schools make decisions about the materials, methods, and courses used to help your student reach the goals described by the standards.

If you want to learn more about Colorado's standards and access other guides, contact the academic content specialists in CDE's Office of Standards and Instructional Support using the QR code to the left or visit the CDE website.

COLORADO
Department of Education



Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills for Grades P-2

This guide organizes Colorado's standards for P-2 students into 13 content areas across four groups:

Arts

Dance focuses on dance as an opportunity for fun, study, and a connection to other content areas like music and physical education.

Drama and Theatre Arts focuses on having students act out scenes, read plays, and create their own plays while discussing what they like about theatre.

Music focuses on singing, playing instruments, moving, and listening to demonstrate their creativity, express emotions, and tell stories.

Visual Arts focuses on creating art, identifying art in a student's surroundings, seeing how art represents things and ideas, and exploring how art is made.

Humanities

Reading, Writing, and Communicating focuses on reading comprehension and fluency, as well as writing organized texts that are supported by relevant facts and details. Students also develop oral communication skills through a language-rich environment.

Social Studies focuses on chronology, using maps, learning about the community, and the difference between wants and needs.

World Languages focuses on the process of learning a new language and understanding diverse cultural perspectives, as well as developing insights into their own language and culture.

STEM

Computer Science focuses on concepts such as identifying patterns and sequences, understanding what data is and how it can be collected and analyzed, and how to use technology appropriately.

Mathematics focuses on counting, whole numbers, place value, addition, and subtraction. Students use ideas from measurement and geometry to help them understand numbers, shapes, and quantities.

Science focuses on developing foundational understanding of physical, life, and earth sciences. Students explore concepts like forces, matter, living things, and Earth's systems through hands-on investigations, observations, and simple models.

Wellness

Comprehensive Health focuses on developing individual skills to enhance physical, emotional, and social wellness.

Financial Literacy focuses on identifying the purpose of money, the choices people make when using money, and how to spend, share, and save money.

Physical Education focuses on enhancing movement concepts and skills, understanding basic health-related components and skill-related components of fitness.

Arts



The visual and performing arts standards reflect the knowledge and creativity required to produce a work of art. Students are expected to study art in different forms, such as dance, theatre, music, and visual arts, and participate in each by creating, performing, and presenting art while responding to the art of others and making connections between works of art and the world around them.

Ways You Can Help Your Student at Home

Preschool and early elementary students are surrounded by art in the videos they watch, the music they hear, and the play they experience with friends and family. Helping your student grow as an artist can be as simple as helping them see art in their everyday world and encouraging them to sing along, draw pictures, and act out stories. Here are some suggestions for helping your student create, enjoy, and perform art:

- Watch, perform, and create dances to explore movement and expression.
- Talk about what dance might mean.
- Use imagination to create diverse characters in plays, encouraging the use of voices, facial expressions, gestures, and body movements to express thoughts and feelings.
- Support art making at home with simple supplies.
- Use creativity to change everyday materials into other objects.
- Sing songs, move to songs, and play instruments when listening to or singing songs.
- Create music or sound effects to stories or poems.
- Clap to the beat, talk about slow and fast, loud and quiet, and different instruments in music.
- Talk about where you hear music every day and how it makes you feel.
- Identify imagery and art in daily surroundings.
- Know that art can be used to represent people, places, things, and ideas.
- Create works of art based on personal relevance.

Arts

Tips for Successful Communication

You can help your student succeed by communicating openly with them and their teachers. Here are some suggestions.

Questions to ask your student:

- What is your favorite way to move?
- What characters do you like? What kinds of voices do they use? What emotions do they express?
- What kind of music do you look forward to listening to?
- What kinds of objects or ideas do you like to draw, paint, or color?

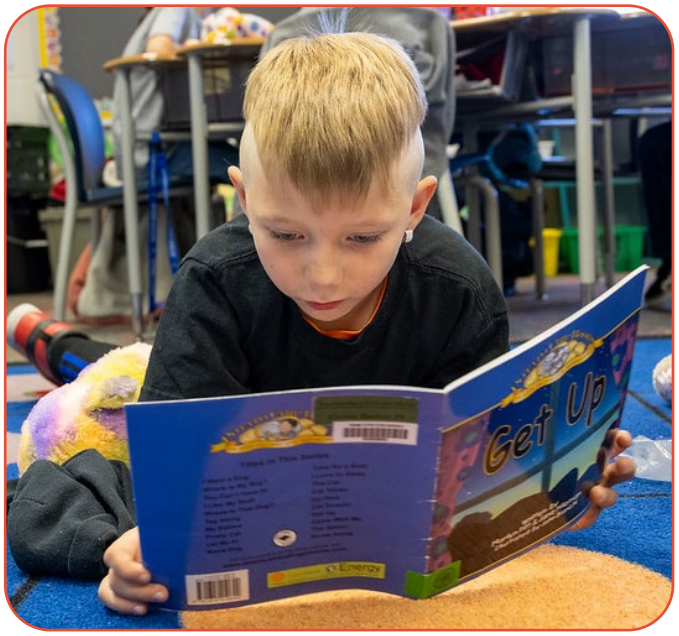
Questions to ask your student's teacher:

- How does my student respond to creating and/or performing during class?
- What do they like best about creating and/or performing during class? What do they like the least?
- Does my student work well independently and in groups during class?
- How can I support my student's development in creating or performing?





Humanities



The standards in the humanities promote effective communication and understanding diverse perspectives. The content areas of reading, writing, and communicating, social studies, and world languages are essential in a well-rounded education that develops skills like using language, problem solving, civic engagement, and cultural awareness.

Ways You Can Help Your Student at Home

Preschool and early elementary students are curious about their world. They tell stories about what and who they know, and they use their imagination to invent new stories. You can help your student learn and share more about the world by exposing them to new places, people, cultures, and ideas, either by exploring yourselves or by reading about the explorations of others. Here are some suggestions for helping your student engage in the humanities:

- Use pictures to learn the meanings of words.
- Share stories and photos about your student's life, as well as stories and photos about when you were a child.
- Read together every day. Consider both fiction and nonfiction from your local library.
- Take a walk in your community and take note of the geographic features, both natural and human made.
- Encourage writing. Practice writing letters, sounding out words, and using words in sentences.
- Read magazines and newspapers with your child and show pictures or photographs in the news.
- Encourage questions and suggest thinking about where the answer might be found.
- Discuss stories, poems, recipes, movies, or anything else your student enjoys.
- Check out books from the library in unfamiliar languages and learn to pronounce and read them.
- Listen to audio books of familiar stories in another language.

Humanities

Tips for Successful Communication

You can help your student succeed by communicating openly with them and their teachers. Here are some suggestions.

Questions to ask your student:

- How do you spell this word?
- What are some stories or cultures you are learning about?
- What do you want to know about from when I was a child?

Questions to ask your student's teacher:

- What kinds of questions does my student ask?
- What are my student's strengths in communicating?
- What stories or books does my student read or look at during school?
- Is my student able to think creatively and communicate their ideas effectively?
- How can I support my student's cultural education at home?





STEM



The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) standards help give students tools to describe, measure, and understand the world around them, then organize and analyze that information to make predictions and solve problems. Students are expected to combine and apply their STEM knowledge in computer science, mathematics, and science to think critically about overcoming challenges in our world.

Ways You Can Help Your Student at Home

Preschool and early elementary students are young scientists in the making, always observing and asking questions about how things work. Students this age are beginning to label, categorize, measure, and sort things. You can help them become a stronger STEM student by helping them ask good questions and collect and make sense of information. Here are some suggestions for helping your student engage in STEM:

- Play games using dice, cards, or puzzles to practice counting, patterns, and problem-solving.
- Encourage kids to look around, notice things, and ask questions.
- Model simple ways to start talking about what they see, like "I see..." or "I notice...."
- Talk out loud about what you're doing when you cook or measure things.
- Ask what information they would need to solve a problem.
- Count things they see, like feet under a table or houses on the street.
- Guess how many of something there are, like crackers in a jar or toys in a box.
- "Debug" a morning routine. Look at your family's morning routine and work with your student to fix any problems you find.
- Teach the steps to make a sandwich, also known as sequencing.
- Help group things by how they look or feel, like tall vs. short or heavy vs. light.
- Explore career opportunities and where students might see themselves using these skills.
- Provide time to ask questions and let them think about things they don't know the answers to yet.

STEM

Tips for Successful Communication

You can help your student succeed by communicating openly with them and their teachers. Here are some suggestions.

Questions to ask your student:

- What do you see? What do you notice?
- What might be the information we could use to solve this problem?
- What do you think will happen if we try this? How can we find out if we are right?

Questions to ask your student's teacher:

- Does my student seem curious and engaged in STEM lessons?
- What types of math concepts are being introduced through STEM activities (for example, measurement, sorting, counting)?
- Does my student have any special strengths or interests in STEM (for example, science experiments, building with blocks, coding basics)?





Wellness



The wellness standards focus on developing individual skills to enhance physical, emotional, social, and financial wellness. Students investigate healthy eating and living habits, positive communication strategies, effective decision-making, personal and community safety, and saving, investing, and debt to achieve financial well-being.

Ways You Can Help Your Student at Home

Preschool and early elementary students are learning how to care for themselves, including some basic health skills related to their hygiene, diet, physical fitness, and safety. They are also learning what money is and how it works, both in the real world and in games with play money. You can help your student make good decisions by talking to them about healthy choices. Here are some suggestions for helping your student learn to manage their wellness:

- Talk about what health means to you.
- Talk about ways to be safe at home and in your neighborhood.
- Practice how to ask for help and what to do in an emergency.
- Practice brushing teeth and washing hands and talk about why it is important.
- Take a trip to the store, explore, and discuss a variety of different foods.
- Discuss how you talk to and have a good relationship with others.
- Encourage play with transactions (for example, ordering and paying for food)
- Allow for the observation of financial activities like grocery shopping, paying bills, going to the bank, and explaining what you are doing.
- Explore different ways to move and take part in various physical activities.
- Balance items like beanbags, books, or other objects on your head while moving in any way you can or make up a game using the objects.

Wellness

Tips for Successful Communication

You can help your student succeed by communicating openly with them and their teachers. Here are some suggestions.

Questions to ask your student:

- What are ways we can take care of our bodies every day?
- What do we use money for?
- What is your favorite thing to do in physical education class?



Questions to ask your student's teacher:

- Do you incorporate any movement breaks or mindfulness activities into the classroom routine?
- How do you help the students identify and express their emotions?
- How do you introduce the concept of money to the students?
- Are there opportunities for the students to practice making simple choices (for example, choosing a book to buy at a pretend store)?
- What are some of the favorite activities the students enjoy in physical education class?
- Do you have any opportunities for the students to participate in cooperative games or activities?