

Academic Standards Requirements for Online Learning Applications

This document provides guidance on the implementation of academic standards in online learning programs and for the identification of standards in applications.

Relevant Minnesota Statutes

120B.018 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Scope.** The definitions in this section apply to this chapter.

Subd. 2. **Academic standard.** "Academic standard" means a summary description of student learning in a required content area under section 120B.021 or elective content area under section 120B.022.

Subd. 3. **Benchmark.** "Benchmark" means specific knowledge or skill that a student must master to complete part of an academic standard by the end of the grade level or grade band.

Subd. 4. **Credit.** "Credit" means the determination by the local school district that a student has successfully completed an academic year of study or mastered the applicable subject matter.

Subd. 5. **Elective standard.** "Elective standard" means a locally adopted expectation for student learning in career and technical education and world languages.

Subd. 6. **Required standard.** "Required standard" means (1) a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, and the arts, or (2) a locally adopted expectation for student learning in health or the arts.

Therefore online instruction must support the achievement of all benchmarks by the end of the specified grade.

120B.021 REQUIRED ACADEMIC STANDARDS.

Subdivision 1. **Required academic standards.**

(a) The following subject areas are required for statewide accountability:

(1) language arts;

(2) mathematics;

(3) science;

(4) social studies, including history, geography, economics, and government and citizenship that includes civics consistent with section 120B.02, subdivision 3;

(5) physical education;

(6) health, for which locally developed academic standards apply; and

(7) the arts, for which statewide or locally developed academic standards apply, as determined by the school district. Public elementary and middle schools must offer at least three and require at least two of the following four arts areas: dance; music; theater; and visual arts. Public high schools must offer at least three and require at least one of the following five arts areas: media arts; dance; music; theater; and visual arts.

(b) For purposes of applicable federal law, the academic standards for language arts, mathematics, and science apply to all public school students, except the very few students with extreme cognitive or physical impairments for whom an individualized education program team has determined that the required academic standards are inappropriate. An individualized education program team that makes this determination must establish alternative standards.

(c) The department must adopt the most recent SHAPE America (Society of Health and Physical Educators) kindergarten through grade 12 standards and benchmarks for physical education as the required physical education academic standards. The department may modify and adapt the national standards to accommodate state interest. The modification and adaptations must maintain the purpose and integrity of the national standards. The department must make available sample assessments, which school districts may use as an alternative to local assessments, to assess students' mastery of the physical education standards beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

(d) A school district may include child sexual abuse prevention instruction in a health curriculum, consistent with paragraph (a), clause (6). Child sexual abuse prevention instruction may include age-appropriate instruction on recognizing sexual abuse and assault, boundary violations, and ways offenders groom or desensitize victims, as well as strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame, and mobilize bystanders. A school district may provide instruction under this paragraph in a variety of ways, including at an annual assembly or classroom presentation. A school district may also provide parents information on the warning signs of child sexual abuse and available resources.

e) District efforts to develop, implement, or improve instruction or curriculum as a result of the provisions of this section must be consistent with sections 120B.10, 120B.11, and 120B.20.

120B.024 CREDITS.

Subdivision 1. **Graduation requirements.** Students beginning 9th grade in the 2011-2012 school year and later must successfully complete the following high school level credits for graduation:

- (1) four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in English language arts;
- (2) three credits of mathematics, including an algebra II credit or its equivalent, sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics;
- (3) an algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade standards in mathematics;
- (4) three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of chemistry or physics, and one elective credit of science. The combination of credits under this clause must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science;
- (5) three and one-half credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in social studies;
- (6) one credit of the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the state or local academic standards in the arts; and
- (7) a minimum of seven elective credits.

Online Learning Application Requirements

The Online Learning application requires the identification of standards and benchmarks associate with the instruction and courses being offered in the initial year of the program. Programs may use the standards and benchmarks that are in place for that year or may use newer standards if the program is transitioning to those standards.

It is recommended that spreadsheet versions of the standards be used to identify standards and benchmarks by adding a column to identify the grade or course in which those benchmarks are to be taught. The following table provides direct links to the spreadsheet versions or pdf versions where spreadsheets are not yet available. Standards documents and background information are also available at the Minnesota Department of Education website for each content area. The [Academic Standards webpage](#) provides an overview.

Content area	Current standards (for the 2021-22 school year)	Revised Standards	Year of Full implementation for revised standards
Arts *	Final 2018 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Arts Education		
English Language Arts	Academic Standards in English Language Arts (2010) - Spreadsheet	2020 Minnesota K-12 English Language Arts Standards (Commissioner Approved Draft)	2024-25
Health **	National Health Education Standards and Minnesota Benchmarks		
Mathematics	Academic Standards: Mathematics K-12 (2007) - Spreadsheet		
Physical Education	2018 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Physical Education Standards		
Science	2009 Minnesota Academic Standards in Science	2019 Minnesota Academic Standards in Science (draft)	2023-24
Social Studies	Academic Standards: Social Studies K-12 (2011) - Spreadsheet		
World Languages ***	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) world language standards		

* Arts: Schools may use statewide or locally determined standards.

** Health: Locally determined standards apply. The [National Health Education Standards and Minnesota Benchmarks](#) were developed by the Minnesota Department of Education to serve as a guide for districts for locally developed standards providing sample grade-specific benchmarks for K-12 health education.

*** World Languages: Locally determined standards apply but must be based on the most recent [ACTFL world language standards](#). The Minnesota Department of Education provides this model that districts can use to develop local world language standards.