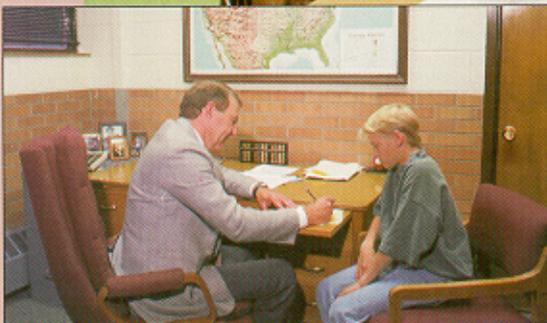


# Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching



State of Connecticut  
State Board of Education 1999

# **State of Connecticut**

John G. Rowland, Governor

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# *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching*

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Hundreds of Connecticut educators participated in the numerous committees that developed both the foundational skills and competencies and discipline-specific professional teaching standards that comprise *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* (CCT).

These development committees were comprised of classroom teachers, department chairpersons, curriculum specialists, principals, higher education faculty members and other exemplary educators who were chosen to represent the diversity of Connecticut's educational professionals, a wide range of educational settings, and the content and disciplinary areas for which the CCT is applicable. Under the direction of Raymond L. Pecheone, chief of the Bureau of Curriculum and Teacher Standards, the following CSDE staff members, teachers-in-residence and scholars-in-residence guided the work of these committees to create the professional teaching standards appearing in this document:

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## Introduction

*Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* (CCT)<sup>1</sup> presents a comprehensive view of an accomplished teacher. It embodies the knowledge, skills and competencies that teachers need to ensure that students learn and perform at high levels. These standards reflect current research and thinking about the mission of schooling and the job of teaching.

The degree of expertise teachers exhibit in the application of these standards should increase as teachers become more experienced. It is expected that Connecticut teachers will seek opportunities for ongoing professional growth throughout their careers and continually evaluate their progress against these standards.

The CCT guides state policies related to the preparation, induction and ongoing professional growth of teachers as follows:

During the **pre-service phase** (in accordance with Section 10-145d-11 of the Regulations for Educator Preparation Program Approval Standards), colleges or universities are expected to demonstrate that students are knowledgeable about:

- *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning;*
- *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching;*
- the Connecticut Mastery Tests; and
- the Connecticut Academic Performance Test.

During the **induction phase**, beginning teachers are expected to demonstrate competence in both the foundational skills and competencies and discipline-based professional standards through the successful completion of the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) teaching portfolios.

Throughout the **continuous professional growth phase**, the CCT establishes standards for the evaluation of teachers (according to the *Guidelines for Comprehensive Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation*) and guides teachers in selecting appropriate professional development (as documented by Continuing Education Units) to meet individual as well as local district goals.

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<sup>1</sup>The teaching standards that comprise *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* were drafted by numerous committees of exemplary Connecticut educators. The committees began their work by examining model teaching standards developed by educators from 17 state education agencies participating in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Draft standards were circulated to hundreds of Connecticut teachers, higher education faculty members, district administrators and other educational constituents for review and comment. *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* reflects the ideas and contributions of countless educators who responded with detailed comments and edits.

The CCT includes: (1) **foundational skills and competencies** that are common to all teachers from pre-kindergarten through Grade 12; and (2) **discipline-based professional standards** that represent the knowledge, skills and competencies that are unique for teachers of elementary education, English language arts, history/social studies, mathematics, music, physical education, science, special education, visual arts and world languages.

*Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* replaces the 15 Connecticut Teaching Competencies<sup>2</sup> as Connecticut's definition of effective teaching practice. The BEST Program teaching portfolios replace the Connecticut Competency Instrument (CCI) for purposes of assessing beginning teachers for licensure. The portfolios evaluate a broad range of teaching competencies identified in *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching*.

The philosophy behind the CCT is that teaching requires more than simply demonstrating a certain set of technical skills. It requires command of subject matter and caring deeply about students and their successes. Effective teaching implies a deep commitment to student achievement and to the belief that all students can attain high levels of achievement.

To be a passionate teacher is to be someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day – or captivated by all of these. A passionate teacher is a teacher who breaks out of the isolation of the classroom, who refuses to submit to apathy or cynicism . . . only when teachers bring their passions about learning and about life into their daily work can they dispel the fog of passive compliance or active disinterest that surrounds so many students. . .<sup>3</sup>

Effective teaching requires the careful and thoughtful orchestration of the concepts described

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<sup>2</sup>The 15 Connecticut Teaching Competencies were first adopted in 1984 as part of Standards for Approval of Teacher Preparation Programs.

<sup>3</sup>Robert L. Fried, *The Passionate Teacher: A Practical Guide* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), p. 1, used with permission.

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# Foundational Skills and Competencies

## I. TEACHERS HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF:

### Students

1. Teachers understand how students learn and develop.
2. Teachers understand how students differ in their approaches to learning.

### Content

3. Teachers are proficient in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. Teachers understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) they teach.

### Pedagogy

5. Teachers know how to design and deliver instruction.
  6. Teachers recognize the need to vary their instructional methods.
- 

## II. TEACHERS APPLY THIS KNOWLEDGE BY:

### Planning

1. Teachers plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum and the community.
2. Teachers select and/or create learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students.

### Instructing

3. Teachers establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a commitment to students and their successes.
4. Teachers create instructional opportunities that support students' academic, social and personal development.
5. Teachers use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which foster individual and collaborative inquiry.
6. Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills.

### Assessing and Adjusting

7. Teachers use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate.
- 

## III. TEACHERS DEMONSTRATE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH:

### Professional and Ethical Practice

1. Teachers conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 10-145d-400a of the Connecticut Certification Regulations).
2. Teachers share responsibility for student achievement and well-being.

### Reflection and Continuous Learning

3. Teachers continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community.
4. Teachers seek out opportunities to grow professionally.

### Leadership and Collaboration

5. Teachers serve as leaders in the school community.
  6. Teachers demonstrate a commitment to their students and a passion for improving their profession.
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*The following sections explain more fully what each standard means in terms of critical knowledge, skills and abilities. The more detailed description of these standards is intended to encourage professional discussion of effective teaching and administration. Moreover, it should communicate expectations for professional practice to prospective teachers, practicing teachers, principals, school administrators and individuals who prepare teachers.*

*It is important to note, however, that this document must not be taken verbatim as a checklist or an evaluation/assessment instrument to be used to evaluate individual teachers. Expectations for the demonstration of these competencies will vary depending upon the experience level of the teacher, whether in the pre-service phase, during the initial years in the profession or during the years of experience as a veteran educator. Any assessment or evaluation instrument developed on the basis of the CCT must reflect these different expectations, as well as the use for which it is intended (e.g., for recommendation for initial licensure by an institution of higher education, for licensing by the state as part of the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program, or as a basis for local district evaluation of the nontenured or tenured teacher).*

*All school districts must develop their own teacher evaluation and professional development plans that address the competencies identified in the CCT. However, those plans also must take into account district and schoolwide learning goals and provide for the appropriate training of teachers and administrators about the evaluation criteria established by local school districts.*

<p><b>I. Teachers have knowledge of:</b> <b>Students</b> <b>Content</b> <b>Pedagogy</b></p>
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## Students<sup>4</sup>

1. *Teachers understand how students learn and develop by:*
  - a. becoming knowledgeable about the major concepts, principles, theories and research related to the normal progression and variations in students' physical, emotional and cognitive development to construct learning opportunities that support students' development, acquisition of knowledge and motivation; and
  - b. learning about exceptionalities in learning – including learning differences, visual and perceptual differences, socio-emotional differences, special physical or mental challenges, and gifted and talented exceptionalities – and challenging students with exceptionality as well as seeking sources of support within the school.
  
2. *Teachers understand how students differ in their approaches to learning by:*
  - a. being aware of how student learning is influenced by language, culture, heritage, family and community values and incorporating students' experiences and community resources into instruction;
  - b. learning about and utilizing strategies for building understanding, acceptance and a positive sense of community into the classroom; and
  - c. becoming knowledgeable about language development, including the process of second-language acquisition, and employing strategies to support the learning of students whose first language is not English.

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<sup>4</sup>Students include children, adolescents and adults served by the public school system.

## Content

3. *Teachers are proficient in reading, writing and mathematics*<sup>5</sup>.
4. *Teachers understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) they teach by:*
  - a. becoming knowledgeable about the major principles and concepts of the subject to be taught<sup>6</sup> and presenting appropriate lesson content;
  - b. learning about and using computer and information technology as an integral part of teaching their discipline(s);
  - c. knowing and utilizing national and state standards within their discipline(s);
  - d. being aware of the evolving nature of subject-matter knowledge and the need for keeping abreast of new ideas and understandings within one's discipline, including the impact of technology and information sources on the nature of teaching, communications and the development of knowledge;
  - e. understanding that literacy skills and processes are applicable in all content areas and helping students develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable students to construct meaning and make sense of the world through reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing; and
  - f. understanding and using concepts and skills inherent in numeracy to enable their students to represent physical events, work with data, reason, communicate mathematically, and make connections within their respective content area in order to solve problems.

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<sup>5</sup>Essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics are assessed through the PRAXIS I CBT examination.

<sup>6</sup>Content knowledge is assessed through the PRAXIS II content-area examinations.

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## Pedagogy

5. *Teachers know how to design and deliver instruction by:*
  - a. understanding that the specific content taught is part of and connected to a larger universe of knowledge represented in a K-12 curriculum;
  - b. recognizing the importance of focusing and sequencing curricular objectives to connect with students' previous and future learning and to prepare students to master state and local achievement goals; and
  - c. choosing when and how to expand beyond the articulated curriculum to meet student needs and to make connections among different subjects and among school, career and work.
  
6. *Teachers recognize the need to vary their instructional methods by:*
  - a. recognizing individual differences in approaches to learning and identifying how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment; and
  - b. varying their role (e.g., instructor, facilitator, coach and audience) in the instructional process in relation to the content and purposes of instruction.

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<p><b>II. Teachers apply this knowledge by:</b> <b>Planning</b> <b>Instructing</b> <b>Assessing and Adjusting</b></p>
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## Planning

1. *Teachers plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum and the community by:*
  - a. designing instruction and assessment to achieve long- and short-term learning goals that are specific and measurable;
  - b. selecting appropriate materials – including a wide range of technological resources – to help students find information, interpret the quality of sources, and effectively synthesize and communicate information;
  - c. sequencing learning tasks into coherent units of instruction derived from the curriculum and incorporating hands-on, real-world experiences and community resources from which students can build an understanding of abstract concepts and knowledge; and
  - d. anticipating common misperceptions, diverse levels of student interest and available resources, and making adjustments as appropriate.
  
2. *Teachers create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students by:*
  - a. designing tasks that meet curricular goals, build upon students' prior learning, and advance the student toward important learning goals;
  - b. addressing various learning styles, incorporating multicultural content and fostering interdisciplinary connections; and
  - c. making purposeful choices about whether students should work individually or collectively.

**Instructing**

3. *Teachers establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success by:*
  - a. ensuring that standards of behavior are explicit and applying them consistently over time with fitting consequences;
  - b. maximizing the amount of time spent in instruction by effectively managing routines and transitions;
  - c. organizing, allocating and managing resources of time, space, activities and attention to ensure high levels of student engagement and participation;
  - d. establishing high expectations for achievement, promoting shared responsibility for learning, and nurturing the development of ethical and responsible behavior in students;
  - e. demonstrating enthusiasm, self-confidence and caring about the well-being of students;
  - f. structuring student interactions and academic discussions in a nonthreatening, safe<sup>7</sup> learning environment that supports varied learning and performance styles, student interests, and encourages intellectual risk-taking among learners; and
  - g. using understandings of individual and group motivation to foster students' independent thinking, perseverance and confidence as learners.
  
4. *Teachers create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development by:*
  - a. developing effective lessons by organizing instructional activities and materials to promote achievement of lesson objectives;
  - b. employing techniques that address a variety of learning styles as well as incorporate a wide range of community and technology resources;
  - c. promoting the development of critical and creative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills and the deeper understanding of concepts; and
  - d. integrating into all curriculums and programs opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate ethical and responsible student behavior.

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<sup>7</sup>A "safe" learning environment in the context of science classrooms also implies physical safety. Beginning science teachers' knowledge of laboratory safety practices is assessed through the Science Safety Laboratory Assessment.

## Teachers apply this knowledge by . . . (continued)

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5. *Teachers use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which foster individual and collective inquiry by:*
  - a. communicating clearly, using precise language and acceptable oral and written expressions that convey expectations for students; and
  - b. engaging students in purposeful discourse<sup>8</sup> by using appropriate questioning strategies – i.e., knowing when to provide information, when to clarify an issue, when to model, when to lead and when to let students struggle with a difficulty.
  
6. *Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills by:*
  - a. becoming familiar with principles and techniques associated with various instructional and assessment strategies, including how to use multiple representations and explanations of concepts; and
  - b. identifying strategies to create learning experiences that make subject matter meaningful for students, encourage students pursue their own inquiries and interests, and help students make connections between school and career.

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<sup>8</sup>Discourse is defined as the purposeful interaction between and among teachers and students, in which ideas are represented, communicated and challenged, with the goal of creating greater meaning or understanding. Discourse can be oral dialogue (conversation), written dialogue (reaction, thoughts, feedback), or visual dialogue (charts, graphs, paintings or images that represent student and teacher thinking/reasoning).

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## **Assessing and Adjusting**

7. *Teachers use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate by:*
  - a. monitoring student understanding of the lesson at appropriate points and adjusting teaching when necessary;
  - b. reflecting upon and analyzing the process of teaching based on student learning or failure to learn, and modifying future plans and instructional approaches accordingly;
  - c. sharing assessment criteria with students on a regular basis as well as guiding students to use these criteria for self-evaluation;
  - d. collecting data over time by analyzing student work and determining whether or not instructional strategies promote desired student learning outcomes; and
  - e. using multiple sources of data (such as classroom observation, student work, teacher-constructed assessment tasks, standardized test information, state examination student scores or released items, school records, etc.) to examine their students' progress in light of national, state and local performance standards.

**III. Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through:**  
**Professional and Ethical Practice**  
**Reflection and Continuous Learning**  
**Leadership and Collaboration**

### **Professional and Ethical Practice**

1. *Teachers conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 10-145d-400a of the Certification Regulations).*
2. *Teachers share responsibility for student achievement and well-being through means such as:*
  - a. working collaboratively with school administrators, colleagues and families to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning;
  - b. involving families of students in the education of their children by keeping them informed about their students' learning and seeking input to support and meet children's needs; and
  - c. identifying appropriate agencies in the larger community, businesses and professional organizations that can provide resources for students, classrooms or schools.

### **Reflection and Continuous Learning**

3. *Teachers continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community through means such as:*
  - a. working with administrators and colleagues to explore student work and progress, to examine the effectiveness of instructional strategies, to identify school and program needs based on student data, and to ensure that the collective needs of the school are addressed.
4. *Teachers seek out opportunities to grow professionally through means such as:*
  - a. sharing practices with professional colleagues within the school or district; and
  - b. enriching their knowledge about content, learners, pedagogy, technology and the U.S. public school system through the examination of professional literature, participation in professional organizations, attendance at professional development seminars or ongoing graduate-level course work.

**Leadership and Collaboration**

5. *Teachers serve as leaders in the school community through means such as:*
  - a. working with colleagues to create a positive, collaborative school culture;
  - b. working with colleagues and/or community leaders to secure community support for students and schools and actively promoting strategies that support the continuous improvement of student learning; and
  - c. working with colleagues in addressing other identified needs of the school and student body.
  
6. *Teachers demonstrate a commitment to their students and a passion for improving their profession through such means as:*
  - a. bringing their enthusiasm about learning and about life into their daily work; and
  - b. showing a commitment to developing the minds and characters of their students.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards

The following discipline-based professional teaching standards are for teachers of elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Elementary Education

### I. Development, Learning and Motivation

Elementary teachers know, understand and use major concepts, principles, theories and research related to the continuum of development of children from pre-kindergarten through early adolescence. They construct learning opportunities that support the development, learning and motivation of the individual child.

### II. Curriculum

Elementary teachers know, understand and use central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of content for students across the elementary grades. They connect concepts, procedures and applications from content areas to build understanding, and encourage the application of knowledge, skills and ideas to real-world situations. Elementary teachers create meaningful learning experiences for various developmental levels that develop students' competence and skills:

#### A. Literacy

Elementary teachers know, understand and use concepts from reading, writing, language and child development, to teach reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and acting. Teachers help students use these concepts to construct meaning, to compose their own oral and written texts, and to interpret and respond to the compositions of others.

#### B. Numeracy

Elementary teachers know, understand and use concepts and skills inherent in numeracy to enable their students to represent physical events, work with data, reason, communicate mathematically, and make connections within math and to other content areas, as well as to the world around them, in order to solve problems.

#### C. Science

Elementary teachers know, understand and use concepts of science, including physical, life and Earth sciences and their interrelationships. They engage students in the inquiry process that involves asking questions, collecting data through the use of senses and simple measurement tools, evaluating information and presenting answers.

#### D. Social Studies

Elementary teachers know, understand and use major concepts and modes of inquiry from social studies to promote students' abilities to participate in a culturally diverse democratic society. They provide opportunities for students to investigate topics related to themselves, their families, their communities and the world around them.

(continued)

**E. The Arts**

Elementary teachers know, understand and use the content, functions and achievements of dance, music, theater and the visual arts as primary media for self-expression, communication, inquiry and insight among students.

**F. Health**

Elementary teachers know, understand and use the comprehensive nature of students' physical, mental, emotional and social well-being to create opportunities for students to develop knowledge, skills and practice necessary to achieve and maintain wellness.

**G. Physical Education**

Elementary teachers know, understand and use movement and physical activity as central elements to foster active, healthy lifestyles and to enhance the quality of life for students.

**III. Aspects of Character**

Elementary teachers know, understand and practice core ideals of caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect for self and others. They create opportunities for students to work cooperatively, reach consensus, plan and carry out community service projects, and develop practical understanding of the requirements of these ideals.

**IV. Habits of Mind**

Elementary teachers foster dispositions that enable students to be lifelong learners and problem solvers. They cultivate students' abilities to persevere, think independently and be self-motivated and confident learners. Elementary teachers encourage their students to adapt to new situations, be open to new ideas, develop insight, be self-reflective, and be willing to have their work examined by peers in order to further learning.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of English Language Arts

- I. Composing, Responding and Interpreting**  
English language arts teachers use their knowledge of the ways people build understandings through reading and writing, speaking and listening, viewing and acting, when they design instruction, interpret student performance and evaluate their teaching to help students reach understandings.
- II. Writing**  
English language arts teachers help students consider the many elements which influence a writing process – among them the writer’s purpose and audience, models in the genre, and conventions of standard written English – and work through the steps which are part of a complex composing process.
- III. Reading Literature**  
English language arts teachers help students respond to a variety of texts, ideas, perspectives and styles as they study literature and expand their knowledge of themselves and the world.
- IV. Reading for Information**  
English language arts teachers help students develop, recognize and expand their reading strategies, and adjust them to suit the purpose, task and the text.
- V. Language Study**  
English language arts teachers help students understand the nature of language, apply the conventions of standard English language in oral and written communications, and adapt their use of language to meet the needs of different situations.
- VI. Materials for Instruction**  
English language arts teachers select and create materials based on instructional purpose, literary merit, impact of the medium, parameters of the curriculum and students’ developmental needs.
- VII. Knowledge of Students**  
English language arts teachers use their knowledge of the development, backgrounds, interests and abilities which influence students’ thinking, learning and use of language to make decisions.
- VIII. Teaching Strategies**  
English language arts teachers use a variety of teaching strategies to guide students in developing literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

(continued)

**IX. Curriculum**

English language arts teachers help students develop concepts and skills that make them better able to respond, interpret and compose with increasing degrees of control and responsibility for their own learning.

**X. Environment**

English language arts teachers maintain environments that provide students with opportunities to work together to build understandings as they provide experiences with language similar to those they may encounter outside the classroom.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Mathematics

### I. **Mathematical Content**

Teachers responsible for mathematics instruction at all levels understand the key concepts and procedures of mathematics, including ideas from number systems and number theory, geometry and measurement, statistics and probability, algebra and functions, discrete mathematics and concepts of calculus, and have a broad understanding of the K-12 mathematics curriculum.

### II. **Mathematical Tasks**

Teachers of mathematics pose tasks that provide the stimulus for students to think about mathematical concepts and procedures, their connections with other mathematical ideas, and their applications to real-world contexts. These tasks encourage students to reason about mathematical ideas, and to formulate, grapple with and solve problems.

### III. **Mathematical Discourse**

Teachers of mathematics orchestrate discourse that is founded on mathematical ways of knowing and ways of communicating. This discourse fosters the development of critical mathematics processes – problem solving, reasoning, communication and making mathematical connections – and influences students' dispositions toward doing mathematics.

### IV. **Learning Environment**

Teachers of mathematics are responsible for creating an intellectual environment in which mathematical thinking is the norm. Teachers create an environment that supports and encourages mathematical reasoning and encourages students to make conjectures, experiment with alternative approaches to solving problems, and construct and respond to the mathematics arguments of others.

### V. **Analysis of Learning and Teaching**

Teachers of mathematics use a variety of strategies to continuously monitor students' capacity and inclination to analyze situations, frame and solve problems, and make sense of mathematical concepts and procedures. Teachers use such information about students to assess not just how students are doing, but also to appraise how well the mathematical tasks, discourse and environment are working together to foster students mathematical power and what changes need to be made in response.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Music

### I. Knowledge of Music

Music teachers research and are knowledgeable about a variety of music from diverse cultural traditions and historical periods, including contemporary. Key domains of knowledge include:

- representative musical works and composers;
- distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres;
- performance practices for representative music genres; and
- exemplary conductors, performers and performing groups.

### II. Applied Musicianship

Music teachers communicate about, respond to, create and perform music accurately and artistically. Key domains include the ability to:

- convey artistry and musical ideas through conducting and expressive gesture;
- respond to (select, analyze, interpret and evaluate the quality of) music and music performance with artistic insight;
- create (imagine, plan, make, evaluate, refine, present) improvised and/or composed melodies, accompaniments, arrangements and variations;
- perform (select, analyze, interpret, rehearse, evaluate, refine and present) a varied repertoire, and/or appropriate accompaniments;
- sight-sing simple melodies;
- perform music accurately and artistically from notation on at least one primary instrument; and
- demonstrate appropriate tone and performance techniques on a variety of secondary instruments, including voice, keyboard instrument, standard beginning-level band and orchestral instruments, and standard classroom instruments.

### III. Importance of Music

Music teachers draw on an understanding of the nature and significance of music and its relationship to other arts and disciplines, to communicate its aesthetic, educational and societal value.

### IV. Creating Music

Music teachers plan and provide sequential, developmentally appropriate instruction that empowers students to independently **create** (imagine, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present) music through improvisation, arranging, harmonization and composition. Music teachers help students develop the skills and understandings – aural, theoretical, notational, technical – and personal “voice” which provide the foundation for creating music that is both technically sound and expressive.

(continued)

## **Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Music... (continued)**

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### **V. Performing Music**

Music teachers plan and provide sequential, developmentally appropriate instruction that empowers students to independently **perform** (select, analyze, interpret, rehearse, evaluate, refine and present) music. Music teachers help students develop the skills and understandings – aural, technical, notational, stylistic, expressive – necessary to perform accurately and artistically.

### **VI. Responding to Music**

Music teachers plan and provide sequential, developmentally appropriate instruction that empowers students to independently **respond** to (select, analyze, interpret and evaluate) music. Music teachers help students develop the aural and theoretical skills and understandings, vocabulary and familiarity with representative musical examples that provide the foundation for understanding and communicating about music.

### **VII. Learning Environment**

Music teachers establish and maintain a positive environment, conducive to developing students' independent musicianship and future participation in music.

### **VIII. Reflection and Professional Growth**

Music teachers pursue lifelong learning through reflective practice, musical and professional development, and participation in music making.

### **IX. Leadership**

Music teachers help their school and community develop an appropriate vision of, and commitment to providing, a quality music/arts education for all students.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Physical Education

### I. Content Knowledge

Physical education teachers use their understandings of physical education content and concepts of the sub-disciplines of the field to support and encourage learner expression through movement and physical activity. Key domains of knowledge include:

- motor development and motor learning;
- exercise science, including biomechanics, physiology and kinesiology;
- physical activity and wellness;
- movement forms and concepts;
- sociology and psychology of movement; and
- legal and safety issues.

### II. Growth and Development

Physical education teachers use their understanding of how students learn and develop to provide opportunities that support their physical, cognitive and emotional development through physical activity.

### III. Diverse Learners

Physical education teachers understand how individuals differ in their approaches to learning and physical performance and design appropriate instruction adapted to allow all students to develop the skills and knowledge to feel success in and enjoy physical activity throughout their lives.

### IV. Management and Motivation

Physical education teachers use their understanding of the motivation and behavior of students and groups to encourage learners to participate in physical activity inside and outside of school and to promote mutual respect, support, safety and cooperative participation.

### V. Planning and Instruction

Physical education teachers plan and implement a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and activities that maximize learner participation in safe learning experiences for the purpose of developing physically educated students.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Science

### I. Science Nature and Content

Science teachers understand the main ideas of their disciplines and the processes by which scientific data is collected and theories are built. Key domains of knowledge are as follows:

- for teachers of *biology* – evolution, diversity and unity of life of earth, molecular and cellular biology, ecology and genetics;
- for teachers of *chemistry* – atomic, molecular and nuclear structure of matter, matter and energy transformations, chemical reactions and organic chemistry;
- for teachers of *earth science* – earth history and dynamics, earth's composition and natural resources, meteorology and astronomy;
- for teachers of *physics* – forces and motion; energy transformations; the nature of light, sound, electricity and magnetism; thermodynamics; and the nature of matter; and
- for teachers of *general science* – basic principles and concepts of the physical, life and earth sciences.

### II. Science Logic and Construction of Knowledge

Science teachers understand the various forms of scientific inquiry and create opportunities for students to develop independent, creative and critical scientific reasoning.

### III. Science Context and Applications

Science teachers understand the significance of scientific literacy in a modern society and create opportunities for students to apply their knowledge, solve problems, examine science-related issues and construct informed and carefully reasoned opinions.

### IV. Students' Diversity

Science teachers search for science materials and teaching strategies that encourage students with diverse abilities, interests and backgrounds to actively participate in the learning of science.

### V. Learning Environment

Science teachers develop science learning communities in which teacher and students ask questions, seek information and validate explanations in various thoughtful, creative and cooperative ways.

### VI. Instructional Resources

Science teachers use available time, materials, equipment and communication technologies in a safe environment to support students' scientific investigations.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Social Studies

### I. Social Studies Content Knowledge

Social studies teachers use their subject-matter knowledge and the disciplinary thinking that is at the heart of history/social studies to plan and promote meaningful and challenging learning connected to important social studies themes. Key domains of social studies content knowledge include:

- *United States history*, including major events and the way of life in each major era from Native American peoples before exploration through the 20th century;
- *world history*, including the study of both western and nonwestern civilizations from prehistory through the 20th century;
- *government/civics/political science*, including basic political concepts and political theory, the United States Constitution, other forms of government, and international relations;
- *geography*, including the themes of geography, map skills, and the study of physical, human and regional geography;
- *economics*, including fundamental economic concepts, microeconomic and macroeconomic principles, international economics and current economic issues; and
- *behavioral sciences*, including sociology, anthropology and psychology.

### II. Knowledge of Students

Social studies teachers use information regarding students' development and interests, backgrounds, family histories and traditions to guide their practice and to develop relationships with their students in order to provide all students an opportunity to learn history/social studies.

### III. Learning Environment

Social studies teachers provide a physically, emotionally and intellectually safe environment to promote active learning, questioning and the exchange of ideas and opinions, often concerning sensitive and/or controversial issues related to history/social studies.

### IV. Social Studies Skills

Social studies teachers ensure that all students have an opportunity to develop essential social studies skills (e.g., constructing informed positions on issues, expressing their positions and justifying their positions with reasoned arguments based on history/social studies content) and know that skills and content should be learned together.

### V. Integrated Teaching and Learning

Social studies teachers engage students in learning experiences that are integrated by establishing linkages, both within the themes and disciplines of history/social studies and across other academic disciplines.

(continued)

**VI. Challenging Teaching and Learning**

Social studies teachers promote students' use of inquiry (e.g., through the use of primary documents, case studies and debates) and critical thinking to explore history/social studies and ensure that all students have an opportunity to pursue challenging content knowledge and learning experiences.

**VII. Civic Competence**

Social studies teachers promote civic competence, social concern and responsibility through real-world applications of history/social studies learning and they help their students to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Special Education

### I. **Content Knowledge**

Special education teachers must have a knowledge of:

- various disabilities, the impact of disabilities on classroom performance;
- the implementation of strategies to facilitate student learning and behavior management;
- negotiation and conflict resolution skills;
- the appropriate use of formal and informal assessment strategies and instruments;
- legal provisions, regulations and guidelines regarding student assessment;
- how students learn to read and respond to text; understanding of reading and writing as interactive processes;
- how students learn mathematics, including mathematical reasoning and problem solving, mathematical concepts, procedures and tasks;
- instructional materials including adaptive equipment and technological resources; and
- occupational/life skills curriculum and relevance to independent living and employment.

### II. **Collaboration**

Special education teachers work collaboratively in classroom settings as partners with other teachers and related service providers and share responsibility for meeting student outcomes, through the design and modification of instruction to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities.

### III. **Consultation within the School Community**

Special education teachers collaborate with members of the school community, conveying and receiving information, in the design and implementation of instructional and behavioral adaptations for students with disabilities.

### IV. **Instruction**

Special education teachers teach language arts, mathematics and occupational/life skills, and use their knowledge of learning strategies and adaptations to modify the instructional methods and materials of these and other subject areas to foster the independence of the student. Teachers know and use a variety of strategies and resources, including task analysis and other specialized instructional approaches, as well as a variety of materials and adaptive equipment, alternative and augmentative communications systems and assistive technology to meet students' particular learning needs and goals.

(continued)

**V. Students and Their Needs**

Special education teachers use their understanding of the impact of various disabilities on learning and classroom performance, as well as their knowledge of the continuum of education program options and services in the implementation of students' Individual Education Programs (IEP).

**VI. Assessment**

Special education teachers understand and use formal and informal assessment techniques, and they interpret and communicate the results of assessments to students, parents and colleagues to analyze and modify instruction, and to ensure the continuous cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of the learner.

**VII. Environment**

Special education teachers use their understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that maximize opportunities for students' academic, behavioral and personal success.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Visual Arts

### I. Knowledge of Visual Arts

Art teachers research and respond knowledgeably to art forms, artists and works from diverse historical and contemporary cultures. Key domains of knowledge include:

- representative artists, art works, artifacts and objects in a variety of media;
- key characteristics of representative genres and styles from diverse cultures, peoples and historical periods;
- traditions in and influences of art, design and the making of artifacts; and
- art criticism and aesthetics.

### II. The Making of Art

Art teachers convey meaning through skillful art making in a variety of media. Key domains of knowledge include:

- a high level of technique and expressiveness in at least one visual medium; and
- appropriate technique and processes in a variety of visual media, including:
  - 2-dimensional (such as drawing, painting, print-making and photography),
  - 3-dimensional (such as sculpture, ceramics and crafts), and
  - computers and other electronic media (such as video and film).

### III. Importance of the Visual Arts

Art teachers understand the nature and significance of the visual arts and the connections to other arts, other disciplines and daily life to articulate the educational, communicative, historical and cultural values of the visual arts.

### IV. Curriculum Planning

Art teachers design comprehensive, sequential curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and empowers students to carry out the artistic processes of creating and responding to art.

### V. Knowledge of Students

Art teachers plan and implement instruction that reflects knowledge of students' artistic, intellectual and physical development.

### VI. Instructional Resources

Art teachers create, select and adapt a variety of appropriate art works, technologies and other resources to plan and support student learning.

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## **Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Visual Arts... (continued)**

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### **VII. Instruction**

Art teachers use a variety of safe and developmentally appropriate art media, techniques, teaching methods and strategies to promote a high level of understanding and artistic achievement.

### **VIII. Reflection and Professional Growth**

Art teachers pursue lifelong learning and improvement through reflective practice, artistic and professional development, and participation in art making.

### **IX. Leadership**

Art teachers articulate and enhance the role of the arts and arts education in the school and community as well as demonstrate organizational skills and take an active role in educational decision making.

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## Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of World Languages

### I. Content Knowledge

World language teachers demonstrate linguistic competence and cross-cultural proficiency in the language(s) they teach. They have the knowledge, awareness and ability to compare and contrast the home culture(s) and the target culture(s).

World language teachers understand the cumulative nature of language learning (i.e., language proficiency develops and expands, yet continues to build on all previous learning). Key domains of knowledge include:

- research in first- and second-language acquisition;
- general linguistics;
- current brain research; and
- various assessment models related to listening, speaking, writing and cultural understanding in the target language.

World language teachers demonstrate an understanding of the interdisciplinary base of world language instruction (e.g., language arts, history, the arts, mathematics, etc).

### II. Learning Environment

World language teachers create and maintain a nurturing learning environment that encourages risk taking and creative use of language. This linguistic learning environment embodies the practices, perspectives and products of the culture(s) being studied.

### III. Learners

World language teachers believe that all students have the potential to learn and be successful in acquiring and using language in and beyond the classroom. They recognize that students' development, linguistic backgrounds, abilities and interests influence their thinking, learning and use of language. They demonstrate awareness of student diversity and learn strategies to build understanding in the classroom.

### IV. Instruction

World language teachers use a variety of authentic<sup>9</sup> materials and cultural products, including technology and human resources. World language teachers understand that people use listening and speaking, reading and writing, viewing and performing as ways to build understanding. They help students to develop these skills in a variety of cultural contexts. They explore with students varied cultures in which the language is used as a medium of communication.

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<sup>9</sup> "authentic" means created by native speakers for native speakers

# **Connecticut State Department of Education**

## **Division of Teaching and Learning**

Abigail L. Hughes  
Acting Associate Commissioner

## **Bureau of Curriculum and Teacher Standards**

Raymond L. Pecheone, Chief

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