

III-E. Theatre Findings and Recommendations

This section contains findings and recommendations related to the internal quality review, the external referent reviews, and the review of 21st Century Skills and PWR Skills for theatre. Detailed review criteria can be found in the Methodology section of this report. A brief description of the criteria and guiding questions also are provided here for convenience.

Internal Quality Review

As described in the Methodology section of this report, the Colorado MCS were reviewed for their quality according to four criteria: depth, coherence, rigor, and breadth. The scale used for evaluating each criterion was as follows: Fully (F), Partially (P), No (N), or Insufficient Information to determine (I). Findings from these analyses are presented below.

Depth

Ratings for depth are assigned based on the questions below.

- Do the benchmarks describe content of sufficient and appropriate depth in the standard *within each grade span*? (For example, is the depth of content of the standard appropriate for a school year?)
- Do the benchmarks describe content of sufficient and appropriate depth in the standard *across the grade spans*?

The table below shows the ratings for depth in the theatre standards, reported for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans. The across grade span ratings are holistic ratings of the depth of the standards in K–12.

Table 33. Ratings for Depth in the Theatre MCS

Standard	K–4	5–8	9–12	Across Grade Spans
1	F	F	F	F
2	P	F	F	F
3	F	F	F	F
4	P	P	F	P
5	P	P	F	P
6	F	F	F	F

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 33 shows, standards 1, 2, 3, and 6 are rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. Standards 4 and 5 are rated as Partially across the standards for depth. The ratings for each standard within the grade spans are discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Standard 1

Standard 1 for theatre requires students to develop interpersonal skills and problem-solving capabilities through group interaction and artistic collaboration. Standard 1 is rated as Fully across the grade spans. It is also rated as Fully within each grade span. There is clear evidence of appropriate depth for the benchmarks within each grade span (K–4, 5–8, and 9–12). For example, demonstrating problem solving through group interaction (1.K–4.3) indicates an appropriate level of depth for the K–4 grade span.

Standard 2

Standard 2 for theatre requires students to understand and apply the creative process to fundamental skills of story telling, playwriting, acting, and directing. Standard 2 is rated as Fully across the grade spans. Depth within the K–4 grade span is rated as Partially. Of the four benchmarks in the K–4 grade span, the level of depth required for two of the benchmarks is ambiguous. The ambiguity in 2.K–4.1 results from a lack of specificity (i.e., although “telling stories” is a logical building block for developing skills in theatre, without further specification, it is overly broad, and depending on how the story is told, or the prescribed conditions of the activity, could result in different levels of depth). The ambiguity in 2.K–4.3 results from vague wording. It is unclear what would be an appropriate demonstration of using role playing “to understand human behavior” at this grade span. Since the remaining two benchmarks in this grade span (two of the four) do demonstrate appropriate depth, the rating for this grade span is P rather than I. Standard 2 is rated as Fully within grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. There is clear evidence of appropriate depth for the benchmarks within them. For example, introducing the concepts of interpreting subtext (2.9–12.4) requires additional layers of processing, which demonstrates an appropriate level of depth for the 9–12 grade span.

Standard 3

Standard 3 for theatre requires students to understand and apply the creative process of design and technical production. Standard 3 is rated as Fully across the grade spans. It is also rated as Fully within each grade span. There is clear evidence of appropriate depth for the benchmarks within each grade span (K–4, 5–8, and 9–12). For example, analyzing text in order to determine appropriate design (3.5–8.1) requires comprehension of text, connecting information to a potentially wide array of possibilities, and making decisions that are supported by the text, all of which demonstrate an appropriate level of depth for the 5–8 grade span.

Standard 4

Standard 4 for theatre requires students to understand and relate the role of theatre arts to culture and history. Standard 4 is rated as Partially across the grade spans. Depth within the K–4 and 5–8 grade spans is rated as Partially. At the K–4 grade span, there is a concern that the level of depth required to research historical/cultural information and to apply knowledge to dramatic activities may not be appropriate. Although these benchmarks may be appropriate for grades 3 and 4, it is questionable how kindergarten and first grade students would be able to demonstrate these skills. At the 5–8 grade span, the level of depth could not be determined for “exploring historical and cultural concepts through dramatic activities” (4.5–8.2). The ambiguity in this benchmark results from the

use of the verb “explore,” which can vary in levels of depth, as well as from the general context (historical and cultural concepts) of the statement. However, because the depth is determined to be appropriate for the only other benchmark in this grade span, the overall rating within this grade span is Partially. Depth within the 9–12 grade span is rated as Fully. For example, analyzing and applying cultural knowledge to theatrical works (4.9–12.2) requires higher-level processing skills that demonstrate appropriate depth for the 9–12 grade span.

Standard 5

Standard 5 for theatre requires students to analyze and assess the characteristics, merits, and meanings of traditional and modern forms of dramatic expression. Standard 5 is rated as Partially across the grade spans. Depth within the K–4 and 5–8 grade spans is rated as Partially. At the K–4 grade span, two of the three benchmarks have appropriate depth; however, due to an ambiguous and inconsistent use of language, it is unclear what depth is expected for “understanding the form of dramatic structure.” Presumably, the intention of this benchmark at this grade span is to understand dramatic structure (i.e., beginning, middle, end) rather than understanding various types (genres) of drama (tragedy, comedy, etc.). However, “forms” appears in the Glossary with the following definition: “comedy, tragedy, melodrama, farce, absurd, social drama, epic drama, guerrilla theatre, experimental theatre.” Furthermore, the corresponding benchmark at the 5–8 grade span (5.5–8.3) mentions “comedy, tragedy, and other dramatic forms.” Also, a different definition of “form” is used in the wording of the standard: “...meanings of traditional and modern forms of dramatic expression.” Thus, within this standard are multiple interpretations of “form.” Depth within the 9–12 grade span is rated as Fully. For example, analysis of literary elements such as structure, theme, imagery, symbolism, language, and style (5.9–12.1) requires knowledge and application of literary concepts within the larger context of the work. This is an appropriate level of depth for the 9–12 grade span.

Standard 6

Standard 6 for theatre requires students to know and apply connections between theatre and other disciplines. Standard 6 is rated as Fully across the grade spans. It is also rated as Fully within each grade span. There is clear evidence of appropriate depth for the benchmarks within each grade span (K–4, 5–8, and 9–12). For example, identification of relationships (6.K–4.2) does not go beyond making direct connections, which demonstrates an appropriately low level of depth for the K–4 grade span.

Coherence

Ratings for coherence are assigned based on the questions below.

- Are the benchmarks for each standard sequenced appropriately across the grade spans? (For example, do they scale or spiral appropriately across the grade spans?)
- Do the benchmarks begin and end at appropriate points in the content?

The tables below show the ratings for coherence in the theatre standards, reported as appropriate sequence across the grade spans, and as appropriate beginning and endpoints for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans.

Table 34. Ratings for Coherence in the Theatre MCS

Standard	Appropriate Sequence Across Grade Spans
1	F
2	F
3	F
4	F
5	P
6	F

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

Table 35. Ratings for Coherence in the Theatre MCS

Standard	Appropriate Beginning and Endpoints			
	K–4	5–8	9–12	Across Grade Spans
1	F	F	F	F
2	F	F	F	F
3	F	F	F	F
4	P	P	P	P
5	I	N	P	P
6	P	F	F	F

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 34 shows, standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. Standard 5 is rated as Partially for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. As Table 35 shows, standards 1, 2, 3, and 6 are rated as Fully across the grade spans for appropriate beginning and endpoints. Standards 4 and 5 are rated as Partially across the grade spans for appropriate beginning and endpoints. The ratings for each standard within the grade spans are discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Standard 1

Standard 1 is rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. There is clear evidence of appropriate spiraling of content across the grade spans. For example, sharing constructive opinions (1.K–4.4)—fully appropriate for K–4—is scaled up to adapting the activity based on constructive criticism (1.5–8.4), and this is taken to an appropriately higher level in 9–12 with evaluating collaborative efforts and artistic choices (1.9–12.4). This standard is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. For example, adapting based on feedback (1.5–8.4) leads to developing skills of revision, which is an appropriate endpoint for the 5–8 grade span.

Standard 2

Standard 2 is rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. There is clear evidence of appropriate spiraling of content across the grade spans. For example, vocal exercises (2.K–4.2) serve as a starting point for developing vocal skills of clarity, volume, and vocal variety (2.5–8.3). A more sophisticated version of this concept appears in the 9–12 grade span with using voice for conscious communication of thought, feeling, and character (2.9–12.2). The standard is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. For example, telling stories (2.K–4.1) results in developing communication skills and logical thinking, which are appropriate for the K–4 grade span.

Standard 3

Standard 3 is rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. There is clear evidence of appropriate spiraling of content across the grade spans. For this standard, however, spiraling is achieved not by adapting the same activity to a higher grade span, as demonstrated in the previous examples, but instead by changing the activities for each grade span. For example, the K–4 concept of set design focuses on using elements such as space, color, and line to visualize and design environments (3.K–4.1). Although analysis of texts would not be appropriate for the full range of the K–4 grade span, it is appropriate for the 5–8 grade span (3.5–8.1); also, the parallel 9–12 concept is extended to include researching, selecting, and designing appropriate settings (3.9–12.1). The standard is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. For example, adhering to theatrical standards and safety guidelines results in a broader awareness of one’s surroundings and develops a sense of responsibility that is appropriate for the 9–12 grade span.

Standard 4

Standard 4 is rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans and is rated as Partially for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. There is clear evidence of appropriate spiraling of content across the grade spans; however, there is a concern that endpoints of the K–4 and 9–12 benchmarks are not fully aligned with the overall focus of the standard, which, based on evaluation of the benchmarks, is to understand theatrical contributions from various cultures throughout history. Also, the stated focus of this standard on the “role of theatre,” although it does appear in one 9–12 benchmark (4.9–12.1), is not represented in any of the K–4 or 5–8 benchmarks. This lack

of alignment between the standard and the benchmarks may result from an unintentionally narrow wording of the standard. The benchmarks in the grade spans are fully appropriate, and the extension beyond the specification of the standard is desirable. At the 5–8 grade span, the endpoint of “exploring concepts through dramatic activities” is ambiguous. Similar to the previous comment regarding this word, “explore” does not imply an endpoint, thus resulting in an ambiguity in interpreting this benchmark.

Standard 5

Standard 5 is rated as Partially for appropriate sequence across the grade spans. There is some evidence of spiraling of content across the grade spans; however, there is a greater concern over the alignment of the benchmarks to the actual standard, similar to the concern raised with standard 4. For standard 5, however, the issue appears to be extraneous concepts combined with an imprecise selection of words in the phrase “traditional and modern forms of dramatic expression.” First, the concepts of traditional and modern are encapsulated in standard 4, since it is part of history. Overall, these words are extraneous in standard 5 (i.e., no benchmark addresses or implies these concepts) and increase the lack of clarity and the ability to differentiate between this standard and the previous standard. Second, there is an inconsistent use of “form” among the standard statement and in the two benchmarks of this standard (5.K–4.2 and 5.5–8.3), as discussed above (see section on Depth). Third, given the various interpretations of “traditional and modern” (e.g., time period, style of performance in respect to when the work originated), the focus of the benchmarks implies “dramatic works” rather than “traditional and modern forms of dramatic expression.” Thus, despite the wording of the standard, the focus of standard 5 seems to be analyzing and assessing characteristics, merits, and meanings of dramatic works.

At the K–4 grade span, the benchmark—responsible audience behavior (5.K–4.3)—appears misplaced in this standard. Knowing how to respond in a performance situation would be more appropriately tied to developing interpersonal skills (standard 1). In contrast, all benchmarks in the 5–8 and 9–12 grade spans are, for the most part, sequenced appropriately.

Standard 5 is rated as Partially for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. At the K–4 grade span, the endpoints in 5.K–4.2 and 5.K–4.3 do not relate directly to the standard, and the standard is rated as Insufficient Information. Within the 5–8 grade span, although analysis of dramatic elements (5.5–8.2) is fully appropriate for this grade span, identification is probably better suited to the K–4 grade span. Also, expressing personal reactions to various types of drama (5.5–8.3) is more appropriate for the lower grade span. Since the endpoints of those benchmarks were determined to be, in part, inappropriate (i.e., too low) for the 5–8 grade span, the rating is No. At the 9–12 grade span, the standard is rated as Partially. Two of the benchmarks in this grade span (5.9–12.1 and 5.9–12.3) demonstrate appropriate endpoints. The endpoint of “reflecting and revising collaborative contributions and artistic choices” (5.9–12.2), however, does not relate directly to the standard. This benchmark may be better suited to standard 1, or eliminated altogether since it is somewhat redundant with evaluating collaborative efforts and artistic choices [1.9–12.4].

Standard 6

Standard 6 is rated as Fully for appropriate sequence across the grade spans and is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. There is clear evidence of appropriate spiraling of content across the grade spans. For example, identifying relationships between theatre and other disciplines (6.K–4.2) provides a basis for demonstrating interactions between theatre and other disciplines (6.5–8.2), which allows for analysis of common themes between theatre and other disciplines (6.9–12.2). The K–4 grade span is rated as Partially because the endpoints are unclear for creating dramatic activities to understand other disciplines (6.K–4.1) and for exploring technology (6.K–4.3). The standard is rated as Fully within the 5–8 and 9–12 grade spans. The beginning and endpoints are appropriate for each grade span. Given the focus on technical production in standard 3, the three benchmarks focusing on technology in standard 6 (6.K–4.3, 6.5–8.3, and 6.9–12.3) may be appropriate for inclusion in standard 3.

Rigor

Ratings for rigor are assigned based on the questions below.

- Do the benchmarks describe content and skill expectations of a reasonable and appropriate level for this grade span?
- Do the standards and benchmarks communicate an appropriate level of rigor?

The table below shows the ratings for rigor in the theatre standards, reported for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans.

Table 36. Ratings for Rigor in the Theatre MCS

Standard	K–4	5–8	9–12	Across Grade Spans
1	F	F	F	F
2	P	P	F	P
3	F	F	P	F
4	P	P	F	P
5	P	P	P	P
6	I	I	P	I

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 36 shows, standards 1 and 3 are rated as Fully across the grade spans for rigor. Standards 2, 4, and 5 are rated as Partially across the grade spans for rigor. Standard 6 is rated as Insufficient Information across the grade spans for rigor. The ratings for each standard within the grade spans are discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Standard 1

Standard 1 is rated as Fully across the grade spans for rigor. It is also rated as Fully within each grade span. There is clear evidence of appropriate rigor for the benchmarks within the K–4, 5–8, and 9–12 grade spans. For example, developing a unified production concept through research and collaboration (1.9–12.2) requires students to collect and process information and then work with others to implement the idea and make a cohesive whole—all of which demonstrate an appropriate level of rigor for high school students.

Standard 2

Standard 2 is rated as Partially across the grade spans for rigor. Within the grade spans, K–4 and 5–8 are rated as Partially. Because two of the four benchmarks in K–4 are appropriate in rigor, and the other two are unclear in their level of rigor, the grade span rating is Partially. Particularly unclear are “telling stories” (2.K–4.1) and “planning and recording improvisations based on personal experiences” (2.K–4.4). Depending on the endpoint or conditions under which stories are told, which is not clear in the MCS, the rigor of these statements can vary. At the 5–8 grade span, two of the four benchmarks show an appropriate level of rigor. In 2.5–8.3 (“developing vocal skills of clarity, volume, and vocal variety through reading aloud and interpreting characters”), however, the rigor appears too low for the 5–8 grade span. This benchmark is appropriate for grade 5 (in addition to grades 3 and 4), but is not demanding enough for grades 7 and 8. The level of rigor required in 2.5–8.4, similar to the corresponding benchmark at the lower grade span (2.K–4.4), is not clear. The standard is rated as Fully for 9–12 grade span. There is clear evidence of appropriate rigor for the benchmarks within the grade span.

Standard 3

Standard 3 is rated as Fully across the grade spans for rigor. It is rated as Fully within the K–4 and 5–8 grade spans. The level of rigor within the grade spans is appropriate. Within the 9–12 grade span, the standard is rated as Partially. Distinguishing the level of rigor in “understanding and applying the functions of scenery, properties, lighting...” (3.9–12.2) from the comparable benchmark at lower grade spans is difficult. The comparable benchmark at K–4 is “assembling and using objects, light, fabrics, sound effects, masks, and makeup to represent time and place, and to suggest character in playmaking activities” (3.K–4.2). It would be a reasonable presumption that included in the lower benchmark is the concept of “understanding” objects, light, sound effects, and makeup if one is to assemble and use them. The comparable benchmark at 5–8 (“assembling and using elements of technical theatre to represent time and place, establish character, enhance theme and mood, and create dramatic environments” [3.5–8.2]) does require an appropriately higher level of rigor than the K–4 statement, because “to establish character” requires more rigor than “to suggest character” and because “to enhance theme and mood” is a higher-level concept. However, a comparison of the high school benchmark to the two lower grade spans does not yield a clear distinction in levels of rigor.

Standard 4

Standard 4 is rated as Partially across the grade spans for rigor. The standard is rated as Partially in the K–4 grade span. The level of rigor at the grade span for “researching historical and cultural information to support classroom dramatization” (4.K–4.1) is too high for the lower end of the grade span. The standard at the 5–8 grade span is rated as Partially due to an unclear level of rigor in “exploring historical and cultural concepts” (4.5–8.2). The standard is rated as Fully for the 9–12 grade span. The rigor is appropriate at this grade span.

Standard 5

Standard 5 is rated as Partially across the grade spans for rigor. It is also rated as Partially within each grade span. Although the rigor is appropriate for many of the benchmarks within each grade span, the broader issues discussed previously regarding the clarity of particular benchmarks also affect the level of rigor and thus results in ratings of Partially within each of the grade spans. At the K–4 grade span, the overall ambiguity of 5.K–4.2 has already been mentioned. At the 5–8 grade span, the rigor of 5.5–8.3 (also discussed above) displays a level of rigor that is too low for this grade span. At the 9–12 grade span, the level of rigor could not be determined for “reflecting and revising collaborative contributions and artistic choices” (5.9–12.2).

Standard 6

Standard 6 is rated as Insufficient Information across the grade spans for rigor. At the K–4 grade span, the standard is rated as Insufficient Information. The level of rigor is ambiguous for two of the three benchmarks (i.e., “Creating dramatic activities to understand other disciplines” [6.K–4.1] and “exploring technology to enhance dramatic activities” [6.K–4.3]) due to lack of specificity in the description of the skills in the benchmarks. For example, “exploring” can be interpreted as requiring a very high or very low degree of rigor, depending on implementation. At the 5–8 grade span, the standard is also rated as Insufficient Information. The level of rigor is unclear for two of the three benchmarks (i.e., using dramatizations to demonstrate the interaction between theatre and other disciplines [6.5–8.2] and understanding and using technology to enhance classroom activities [6.5–8.3]). At the 9–12 grade span, “combining knowledge and skills from other disciplines” (6.9–12.1) neither specifies an endpoint nor any other details regarding this activity. However, the two other benchmarks for this grade span do demonstrate an appropriate level of rigor. Thus, the rigor rating within the 9–12 grade span is Partially.

Breadth

Ratings for breadth are assigned based on the questions below, each of which is reported in a separate table.

- Do the benchmarks describe sufficient and appropriate breadth of content across standards *within each grade span*?
- Do the benchmarks contain the essential content for this subject *within and across grade spans*?
- Are the benchmarks free from extraneous content *within and across grade spans*?
If not, what content is extraneous?

Each of the three aspects of breadth examined is reported in a separate table in order to distinguish between essential and extraneous content.

Breadth represents the sufficiency of content across the standards. The table below shows the ratings for overall breadth *across* the reading standards within each grade span and across the grade spans.

Table 37. Ratings for Overall Breadth in the Theatre MCS

Grade Span	Across Standards
K–4	P
5–8	P
9–12	P
Across Grade Spans	P

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 37 shows, grade spans K–4, 5–8, and 9–12 are rated as Partially across the standards for overall breadth. Individual grade spans are discussed below.

Grade spans K–4, 5–8, and 9–12 are each rated as Partially because the benchmarks, overall, contain some evidence of appropriate breadth across standards; however, there are several concerns regarding the standards themselves or how the benchmarks relate to the standards in terms of their breadth.

The table below shows the breadth ratings for essential content in the theatre standards, reported for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans.

Table 38. Ratings for Breadth—Essential Content in the Theatre MCS

Grade Span	1	2	3	4	5	6	Across Standards
K–4	P	F	P	P	N	F	P
5–8	P	F	P	P	P	F	P
9–12	F	P	P	F	F	F	P
Across Grade Spans	P	F	P	P	P	F	P

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 38 shows, together, grade spans K–4, 5–8, and 9–12 are rated as Partially across the standards for breadth—essential content. Each grade span is discussed below. Areas for improvement are discussed below.

Note that some of the following concerns regarding breadth in the standards apply to all grade spans. They are fully discussed in the K–4 grade span and referenced in the higher grade spans to minimize redundancy.

Grade Span K–4

Grade span K–4 is rated as Partially across the standards for essential content. The grade span is rated as Partially at standards 1, 2, and 4. It is rated as No at standard 5, and is rated as Fully at standards 2 and 6.

The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 1 because of the placement of collaboration and problem-solving skills as a theatre standard. “Developing interpersonal and problem-solving skills” does not describe specific theatre content. Although these skills are very important in theatre, they are not exclusive to theatre. Rather than placing this content at the level of the standard, it would be more appropriate to place this content in the benchmark-level statements. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 3, because both benchmarks at the K–4 grade span focus on a fairly limited section of content pertaining to design and technical production. Other concepts that could be included at this grade span include making/creating props (to supplement “assembling and using” that is in the benchmark) and identifying roles of actor, director, designer, etc. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 4 because although the standard focuses on relating the role of theatre to culture and history, as stated above, no benchmark in this grade span specifically addresses this content (see discussion on Coherence). Both benchmarks in the K–4 grade span focus on researching and applying historical and cultural information.

The grade span is rated as No at standard 5 because two of the three benchmarks in this grade span do not capture the essential content as articulated in the standard. As addressed earlier, “understanding the form of dramatic structure” (5.K–4.2) is not clear; and 5.K–4.3 is not essential to this standard. The latter benchmark may be more appropriately placed in standard 1, as part of developing interpersonal skills through group interaction. The different rating between standard 4 and standard 5, despite similar circumstances, results from the proportion of benchmarks that contain essential, unclear, or non-essential content. A broader issue with this standard concerns how “traditional and modern” fits into this standard versus the appropriateness of including it in standard 4 (also mentioned above).

Grade Span 5–8

Grade span 5–8 is rated as Partially across the standards for essential content. The grade span is rated as Partially at standards 1, 3, 4, and 5. It is rated as Fully at standards 2 and 6. Similar to K–4 grade span, grade span 5–8 is rated as Partially at standard 1 because of the broader issue concerning prioritizing collaboration and problem-solving skills as a theatre standard. The grade span is rated Partially at standard 3 because of a seemingly narrow coverage of technical production. Other grade-appropriate content for the 5–8 grade span could include the use of stage space (blocking) and roles of theatre personnel. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 4 because the benchmarks in this grade span do not address the role of theatre. It is rated as Partially at standard 5 because of the lack of cohesiveness between the goal as interpreted from the wording of the standard and the goals as they are articulated in the benchmarks. There is no mention of “traditional and modern forms of expression.” Again, this can be attributed to unintentional wording in the standard.

Grade Span 9–12

Grade span 9–12 is rated as Partially across the standards for essential content. It is rated as Fully at standards 1, 4, 5, and 6. It is rated as Partially at standards 2 and 3. It is rated as Partially at standard 2 because, in addition to the concern of too much content in this standard, there is an additional concern that no benchmark addresses directing. Although no benchmarks in the lower grade spans refer to this concept either, it may not be an appropriate expectation for the lower grade spans. The content, however, would be appropriate at the 9–12 grade span. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 3 because other grade-appropriate content could be included (e.g., use of stage space [blocking], roles/resources required to bring different aspects of production together).

The table below shows the breadth ratings for freedom from extraneous content in the theatre standards, reported for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans.

Table 39. Ratings for Breadth—Free of Extraneous Content in the Theatre MCS

Grade Span	1	2	3	4	5	6	Across Standards
K–4	P	P	F	F	P	F	P
5–8	P	P	F	F	P	F	P
9–12	P	P	F	F	P	F	P
Across Grade Spans	P	P	F	F	P	F	P

(F=Fully; P=Partially; N=No; I=Insufficient Information)

As Table 39 shows, together, the grade spans are rated as Partially across the standards for breadth—free of extraneous content. Each grade span is discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Grade Span K–4

Grade span K–4 is rated as Partially across the standards for freedom from extraneous content. It is rated as Fully at standards 3, 4, and 6, and Partially at standards 1, 2, and 5. It is rated as Partially at standard 1 because of the broader issue of collaboration and problem solving as a theatre standard. Despite the importance of these skills to theatre, they do not directly address theatre content and theatre activities, and thus their inclusion at the standard level should be reexamined. It is rated as Partially at standard 2 because the amount of content in this one standard seems excessive. There is too much breadth within the standard. The concepts of movement, vocal expression, story interpretation, and improvisation all appear in just one benchmark (2.K–4.2). Though movement and vocal expression are logically placed within the same benchmark, story interpretation and improvisation are different concepts requiring more internal processing skills. In general, the standard itself includes three very different topics: acting/story telling, playwriting, and directing. It is rated as Partially at standard 5 because one of the benchmarks (responsible audience behavior) in this grade span does not relate directly to the standard on analyzing and assessing characteristics, merits, and meanings in drama. This

benchmark would be more appropriate for standard 1, particularly if responsible behavior is considered part of “demonstrating respect for others in dramatic activities” (1.K–4.1).

Grade Span 5–8

Grade span 5–8 is rated as Partially across the standards for freedom from extraneous content. As with the lower grade span, it is rated as Fully at standards 3, 4, and 6. It is rated as Partially at standards 1, 2, and 5. Similar to the previous grade span, 5–8 is rated as Partially at standard 1 because of the questionable placement of this content at the standard level. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 2 because of the concern that this standard contains too much content. It is rated as Partially at standard 5 because expressing and comparing reactions to forms of drama (5.5–8.3) seems like a superficial treatment of analyzing/assessing characteristics, merits, and meanings.

Grade Span 9–12

Grade span 9–12 is rated as Partially across the standards for freedom from extraneous content. It is rated as Fully at standards 3, 4, and 6. It is rated as Partially at standards 1, 2, and 5. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 1 because, in addition to the concerns raised earlier regarding the standard, “daily life” in 1.9–12.3 is not logically connected to previous benchmarks or to the standard. However, it should be noted that in this grade span, unlike the lower grade spans, there are benchmarks that are specific to theatre (e.g., interrelated responsibilities in theatre and unified production concepts). The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 2 because “classical and contemporary acting styles and techniques” (2.9–12.3) does not relate directly to the standard. This benchmark would be more logical in standard 4 or 5. The grade span is rated as Partially at standard 5 because “reflecting and revising collaborative contributions and artistic choices” (5.9–12.2) is redundant with benchmarks in standard 1 (specifically, 1.5–8.4 and 1.9–12.2).

External Referent Review

As described in the Methodology section of this report, analysts reviewed four sets of content standards to serve as an external referent comparison with Colorado’s MCS in theatre. The following documents were used as external referent standards for the theatre review:

- Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework (November 1999)
- New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts (2004)
- Singapore, H2 Theatre Studies and Drama Teaching Syllabus (Syllabus 9726)
- Scotland
 - Curriculum for Excellence: Expressive Arts; Experiences and Outcomes (Scotland, 2007)
 - Curriculum for Excellence: Expressive Arts; Principles and Practices (Scotland, 2007)
 - Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 2 (Scotland, 2007)

These external referent standards were reviewed for two broad criteria, organization/structure and content. Each criterion contained several subcategories about which analysts recorded observations before determining a final overall holistic rating of mostly similar (Similar) or mostly different (Different). Findings from these analyses are presented below, first with a summary of findings across the external referents. This is followed by four sections detailing the findings of the review for each referent.

The table below summarizes the holistic external referent standards in comparison with the Colorado MCS for theatre.

Table 40. Holistic Comparison Ratings for Theatre External Referents

Rating Category	Massachusetts	New Jersey	Singapore	Scotland
Organization/ Structure	Similar	Different	Different	Different
Content	Similar	Different	Similar	Different

The holistic ratings above reflect the analyst’s judgment that in three of the external referent standards, there were more differences than similarities with Colorado’s MCS in organization and structure. In one of the external referent standards, there were more similarities than differences. With regards to content, the holistic ratings above show that in two of the four external referents, there were more similarities than differences overall with the Colorado MCS for theatre. With two of the referent standards, there were more differences than similarities. The analyses below highlight various similarities and differences between the Colorado MCS and pertinent categories in each referent’s documents. It is important to note that the referents have similarities and differences among one another, as well as with the Colorado MCS. However, no one approach is intended to be presented as necessarily more or less effective than another. Differences in

structure or content of a state or country's standards may be qualitative, but may also be attributable to differences in history, purpose, and/or context. Thus, the implication is that a variety of approaches and combinations of approaches may be considered, should they be determined to be appropriate for Colorado.

Organization and Structure

As indicated in Table 40, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework* presents a similar organization and structure to the Colorado MCS for theatre. The organization and structure of the *Visual and Performing Arts—New Jersey Core Curriculum*, the Singapore Theatre Studies and Drama Teaching Syllabus, and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence, Experiences and Outcomes: Expressive Arts* are mostly different from the Colorado MCS. Criteria for evaluating organization and structure included grade articulation, hierarchy of standards, number of standards, and design and format of the document. In some of these categories, the referents differ from each other as well as from the Colorado MCS; in others, they share some similarities with each other as well as with the Colorado MCS.

Grade Articulation

Colorado's MCS for theatre articulates expectations for three grade spans, K–4, 5–8, and 9–12. Three of the referents also present expectations for multiple grade spans: *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, the *Visual and Performing Arts—New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards*, and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence, Experiences and Outcomes*. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is somewhat similar to the Colorado MCS, articulating the fewest number of grade spans (3); however, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* articulates two different sets of expectations at the high school level. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence* articulate the greatest number of grade spans (5).

Hierarchy of Standards

The Colorado MCS articulates two different levels: the broadest level is the standard, which consists of the content statement; the next level is the benchmark, which tends to indicate a more specific application or expectation of the standard for each of the grade spans. Both the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and *New Jersey Core Curriculum* articulate three different levels. The addition of strand in both referents identifies the specific art discipline since both referents present dance, music, theatre, and visual arts together as arts standards. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also identify other topics in their strands (discussed below). Neither Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus nor Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence* articulates a hierarchy in their content statements.

Number of Standards

The Colorado MCS has six standards. Both the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have five standards. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus does not have standards but articulates three broad Areas Of Study. At the next level of detail, the Colorado MCS has a total of 57 benchmarks, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has a total of 86 learning standards, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has a

total of 114 cumulative progress indicators, and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence* has only 15 experiences and outcomes. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus has over 100 content statements scattered throughout its syllabus. The Colorado MCS has fewer content statements than three of the referents.

Design/Format

The Colorado MCS presents the standard and then the benchmarks, organized from the lowest to the highest grade span. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are somewhat similar to the Colorado MCS in the design and format of the documents. The three documents above present the grade spans vertically (portrait layout, top to bottom). The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus and Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* are very different from the Colorado MCS in the design and format of the documents. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence* use unique identifiers for each content statement.

The format of each referent facilitates different degrees of user-friendliness. Most users specifically targeting theatre content will find the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* cumbersome due to the inclusion of four art disciplines in the grade-span statements of the standards. As a result, theatre content appears on a small portion of every page, requiring users to scan several pages to gain a sense of the theatre expectations at each of the five grade spans. Visually, however, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does include helpful tabs in the margins identifying the standards by number. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is the closest of the referents in format to the Colorado MCS. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, and Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* use unique identifiers for each grade-span statement. Like the Colorado MCS, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus does not use unique identifiers for any content statements.

Content

As Table 8 shows, the content of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus have more similarities than differences with the content of Colorado's MCS for theatre; and the content of the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* and Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* have more differences than similarities with the content of Colorado's MCS for theatre.

Standard 1

Although the referents differ in the amount and degree of coverage for this standard, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, and Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* provide much less depth and breadth than the Colorado MCS. The lack of comparable depth and breadth results from the three referents addressing the content in this standard (e.g., collaboration and problem solving) at a level that would be comparable to benchmark of the Colorado MCS rather than prioritizing the content at the level of the standard. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus places this content in the core skills and learning outcomes, which are similar to the 21st century and post-secondary workforce readiness skills developed by the Colorado Department of

Education. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus also displays a level of depth that is similar to the Colorado MCS.

Standard 2

Since this standard focuses primarily on performance, especially acting, it is not surprising that all referents devote a significant portion of their documents to the content in this standard. There are, however, differences in how the content is presented in the referents, resulting mainly in differences in breath and specificity. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus have a broader range of content than the Colorado MCS. In the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, the broader range results from the different organization of the content. Rather than combining all performance concepts (e.g., acting and directing) with playwriting into one standard, as the Colorado MCS does, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* articulates in three different standards the concepts of acting, reading and writing scripts, and directing. By spreading the content across three standards, the resulting coverage is both broader and deeper. In Singapore's Theatre Studies Syllabus, greater breadth results largely from multiple sections addressing acting and numerous statements pertaining to theoretical and practical expectations for acting, dramatic sequence—this addresses performance aspects—and stage movement. In the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, the organization of the content in this standard is similar to that of the Colorado MCS, and the level of depth and breadth are similar. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* has considerably less breadth than the Colorado MCS, and since the statements were designed for flexibility in interpretation and application, the level of depth is not clear in the lower levels. Level is the equivalent of grade span in Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence*. At the highest level, depth is comparable to that in the Colorado MCS.

Standard 3

The referents vary considerably in their coverage of design and technical production. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* have a greater range in content than the Colorado MCS. In both of these referents, the greater range results from a greater number of statements addressing more concepts. In depth, however, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are similar to the Colorado MCS. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* and Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* show a narrower range of content than the Colorado MCS.

Standard 4

Neither the Colorado MCS nor the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* references specific cultures or periods in their coverage of history and culture. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus do mention specific cultures/periods. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicate levels of depth and breadth that are similar to the Colorado MCS. The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus indicates less depth but greater breadth in comparison to the Colorado MCS. In the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus, specific cultures and periods are identified; however, there is no indication of expectations for the content outside of "familiarity." Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* does not include comparable content in its curriculum.

Standard 5

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* and the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus offer coverage for this standard that is similar in depth and breadth to the Colorado MCS. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* indicates greater depth and breadth than the Colorado MCS—an expected outcome given that the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* devotes more learning standards, which are the equivalent of the Colorado MCS benchmarks, to the concepts in this standard. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* is similar to the Colorado MCS in depth but does not display the full range of content that is found in the Colorado MCS.

Standard 6

Only the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the content of this standard. Overall, it is similar to the Colorado MCS coverage for this standard in depth and breadth; however, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* does offer examples that help to clarify how one might realize or apply the learning standards. Without the clarifying examples, its learning standards for this content are fairly broad, similar to those in the Colorado MCS. The other three external referents do not offer comparable content.

Grade Spans

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* sequence content through nearly all grade spans. There is some evidence of sequencing in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*; however, it is not consistent. Instead, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* tends to distribute certain concepts in a few different grade spans. The distribution and range of content is similar in the other three referents. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* offers the least range of content.

Endpoints in the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus are similar to those in the Colorado MCS benchmarks for the 9–12 grade span. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* provides a greater range of beginning and endpoints for the lower grade spans—an expected outcome since expectations are articulated at grade 2. Its specification of expectations for grade 2 results in a greater sensitivity to developmental differences at lower grade spans. The endpoints articulated in Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* are substantively different from those articulated in the Colorado MCS, resulting mainly from different philosophies and approaches.

Wording/Specificity

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* and the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus exhibit a level of specificity that is similar to the Colorado MCS. On the other hand, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* display a level of specificity that is different from the Colorado MCS and each other. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* frequently offers more detailed statements and displays a consistently high level of precision in language. The majority of Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* content statements deliberately avoid specificity to allow for flexibility and customization.

The sections that follow provide detailed discussions of the similarities and differences between each external referent and the Colorado MCS, elaborating on the overview in the preceding section.

Massachusetts

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework* are more similar than different.

Grade Articulation

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* articulates standards at the end of grade 4, end of grade 8, and end of grades 9–12. For the 9–12 grade span, it specifies two different levels based on the number of years of study at the high school level. At the Basic level, expectations are based on one full year of study; at the Extended level, expectations are based on at least two years of study. The latter expectations also apply to students who intend to pursue theatre beyond high school. The articulation of two different sets of expectations at the high school level results in higher-level standards with greater depth, rigor, and breadth.

Hierarchy of Standards

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* articulates three levels. At the broadest level is the strand, which indicates the specific art discipline (theatre, visual arts, dance, music) or—in the case of the connections strand—applies to all art disciplines. Within each strand are standards. Although its standards do include statements that are comparable to the Colorado MCS statements, it also identifies each standard by broad categories. These are acting, reading and writing scripts, directing, technical theatre, and critical response. The use of broad categories such as these minimizes the potential for misalignment between standard and grade-span statements. Within each standard are learning standards, which describe expectations for the end of grades 4, 8, 9–12 Basic, and 9–12 Extended. These are equivalent to the benchmarks in the Colorado MCS.

Number of Standards

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has five theatre standards and five connections standards. The theatre standards include the following numbers of learning standards at each grade span: 19 for the end of grade 4; 31 for the end of grade 8; 18 for the end of grades 9–12 Basic; and 12 for the end of grades 9–12 Extended. There are 80 grade-specific learning standards for theatre. The connections standards include the following numbers of learning standards at each grade span: 8 for the end of grade 4; 11 for the end of grade 8; 11 for the end of grades 9–12 Basic; and 12 for the end of grades 9–12 Extended. There are 42 grade-specific learning standards for connections. Across both the theatre and connections strands, there are 128 learning standards defining the 10 standards (5 theatre and 5 connections). The larger number of learning standards in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* results in greater ranges of content and greater depth than the Colorado MCS.

Design/Format

In terms of presentation and organization of content, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is similar to the Colorado MCS. Content is organized by strand, then standard, and finally learning standards, in order from the lowest to the highest grade span. As mentioned above, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* presents learning standards that apply to all art disciplines separately from the theatre standards. Concepts of history, style, influence, purpose, technology, and interdisciplinary studies can be found in the connections strand. This is different in design from the Colorado MCS presentation of history, style, and technology within the specific context of theatre. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* also includes a number of appendices at the end of the framework on arts-related topics, such as Arts in World and U.S. History; Assessment Development; Research on Arts and Learning; Opportunities to Learn the Arts; Improving Arts Education; and Technology Literacy Competencies and the Arts.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework* are more similar than different.

Standard 1

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* includes coverage for working collaboratively, giving and receiving feedback, and evaluation of one's own as well as the work of others in a few different standards. Despite similar coverage, it organizes this content differently from the Colorado MCS. Rather than prioritizing this content as a standard, it accounts for the content in individual learning standards across the following standards: acting, reading and writing scripts, technical theatre, and critical response. Although it articulates the importance of working alone, which the Colorado MCS does not address, the Massachusetts document's overall coverage results in less breadth and depth in the standard. This difference between the two documents is likely a result of the different organization of the content.

Standard 2

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* accounts for story telling, role-playing, acting, and playwriting in various standards. Similar to the case above with standard 1, it organizes these topics differently from the Colorado MCS. Rather than placing all concepts relating to performance in one standard, as the Colorado MCS does, it treats acting, directing, and script writing as separate standards. This division allows the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* to provide greater depth and breadth for each of the topics than the Colorado MCS. For example, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* includes coverage for making decisions regarding the visual configuration of the acting space (3.1); stage space, stage directions, and blocking (3.4); the rehearsal process (3.5); concept statement and prompt book (3.9); and self-analysis (5.4).

Standard 3

Similar to the Colorado MCS, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* devotes one standard to the technical aspects of theatre. It provides similar coverage on creating appropriate scenery, props, costumes, sound, and lighting; determining technical requirements from

texts; and adhering to safety guidelines during creation and performance. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the Colorado MCS have similar depth and breadth in the standard at grade span K–4. At the upper grade spans, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has greater depth and breadth than the Colorado MCS. It includes a greater range of content than the Colorado MCS. For example, the referent includes theatrical personnel (4.3), designing models and floor plans of sets (4.6), creation of various sound environments (4.7), and relationship between technical aspects of production and on-stage performers (4.13).

Standard 4

The treatment of history and culture in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is similar in depth and breadth to the Colorado MCS. Although it does specify native populations and groups that immigrated to America (8.1) at the lowest grade span, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* does not specify beyond America and various world cultures (8.4 and 8.5) and historical and cultural context (8.8 and 8.9) at the upper grade spans. The Colorado MCS also do not provide any specificity at these grade spans.

Standard 5

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS for this standard. Similar to the Colorado MCS, it accounts for generating responses to performance, analyzing how theatrical elements are used, and using criteria for critical evaluation. Unlike the Colorado MCS, it sequences concepts of critical evaluation and appropriate audience behavior through all grade spans (5.1, 5.6, and 5.12). At the 9–12 grade span, the expectation is that “students attend live performances of extended length and complexity, demonstrating an understanding of the protocols of audience behavior appropriate to the style of the performance.” For this standard, the Colorado MCS also includes audience behavior only at the K–4 grade span and critical evaluation only at the upper grade spans.

Standard 6

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* provides coverage that is similar to the Colorado MCS for this standard. The depth and breadth in its learning standards are very similar to the Colorado MCS benchmarks. Nevertheless, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* provides examples that specify clearer endpoints. For example, “using research skills from history and social science to develop a monologue for a character from history” (10.2) is much more focused than “exploring how theatre is interrelated with other disciplines” (6.5–8.1). While the focus of the Colorado MCS benchmarks is on connections among theatre and other disciplines and technology, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* learning standards are slightly broader and include specific mention of other art disciplines (10.1) and knowledge about cultural institutions in the arts (10.3). In terms of overall depth and breadth, however, it is similar to the Colorado MCS.

Grade Spans

At the K–4 grade span, the distribution of content in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is similar to that of the Colorado MCS. However, at times, it provides expectations for the lowest grade span that are more tangible than those in the Colorado MCS. For

example, at the lowest grade span, it specifies learn lines (1.5); identify what drama is and how it happens (2.1); and identify characters, setting and action (2.2). As discussed above, some of the Colorado MCS benchmarks at this grade span are unclear due to lack of precision in language or ambiguous interpretation of the benchmark. For the upper grade spans, distribution of content and sequencing in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are similar to the Colorado MCS. At the highest grade span, its range of content is broader than the Colorado MCS. As noted above, however, this is likely a result of the referent specifying two different sets of expectations at the high school level.

Wording/Specificity

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* consistently presents a higher level of specificity than the Colorado MCS. For example “organizing and performing technical responsibilities” (3.9–12.3) is treated more substantially in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* than the Colorado MCS with “technical crew or management team” (4.11), “aspects of production and the on-stage performers” (4.13), and “create and implement a major design element for a mainstage production by stage managing a theatrical event” (4.16). The Massachusetts document places broad concepts in the standard; however, the learning standards provide details on realistic and practical application of the standard in concrete terms.

New Jersey

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts* are more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* articulates cumulative progress indicators for the end of grades 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12. The main difference between it and the Colorado MCS grade articulation is the specification at two additional levels: grades 2 and 6. These additional grade spans result in a substantively greater delineation of expectations for the lower grades in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* than in the Colorado MCS.

Hierarchy of Standards

Similar to the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* articulates three different levels. At the broadest level is the standard, which describes broad categories appropriate for all art disciplines—aesthetics; creation and performance; elements and principles; critique; and world cultures, history, and society. Each standard is further articulated by strands. Standards 1.2 and 1.3 include four strands: dance, music, theatre, and visual art. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* places all content specific to theatre in only two standards—creation and performance and elements and principles. Standards 1.1, 1.4, and 1.5 include two strands: knowledge and skills. Each strand articulates, cumulative progress indicators for the end of grades 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12. The strands are the equivalents of benchmarks in the Colorado MCS.

In general, the knowledge indicators tend to include internal processing, and the skills indicators tend to include the external application. However, frequently there is little difference between the two types of indicators and the distinction is superficial. For example, there is little difference between the knowledge indicator “compare artistic content of contrasting works” (1.4.8.A.2) and the skills indicator “compare and contrast the technical proficiency of artists” (1.4.8.B.2). Both indicators appear to require similar processing.

Number of Standards

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has five standards. Each standard includes the following numbers of cumulative progress indicators at each grade span: 18 for the end of grade 2; 22 for the end of grade 4; 27 for the end of grade 6; 23 for the end of grade 8; and 24 for the end of grade 12. There are 114 grade-specific cumulative progress indicators across all standards and strands appropriate for theatre. Although the number of indicators at individual grades is slightly higher than the number of benchmarks in the Colorado MCS, the overall number of indicators is significantly greater than the Colorado MCS due to articulation at two additional grades. Despite a greater quantity of statements, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicators display greater breadth in only one standard.

Design/Format

Overall, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* presentation is very different from that of the Colorado MCS. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* presents the standard, then the cumulative progress indicators—organized from the lowest to the highest grade span—and finally the strand. One key difference between it and the Colorado MCS, as well as the other referents, is the inclusion of visual art, dance, and music indicators among the theatre indicators for the two content-area-specific standards—creation and performance and elements and principles. This feature makes it cumbersome to use for those seeking out content for only one of the four disciplines. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* includes design and format elements that increase its usability. For instance, it includes helpful tabs in the margins to identify the standards. It also uses italic and bold fonts and white space.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts* are more different than similar.

Standard 1

Overall, the Colorado MCS benchmarks offer greater depth and breadth in standard 1 than the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*. This is likely a result of the Colorado MCS prioritizing this content at the level of the standard. The organization of the content of standard 1 in *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is similar to the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*. It includes indicators that address collaboration and constructive criticism; however, it places this content in individual grade-span indicators of mostly the creation and performance standard. One of its indicators specifies content not found in the Colorado MCS: Indicator 1.2.4.C.3, focuses on collaboration through assuming roles of director, actor, playwright, designer. The Colorado MCS does not address roles of theatre personnel in this standard or any other standard.

Standard 2

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum*'s treatment of storytelling, acting, and directing is similar in depth and breadth to that of the Colorado MCS. Rather than spiraling content through all grade spans, like the Colorado MCS, it places some content only in specific grade spans. For example, the concept of directing appears only at grade 12 ("Interpret a script by creating a production concept with informed, supported, and sustained directorial choices" [1.2.12.C.2]).

Standard 3

Unlike the Colorado MCS, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* addresses technical production in a few indicators within the two theatre-specific standards. It addresses the concept of design only at grade 8. Its focus on this content from the perspective of description and analysis (1.2.8.C.4) differs significantly from the wider perspective of the Colorado MCS, which includes assembling, using, visualizing, designing, organizing, and researching. This results in greater depth and breadth in the Colorado MCS.

Standard 4

Overall, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicators display a greater range of depth and breadth for this standard than the Colorado MCS. Neither document indicates specific cultures or periods and each takes a more generic approach (e.g., identify and compare “works from diverse cultures.” Nevertheless, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* includes indicators on identifying works from various cultures (1.5.2.A.1 and 1.5.4.A.1), having knowledge of significant artists (1.5.6.B.1), and tracking historical events and artistic development (1.5.12.A.1).

Standard 5

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has coverage of structure/form; development of theme, character, and plot; character intent and motivation; and dramatic elements that is similar in depth and breadth to the Colorado MCS. Occasionally, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* articulates more specific starting points at the lower grade span than the Colorado MCS. For example, at grade 4, it includes recognizing main subject or theme (1.4.4.B.3), using arts terminology (1.4.4.A.1), and using qualitative terms in response to art (1.1.4.B.3). For the latter example, the corresponding grade 4 benchmark of the Colorado MCS is “expressing impressions and observations related to dramatic activities and performance” (5.K–4.1). The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* statement elicits something very specific (qualitative terms). The Colorado MCS statement is not as discriminating (impressions and observations).

Standard 6

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does not include coverage for connections between theatre and other disciplines.

Grade Spans

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* contains a number of concepts that do not align to any of the Colorado MCS standards. Indicators in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* aesthetics standard include reflecting on the nature and meaning of art and beauty (1.1.4.A.2), Functionalism and Formalism (1.1.6.A.1 and 1.1.6.A.2), and describing how an element contributes to its aesthetic value (1.1.6.A.3). Indicators in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* world culture, history, and society standard include identifying family and community as themes (1.5.2.A.2) and recognizing arts resources in communities (1.5.4.A.2). Its creation and performance standard includes investigating and outlining pathways for arts-related careers (1.2.6.C.6 and 1.2.12.C.5).

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has greater grade span articulation than the Colorado MCS. The inclusion of indicators at grade 2 in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* results in more tangible indicators that demonstrate an appropriately lower level than the grade 4 indicators. Nevertheless, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does not consistently sequence content through all grade spans, unlike the Colorado MCS. In general, there tend to be differences among the activities articulated at various grade spans.

Wording/Specificity

Despite the greater number of indicators in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, the actual level of specificity in the indicators is similar to that provided in the Colorado MCS benchmarks, especially for grades 4, 8, and 12.

Singapore

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the Singapore Theatre Studies and Drama Teaching Syllabus are more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

Unlike the Colorado MCS, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus articulates content and expectations at one level only—the knowledge and skills expected after completing the two-year course at the pre-university level.

Hierarchy of Standards

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus has three main sections that, when considered together, offer a comparable level of information to the Colorado MCS. The areas of study provide the broadest but least detailed level of content. The theoretical and practical expectations provide the narrowest but most detailed level of content. The core skills and learning outcomes are in between in terms of amount of detail and depth.

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus areas of study include three broad categories of concepts and knowledge with which students should be familiar: elements of theatre and drama; production and performance; and world theatre. Each of these categories contains a number of concepts—such as structure, plot, language, use of spectacle for the elements of theatre and drama category—however, expectations for the specific content (beyond “familiarity”) are not articulated in this section. Thus, the areas of study inform the range or breadth of content. However, depth and rigor could not be determined from this section. Instead, the core skills and learning outcomes provide an appropriate level of information in order to determine depth and rigor.

The theoretical and practical expectations provide additional detail on performance topics such as acting, dramatic sequence, and stage movement. Also included are detailed expectations for the following production topics: puppetry, set design, mask design, make-up and costume design, sound design, and lighting design. Together, the areas of study and theoretical and practical expectations provide indications of the breadth of the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus.

The core skills and learning outcomes, on the surface, resemble the Colorado Department of Education’s draft of 21st century and post-secondary workforce readiness skills (e.g., analytical skills, communication skills, collaborative skills). However, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus frames each skill within the specific context of theatre. The core skills and learning outcomes in it indicate levels of depth and rigor.

Number of Standards

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus identifies three broad areas of study: elements of theatre and drama, production and performance, and world theatre. Each area consists of about five sub-areas. The amount of content in each sub-area ranges widely from specifying a single concept (e.g., significant theatrical developments in the history of theatre) to multiple concepts (e.g., dramatic conventions, theatrical traditions, tension,

focus, rhythm, space, movement, sound, time, symbol, mood, pace, pause, atmosphere, character/role, actor, audience relationship).

The theoretical and practical work expectations further specify 23 statements for the performance topics, and 53 statements for the production topics. It should be noted, however, that due to the articulation of both theoretical and practical expectations, frequently the same concept appears repeatedly (e.g., “understand set design in relation to a chosen dramatic text or an identified theatrical event” [theory] and “create an original set design or re-create a period set for a theatrical performance, taking into account scene changes” [practice]).

The core skills and learning outcomes consist of 12 skills: analytical, interpretative, evaluative, writing, creative, devising, and improvisation, communication, collaboration, performance, problem solving, design, direction, and research. Each skill includes specific application to theatre. There are a total of 33 statements that articulate theatre expectations across the 12 skills. The core skills and learning outcomes are very similar to the Colorado Department of Education’s draft of 21st century and post-secondary workforce and readiness skills.

Design/Format

The substantial design and format differences between the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus and the Colorado MCS result from broader differences in the goals of the documents themselves (i.e., teaching syllabus versus content standards). The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus begins outlining the aims and course objectives. These are followed by the core skills and learning outcomes, organized by skill with specific application to theatre described within each skill. The remainder of the document consists of sections describing the appropriate learning environment, areas of study, group performance and development of individual skills, and finally theoretical and practical expectations by the end of the 2-year course.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS for theatre and the Singapore Theatre Studies and Drama Teaching Syllabus are more similar than different. Because the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus does not have standards for theatre at the lower grade spans, only the benchmarks of the 9–12 grade span of the Colorado MCS have been used to compare content.

Standard 1

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus addresses group work and problem solving in the core skills and learning outcomes. This content is framed around understanding group dynamics, group decision making, critique, negotiation, and conflict resolution. The depth and breadth of this content is similar to that of the Colorado MCS.

Standard 2

Overall, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus provides comparable coverage for this standard. At times, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus offers a slightly broader range

of content than the Colorado MCS. Additional content in the document includes acting conventions; aspects of characterization (psychological complexity, behavior); writing for self-expression; focus, stillness and silence; projection, clarity, tone, pitch, pace, accent, and dialect. Depth in the standard is similar to the Colorado MCS.

Standard 3

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus provides a similar level of depth for this standard. However, the referent provides much greater breadth than the Colorado MCS. Specifically, it offers excessive coverage on design and technical aspects of production. Theoretical and practical expectations are specified for sets, masks, lighting, makeup, and costumes. Additional content covered in it includes color filters, switchboards, dimmers, lanterns, materials and colors for mask design, makeup and costume for cultural contexts, historical periods, and theatrical styles.

Standard 4

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus specifies a broad range of content in the world theatre section of the areas of study: social and cultural contexts of plays, historical movements of theatre, developments in theatre, traditional Asian theatre, traditional Western theatre, and Modern theatre. However, outside of mentioning these areas, it does not provide any further detail. Thus, despite the identification of a greater range of content, depth is lacking.

Standard 5

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus includes coverage for dramatic structure, elements of stylistic and thematic coherence, thematic meaning, and symbolic meaning. The core skills and learning outcomes provide evidence of similar depth in such skills as “analyze the different ways in which plays might be interpreted by different directors, designers, performers and audiences.”

Standard 6

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus does not address connections between theatre and other disciplines.

Grade Spans

The Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus is intended for pre-university students. The content and expectations are mostly comparable to Colorado’s 9–12 grade span. There is no indication that the Singapore Ministry of Education offers standards in theatre at the lower grade levels.

Wording/Specificity

When considered together, the Singapore Theatre Studies Syllabus areas of study, core skills and learning outcomes, and theoretical and practical expectations provide a comparable level of specificity to the Colorado MCS standards and benchmarks. The document provides a greater amount of detail than Colorado for some parts of the content, such as world theatre and technical aspects of production.

Scotland

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS for theatre and Scotland's *Curriculum For Excellence: Experiences and Outcomes: Expressive Arts* are more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

The *Curriculum For Excellence* articulates five different levels: early, first, second, third, and fourth. Early corresponds to kindergarten, first corresponds to about grade 3, second corresponds to about grade 6, third corresponds to about grade 7 or 8, and fourth corresponds to about grade 9. At the third level, each student is expected to contribute to a public performance “as a significant culmination” of earlier learning. At the fourth level, students acquire “a basis for more advanced study and further scope for depth, challenge, enjoyment, personalization and choice.” Grade articulation in the *Curriculum For Excellence* appears to describe earlier stages of learning than Colorado's MCS.

Hierarchy of Standards

The *Curriculum For Excellence* does not specify a hierarchy of standards. There are two different sets of experiences and outcomes in the document that apply to theatre—those that are specific to drama and those that apply to all art disciplines (participation in performances and presentations). Within each set of experiences and outcomes, the *Curriculum For Excellence* has statements that either are specific to the level or are shared across several levels. The shared statements tend to be more generically focused around communication and response than actual performance.

Number of Standards

The *Curriculum For Excellence* has the following numbers of drama experiences and outcomes at each level: four for early, four for the first level, four for the second level, three for the third level, and five for the fourth level. The total number of experiences and outcomes is 20; however, a number of the experiences apply to more than one level. At each of the early through third levels, the document provides two unique statements. The other statements at these levels are the more generic shared statements pertaining to communication and response.

For the experiences and outcomes that pertain to all art disciplines, The *Curriculum For Excellence* has the following numbers of statements at each level: one for early, the first, and the second; two for the third; and one for the fourth. It articulates significantly fewer experiences and outcomes than the Colorado MCS articulates benchmarks. This results in significantly less breadth, and much greater freedom for interpretation and customization.

Design/Format

The *Curriculum For Excellence's* experiences and outcomes are presented as first-person affirmations in the student's voice, such as “I use drama to explore real and imaginary situations, helping me to understand my world.”

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS for theatre and Scotland’s *Curriculum For Excellence: Experiences and Outcomes: Expressive Arts* are more different than similar.

Standard 1

There are considerable differences in depth and breadth between the Colorado MCS and The *Curriculum For Excellence*. The latter does not include comparable content for this standard. There is some evidence, however, of interpersonal skills and constructive feedback in the following experiences and outcomes: “I can respond to the experience of drama by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others’ work” (EXA 0-15a) and “inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts, and feelings through drama” (EXA 0-13a). The curriculum does not directly address collaboration or problem solving.

Standard 2

The majority of drama experiences/outcomes in the *Curriculum For Excellence* relate to content in this Colorado MCS. However, the *Curriculum For Excellence* mainly presents expectations for acting, with some evidence of directing and playwriting only at the upper levels. In general, its experiences and outcomes for the lower levels do not indicate depth in the same way that the other external referents do. For example, it is difficult to determine depth from “I have the freedom to choose and explore how I can use my voice, movement, and expression in role play and drama” (EXA 0-12a). The experiences and outcomes at the higher levels, however, do imply depth: “Having had opportunities to lead negotiation and decision making, I can work on my own and with others to devise, rehearse and refine dramas and scripts” (EXA 4-14a). Although depth may not be articulated in the same way for the *Curriculum For Excellence* as it is for some of the other external referents, the greater degree of specificity implies expectations, from which one can make inferences about depth. The breadth of the standard of the Colorado MCS for theatre is also significantly greater than comparable expectations and outcomes of the *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Standard 3

There are considerable differences in depth and breadth between the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence*. The latter has only one experience/outcome that pertains to the use of technology: “I can use theatre arts technology to enhance tension, mood and atmosphere in drama work” (EXA 4-14b). Although this experience/outcome does not specify how technology is incorporated into the experience, the appendix of the *Curriculum For Excellence* identifies “lighting and sound equipment” for theatre arts technology. The coverage for this content appears only at the fourth level. The Colorado MCS, in its specification of designing environments, using objects, fabric, masks, makeup to represent time, place, and character, analyzing text and researching settings, and performing technical responsibilities under guidelines, presents a broader range of content with greater depth.

Standard 4

The *Curriculum For Excellence* does not include concepts of history or culture in the experiences and outcomes.

Standard 5

The *Curriculum for Excellence* has only one experience/outcome that relates to analyzing and assessing drama: “I can analyse technical aspects of drama and scripts, make informed judgments and express considered opinions on my own and others’ work” (EXA 4-15a). The document’s coverage for this content appears only at the fourth level. This experience/outcome is similar in depth to the Colorado MCS high school benchmarks for this standard. However, the Colorado MCS demonstrates greater breadth.

Standard 6

The *Curriculum for Excellence* does not include concepts of connections among theatre and other disciplines.

Grade Spans

Although there is some evidence of sequencing of content in the *Curriculum for Excellence*, especially at the lower levels, the experiences and outcomes at the fourth level tend to be more independent. This is evidenced by the presence of certain content appearing only at the fourth level (e.g., directing, playwriting, the role of technology in theatre, and analysis of drama).

The range and distribution of content in the *Curriculum for Excellence* is significantly less than that of the Colorado MCS. The lower levels (early and first) allow for flexibility and customization, depending on each child’s situation. The middle levels (second and third) mostly build on the lower levels, rarely introducing any new theatre-specific content. One of the main distinctions between the lower and mid levels tends to be the degree of flexibility or range of interpretation of the statements. For example, at the lower levels, such statements as “I enjoy creating, choosing and accepting roles, using movement, expression, and voice” (EXA 1-12a) allows for a range of interpretation and variety. At the middle levels, the statements are more focused with indications of rigor: “I have created and presented scripted or improvised drama, beginning to take account of audience and atmosphere” (EXA 2-14a). At the fourth level, the document provides even more targeted, multi-dimensional statements with significant demands of depth and rigor, such as “I can demonstrate sensitivity, precision and depth in the portrayal of a character, conveying relationships and situations in a variety of settings and to different audiences” (EXA 4-12a).

Wording/Specificity

As mentioned earlier, the experiences and outcomes of the *Curriculum for Excellence* at the lower levels are articulated in a manner that is personal (use of first person), sensitive to, and supports development of individual preference (“freedom to choose,” “developed confidence”), and promotes enjoyment (“enjoy creating”). The language that the *Curriculum for Excellence* uses to present its curriculum clearly places value on

personalization and respect for the individual at the earliest stages of learning. It appears to be written without specificity to allow flexibility and customization.

Review of Colorado’s Theatre Standards for 21st Century Skills and Abilities and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

As described in the Methodology section of this report, analysts reviewed Colorado’s draft 21st Century Skills and Abilities (21st Century Skills) and definition of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR Skills) to determine the degree to which Colorado’s MCS contain the skills described in those draft documents. Findings from those analyses are presented below.

Model Content Standards for Theatre and the 21st Century Skills and Abilities

Critical thinking and reasoning

Critical thinking and reasoning skills are Fully present across all grade spans for standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. For example, working collaboratively, adapting based on feedback, and developing unified concepts all require the ability to think logically and solve problems. For standard 2, the skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for the K–4 grade span because the benchmarks as written for this grade span focus on developing fundamental performance skills without explicit mention or implication of problem solving or analysis. The skill is, however, Fully present at the 5–8 and 9–12 grade spans (e.g., 2.9–12.1 relies on analysis). Since the skill is Fully present in two of the three grade spans, this standard is still rated Fully across the grade spans.

Information literacy

Information literacy skills are Fully present across all grade spans for standards 4 and 6. In standard 4, researching historical and cultural information supports knowledge acquisition. In standard 6, synthesizing complex technologies draws on systems management abilities. This skill is Partially present across all grade spans for standards 2 and 5. In standard 2, the skill is Fully present in the 9–12 benchmarks. Specifically, knowledge acquisition is required to interpret subtext of scripted materials and to create original scripts. The skill is not present at the K–4 and 5–8 grade spans. However, it was determined to be not relevant to, and not an appropriate fit for, standard 2 at these grade spans, since benchmarks in these spans appropriately do not address the concept of interpreting subtext or creating original scripts. Information literacy also is not present in standards 1 and 3. However, it was determined to be not relevant to, and not an appropriate fit for, these standards.

Collaboration

Collaboration skills are Fully present across all grade spans for standard 1. Developing interpersonal skills through group work in standard 1 directly contributes to social skills, synergy, and team resourcing. The skill is a reasonable and appropriate expectation for standard 2 since most performance-related activities in theatre are done in collaboration with others, but the skill is not present in the standard as currently written. The skill is appropriate in standard 5 at the K–4 grade span and is rated as Partially, because expressing impressions and observations requires some social skills. The standard could be rated as Fully, if it were broadened to include communication. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for standards 3, 4, and 6, which, rather than being focused on performance activities, deal with knowledge acquisition in relation to technical theatre, history/culture, and relationships between theatre and other disciplines.

Self-direction

Self-direction skills are Fully present across all grade spans for standards 1 and 2. In standard 1, solving problems through group interaction requires adaptability and initiative. In standard 2, adaptability is evident in the concept of improvisation. The skill is Partially present across all grade spans for standard 5. The skill is Fully present within the K–4 grade span of standard 5, as personal responsibility is evident in demonstrating appropriate audience behavior. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for the 5–8 or 9–12 grade spans of this standard since all of the benchmarks in these grade spans focus on critical response to theatre. Since the skill is only present in one of the grade spans, the across grade span rating is Partially. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for standards 3, 4, and 6 because these standards relate more to knowledge acquisition than initiative, work ethics, or self-advocacy.

Invention

Invention skills are Fully present across all grade spans for standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. In standard 1, developing a unified production concept requires integrating ideas. The skill is not present at the K–4 grade span of standard 1 and it does not appear to be appropriate given the focus of these benchmarks on communication and response rather than on creation. In standard 2, creativity is used for improvisation based on personal experiences and imagination. In standard 3, creativity and integration of ideas are present in designing settings. In standard 4, application of historical events through the creation of dramatic activities relies on innovation. In standard 5, innovation and creativity are present in revising collaborative contributions and artistic choices. For standard 5, the skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for the K–4 grade span because none of the benchmarks involve innovation or integration of ideas; however, since it is present in two of the three grade spans, the across grade span rating for standard 5 is still Fully.

Model Content Standards for Theatre and the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Skills

Application of reading, writing, and computing skills with minimal remediation or training

The skill is Fully present in standards 2, 4, and 5. The skill is Partially present in standard 3. There is some evidence of the skill in analyzing and researching appropriate theatrical settings (3.9–12.1). However, given the focus of this standard on understanding and applying the creative process to skills of design and technical production, it probably would not be desirable to revise the standard solely for the purpose of incorporating the skill more fully. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for standards 1 and 6 because these standards focus on interpersonal skills and connections between theatre and other disciplines, which do not directly reply on reading, writing, and computing skills.

Logical reasoning and argumentation abilities

The skill is Fully present in standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. For example, for standard 3, applying appropriate scenery, props, lighting, and sound, require devising and convincing an audience of an idea, theme, or mood through selection of props and set design.

Identification and solving of problems

The skill is Fully present in standards 1 and 5. The skill is Partially present in standard 3. Adhering to established theatrical practice, safety standards, and environmental guidelines (3.9–12.3) may involve correcting and generating solutions to problems. However, the skill does not tap a fundamental idea of the standard. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for standards 2, 4, and 6 since problem solving is not explicitly part of the creative process, for example, as defined through the benchmarks for standard 2.

Information management skills

The skill is Fully present in standards 2, 4, and 6. The skill is Partially present in standards 1 and 3. In standard 1, organizing responsibilities involved in theatre (1.9–12.1) requires some systems management. In standard 3, adhering to established theatrical practice, safety standards, and environmental guidelines (3.9–12.3) would involve adapting to new information. The skill, defined as system thinking, financial awareness, productivity, etc., is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for the analysis and evaluation of theatre benchmarks in standard 5.

Human relation skills

The skill is Fully present in standard 1. The skill is not present but would be appropriate for standard 2 because acting and directing do involve cooperation. Revision of these benchmarks to focus on the process of acting and directing as it relates to working would more fully integrate this skill into the standard. The skill is not present and does not appear to be appropriate for standards 3, 4, 5, and 6, as the focus of these standards is on knowledge acquisition or developing evaluative skills rather than on applying integrity to work ethic, cooperation, or demonstrating tolerance.

Analysis and interpretation skills

The skill is Fully present in standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. For example, in standard 6, explaining how theatre is related to other disciplines requires recognition of similarities, points of congruence, or patterns.

Recommendations

This section contains specific recommendations from the WestEd reviews, organized by the components of the analysis.

Internal Quality Review of Colorado’s Theatre Model Content Standards

The CDE may want to consider implementing the following recommendations, where appropriate:

- *Prioritization and Organization of Content*
 - All content identified as standards should be reflective of the content area.
 - Ensure logical connections between standards and benchmarks.
 - Ensure that an appropriate hierarchy is maintained between the standard and the benchmarks (e.g., the standard should not describe a concept that is more narrow than the benchmark implies; similarly, the benchmark should not describe a broader scope than the standard implies).
- *Language and Specificity*
 - Ensure that the wording of the standard and of all benchmarks is deliberate, essential, and clear. Be wary of ambiguous words that do not indicate clear meaning, such as “explore,” especially without providing sufficient context. Such words need not be avoided altogether, but if used, there should be sufficient context surrounding the word to yield a clear interpretation/intention.
 - Ensure consistency and cohesion between the standard and the benchmarks in both content and use of language.
- *Coherence*
 - Ensure that endpoints are clear and determinable in all benchmarks.
 - Ensure that beginning and endpoints are tangible for each grade span.
 - When sequencing content, ensure that progression of content is logical.
- *Breadth*
 - Consider specific mention of other art disciplines (standard 6 would be a relevant place in the current version) since of all the arts, theatre is the one that regularly incorporates all the arts.

External Referent Review for Theatre

- *Grade articulation* — Consider additional articulation of benchmarks, particularly at the lower grades, where developmental differences tend to be greater than at the higher grades. If higher-level benchmarks are appropriate and desired, consider articulating two sets of expectations at the high school level.
- *Hierarchy of standards* — Supplement standard statements with broader categorical descriptions, such as acting or critical response, as done in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework* and in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards*. This would minimize the potential for lack of alignment between standard and benchmark.
- *Differentiate content from skills* — Delegate content pertaining to collaboration and problem solving to benchmarks in appropriate standard(s). These are

important skills that do not belong at the level of the standard. Given their representation in Colorado’s draft 21st century and post-secondary and workforce readiness skills, it may be determined that representation in the standards is not necessary; however, these concepts are represented in most states’ theatre standards at the individual grade-span or grade-level statements.

- *Specificity* — Increase the level of specificity and detail in benchmarks, especially in the benchmarks for culture and history, and connections. Ensure appropriate and tangible benchmarks in all descriptions, especially for the lowest grade span.

Suggestions for consideration of additional external referents

Based on the internal quality review, the standards of two other states are recommended for perusal. Rationale for selection of each additional referent is provided below.

Connecticut’s Arts Curriculum Framework (March 1998)

This additional referent was selected particularly for its clarity and logic in organization and prioritization of standards, despite a larger number of standards. Connecticut’s theatre standards are organized into eight broader categories. This referent is recommended for review not for the number of standards but for the larger organization and prioritization of content. In fact, Colorado could reduce the number of standards from 6 to 5 (by delegating content for collaboration and interpersonal skills to the benchmark level of appropriate standards) and reorganize the content within each standard. As a model for organization of content, Connecticut’s standards are presented below:

1. *Creating*: Students will create through improvising, writing, and refining scripts.
2. *Acting*: Students will act by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters.
3. *Technical Production*: Students will design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution.
4. *Directing*: Students will direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals.
5. *Researching and Interpreting*: Students will research, evaluate, and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices.
6. *Connections*: Students will make connections between theatre, other disciplines, and daily life.
7. *Analysis, Criticism and Meaning*: Students will analyze, critique, and construct meanings from works of theatre.
8. *History and Cultures*: Students will demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods.

Indiana Academic Standards for Theatre (August, 2002)

These standards were selected for two reasons: (1) the standards offer concrete examples for many (not all) of their grade-specific statements, and (2) the standards articulate expectations for every grade level K–8, with proficient and advanced expectations for high school. For example, at the kindergarten level, for the Analysis and Response strand, standard 4, “Students identify, develop, and apply criteria to make informed judgments

about theatre,” and content statement K.4.1, “Make use of age-appropriate theatre vocabulary to critique what they see, hear, and understand,” the following example is provided: “Students respond to questions; ‘Did you understand the words?’, ‘Did the character make you laugh?’, or ‘What did the scenery make you think of?’ At grade 8, under the Integrated Studies strand, standard 11, “Students identify and make connections between theatre and other disciplines such as language arts, social studies, humanities, science, and technology,” and content statement 8.11.1, “Trace advancements in technology and their impact on the theatre,” the following example is provided: “Students discuss how the invention of electric light affected the theatre.”

Recommendations from the Review of 21st Century Skills and Abilities and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

Because of the interconnectedness of the findings and recommendations related to the 21st Century Skills and Abilities and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness definition, recommendations related to the 21st Century and PWR skills are presented together in the Findings section of this report.