

III-D. Dance 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 dance. 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 dance 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 25. Ratings for Depth in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 25 shows, standards 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are rated as Fully across the grade spans. Standard 3 is rated as Partially across the grade spans. The ratings for each standard within each grade span are discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Standard 1

Standard 1 for dance requires students to understand and demonstrate dance skills. It is rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. It is also rated as Fully within each grade span. There is sufficient depth in content at all three grade spans for students to understand and demonstrate dance skills. For example, the three benchmarks at grade span K–4, “observing and demonstrating a series of movements in a given order that create a movement phrase through basic non-locomotor and locomotor movement,” “demonstrating accuracy in moving with a rhythmic beat and responding to changes in tempo,” and “demonstrating awareness of spatial dimensions by moving and creating shapes within each dimension,” adequately support the rationale to build “strength, coordination, musicality, and flexibility,” as well as “self-esteem,” across the grade spans.

Standard 2

Standard 2 for dance requires students to understand and apply the principles of choreography. It is rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. Grade span K–4 is rated as Partially because the second benchmark, “developing variations of phrases,” has too much depth. It is more appropriate for students at this grade span to be able to repeat phrases and be able to identify the beginning, middle, and endpoints of phrases.

Standard 3

Standard 3 for dance requires students to create, communicate, and problem solve through dance. It is rated as Partially across the grade spans for depth. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the depth of the grade span is inappropriate. The depth of the first benchmark, “discovering solutions to a movement problem and discussing reasons for that solution,” and the third benchmark, “presenting and discussing dances with peers,” are too great. More appropriate benchmarks for this grade span include, identifying and creating movements to express certain ideas in dance, or identifying how movements can be altered to convey different ideas. Although not stated in the standard statement, the concept of analysis/critical response is also implied by the benchmarks in grade spans 5–8 and 9–12, which contributes to their Fully ratings. However, the lack of appropriate depth in grade span K–4 is significant enough to affect the rating across the grade spans for this standard.

Standard 4

Standard 4 for dance requires students to understand and relate the role of dance in culture and history. It is rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the depth is inappropriate for the second benchmark in this grade span. The depth of the second benchmark, “describing dance in relation to historical periods,” is too great. It requires an understanding of historical periods and the ability to relate dance to concepts in history. More appropriate benchmarks would be identifying and describing characteristics of dances from different cultures and historical periods.

Standard 5

Standard 5 for dance requires students to understand the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness. It is rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the depth is inappropriate for the second benchmark in this grade span. The depth of the second benchmark at grade span K–4, “discussing how warm-up activities prepare the body and mind for an activity,” is too great for this grade span. Awareness of the impact of physical activity on the mind and body is a sophisticated concept. A more appropriate benchmark for grade span K–4 would be participating in warm-up exercises, distinguishing warm-up exercises from dance sequences, or describing the impact of warm-up exercises on the body.

Standard 6

Standard 6 for dance requires students to understand the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines. It is rated as Fully across the grade spans for depth. It is rated as Fully at grade spans K–4 and 5–8 and Partially at grade span 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12 because the depth of the second benchmark at grade span 9–12, “identifying commonalities between dance and other disciplines,” is too limited for this grade span. It would be appropriate for the K–4 grade span. A more appropriate benchmark at grade span 9–12 would be, discussing how dance is influenced by other disciplines, or analyzing how the incorporation of other media enhances the overall theme/idea of a dance.

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 dance 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 26. Ratings for Coherence in the Dance MCS

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

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

Table 27. Ratings for Coherence in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 26 shows, standards 1, 2, 4, and 5 are rated across the grade spans as Fully for coherence of appropriate sequence. Standard 3 is rated as No and standard 6 is rated as Partially for appropriate sequence. As Table 27 shows, standards 3, 4, 5, and 6 are rated as Fully for coherence of appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. Standards 1 and 2 are rated as Partially across the grade spans. The ratings for each standard at each grade span 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 and is rated as Partially for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. It is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints at grade spans K–4 and 5–8. It is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12. The third benchmark of grade span 9–12, “demonstrating rhythmic accuracy,” is not sufficiently different from the corresponding benchmark at K–4, “demonstrating accuracy in moving with a rhythmic beat and responding to changes in tempo.” The fourth benchmark of grade span 9–12, “demonstrating performance skills,” is too vague and needs further clarification (e.g., perform in a group/as a soloist in front of an audience).

Standard 2

Standard 2 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. It is rated as

Partially at grade span K–4, Fully at grade span 5–8, and Partially at grade span 9–12. The standard is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the second benchmark, “developing variations of phrases,” is too high. It is very similar to the second benchmark of grade span 5–8, “developing variations of movement phrases.” Different endpoints are expected for developing variations at grade spans K–4 and 5–8; however, this is not conveyed in the benchmarks. The standard is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12 because the third benchmark, “contributing creative ideas to group choreography,” does not end at an appropriate point. The standard could have a higher endpoint and require students to do more. Students at this grade span should be able to create and choreograph a dance from start to finish.

Standard 3

Standard 3 is rated as No for appropriate sequence across the grade spans and is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. It is rated as Partially for appropriate beginning and endpoints at grade span K–4, and as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. The standard is rated as No for appropriate sequence across grade spans because no concept is properly spiraled across the three grade spans in a coherent way. For example, the concept of “discovering solutions to a movement problem” at K–4 is not continued at either of the higher grade spans. Similarly, the concept of relating music, lighting, and costuming to the meaning of a dance at 9–12 is not prepared in either of the lower grade spans. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the endpoint, “discovering solutions to a movement problem and discussing reasons for that solution,” is too high for the lower part of the grade span. More appropriate endpoints would include identifying and describing problems.

Standard 4

Standard 4 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. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. The standard is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the endpoint of the second benchmark is too high. The endpoint of this benchmark is interpreted as expecting students to relate characteristics of a dance to historical ideas. More appropriate endpoints would include identifying characteristics (e.g., costumes, movements) of dance in different cultures/periods.

Standard 5

Standard 5 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. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 for appropriate beginning and endpoints. It is rated as Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12 for appropriate beginning and endpoints. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the beginning and endpoints of the second benchmark are too high. Discussing the impact of physical activity on the mind is too complex for students at the lower part of this grade span.

Standard 6

Standard 6 is rated as Partially for appropriate sequence across the grade spans and is rated as Fully for appropriate beginning and endpoints across the grade spans. It is rated as Fully at grade spans K–4 and 5–8 and Partially at grade span 9–12. It is rated as Partially for appropriate sequence because the content does not sufficiently spiral between the grade spans. The cognitive complexity of the standard does not increase sufficiently across the grade spans. The standard is rated as Partially for appropriate beginning and endpoints at grade span 9–12 because the endpoint of the second benchmark is too low. “Identifying commonalities between dance and other disciplines,” is lower than the second benchmark of grade span 5–8, “discussing examples of similar concepts used between dance and other disciplines outside of the arts.”

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 dance standards, reported for each standard at each grade span, as well as across the grade spans.

Table 28. Ratings for Rigor in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 28 shows, standards 1, 3, 5 and 6 are rated as Fully for rigor across the grade spans for rigor. Standards 2 and 4 are rated as Partially for rigor across the grade spans. The ratings for each standard within each grade span are discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Standard 1

Standard 1 is rated as Fully for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as Fully at grade spans K–4 and 5–8. It is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12. The rigor of the third benchmark of grade span 9–12, “demonstrating rhythmic accuracy,” is too low. It is similar to the rigor of the second benchmark at grade span K–4, “demonstrating accuracy in moving with a rhythmic beat and responding to changes in tempo.” Moreover, the level of rigor of the fourth benchmark, “demonstrating performance skills,” is too unclear to determine.

Standard 2

Standard 2 is rated as Partially for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as Partially at grade spans K–4 and 9–12. It is rated as Fully at grade span 5–8. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the second benchmark is too high. “Developing variations of phrases” draws upon knowledge of how to adapt different types of movements. Most students would not have a significant amount of experience at this grade span to develop variations of phrases. Grade span 9–12 is rated as Partially because the rigor of the third benchmark is too low. “Contributing creative ideas to group choreography” is reasonable for grade span 5–8, but does not communicate an appropriate level of rigor for grade span 9–12.

Standard 3

Standard 3 is rated as Fully for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span K–4 because the rigor expectations of the first two benchmarks are too high, especially for the lower end of the grade span. Expecting kindergarteners and first graders to discover solutions to movement problems and to discuss reasons for that solution is too high for the grade levels. Similarly, expecting students to discuss “how dance is different from other forms of movement” at this grade span is too high.

Standard 4

Standard 4 is rated as Partially for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as No at grade span K–4 and Fully at grade spans 5–8 and 9–12. It is rated as No at grade span K–4 because the rigor expectations of the two benchmarks are too high. The first benchmark expects students to perform and discuss dances from various cultures. Although participating in or performing dances from different cultures is fully appropriate for this grade span, being able to discuss dances from various cultures is an activity that is not appropriate, especially for the lower range of the grade span. The second benchmark presents an even more challenging expectation, that students “describe dance in relation to historical periods.” Not only does this benchmark require students to be sufficiently familiar with history, but it also requires that students be able to relate history to dance of the period—both of which are unreasonable expectations for the grade span..

Standard 5

Standard 5 is rated as Fully for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as Fully at grade spans K–4, 5–8, and 9–12. Nearly all benchmarks for all grade spans are reasonable and appropriate.

Standard 6

Standard 6 is rated as Fully for rigor across the grade spans. It is rated as Fully at grade spans K–4 and 5–8. It is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12. It is rated as Partially at grade span 9–12 because the rigor of the second benchmark is too low. “Identifying commonalities between dance and other disciplines” is lower than the comparable benchmark at grade span 5–8, discussed above.

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 dance standards at each grade span and across the grade spans.

Table 29. Ratings for Overall Breadth in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 29 shows, the overall breadth across the grade spans is rated as Partially across the standards. Grade span K–4 is rated as Partially. Grade spans 5–8 and 9–12 are rated as Fully.

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

Table 30. Ratings for Breadth—Essential Content in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 30 shows, taken together, the grade spans are rated as Fully for breadth—essential content—across the standards. Individually, grade span K–4 is rated as Fully across the standards, grade span 5–8 is rated as Fully across the standards, and grade span

9–12 is rated as Fully across the standards. Each grade span is discussed below. Areas for improvement are also discussed below.

Grade Span K–4

Grade span K–4 is rated as Fully for essential content across the standards. This grade span is rated as Fully at standards 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. It is rated as Partially at standard 3. It is rated as Partially at standard 3 because the grade span is missing essential content. It should include more explicit preparation for analysis/evaluation of dance (e.g., identifying and describing similarities and differences between movement phrases).

Grade Span 5–8

Grade Span 5–8 is rated as Fully for essential content across the standards. Grade span 5–8 is rated as Fully at standards 1, 3, 4, and 5. It is rated as Partially at standards 2 and 6. It is rated as Partially at standard 2 because more explicit reference to choreographic principles or formal structures should be included at this grade span. It is rated as Partially at standard 6 because the standard is missing the essential content of production aspects of dance (e.g., essential roles and aspects of staging a dance performance; technology).

Grade Span 9–12

Grade Span 9–12 is rated as Fully for essential content across the standards. Grade span 9–12 is rated as Fully at standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

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

Table 31. Ratings for Breadth—Free of Extraneous Content in the Dance MCS

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

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

As Table 31 shows, across the grade spans, the MCS for dance are rated as Partially for breadth—free of extraneous content across the standards. Individually, each grade span is rated as Partially across the standards. 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 being free of extraneous content. It is rated as Fully at standards 1, 2, 5 and 6. It is rated as Partially at standard 3 and No at standard 4. It is rated as Partially at standard 3 because the third benchmark, “presenting and discussing dances with peers,” is unnecessary. Discussion of dances is

addressed in the other two benchmarks, and presentation of dances is addressed in other standards. It is rated as No at standard 4 because the range of possible “historical time periods and cultures” is so large that the possibility of too much content being addressed at this grade span is high. This grade span would benefit from the identification of specific historical and cultural traditions.

Grade Span 5–8

Grade Span 5–8 is rated as Partially across the standards for being free of extraneous content. It is rated as Fully at standards 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. It is rated as No at standard 4. Similar to grade span K–4, grade span 5–8 is rated as No at standard 4 because the range of possible “historical time periods and cultures” is potentially too large. This grade span would benefit from the identification of specific historical and cultural traditions at this standard. This concern with standard 4 affects the rating across the standards for this grade span.

Grade Span 9–12

Grade Span 9–12 is rated as Partially across the standards for being free of extraneous content. It is rated as Fully at standards 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 because the benchmarks are free of extraneous content. It is rated as No at standard 4. Similar to grade spans K–4 and 5–8, the range of possible historical time periods and cultures is too large. This concern with standard 4 affects the rating across the standards for this grade span. The fourth benchmark in standard 3, which addresses, “observing and explaining how musical accompaniment, lighting, and costuming can affect and contribute to the meaning of dance,” is more appropriate in standard 6. It is not extraneous content, but it fits more closely with standard 6, which addresses understanding the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines.

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 for dance. The following documents were used as external referent standards for the dance review:

- Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework (November 1999)
- New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts (2004)
- New South Wales, Australia
 - Primary Curriculum Foundation Statements, Creative Arts K–6, Units of Work (New South Wales, 2005)
 - Dance; A Guide to the New Years 7–10 Syllabus (New South Wales, 2005)
 - An Introduction to Dance Stage 6 in the New HSC (New South Wales, 1999)
 - Dance Stage 6, Support Document (New South Wales, 1999)
- Scotland
 - Curriculum for Excellence: Expressive Arts; Experiences and Outcomes (Scotland, 2004)
 - Curriculum for Excellence: Expressive Arts; Principles and Practices (Scotland, 2004)
 - Curriculum for Excellence, Building the Curriculum 2 (Scotland, 2004)

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 Colorado’s MCS.

Table 32. Holistic Comparison Ratings for Dance External Referents

Rating Category	Massachusetts	New Jersey	New South Wales	Scotland
Organization/Structure	Different	Different	Different	Different
Content	Different	Different	Different	Different

The holistic ratings above reflect the analysts’ judgment that in all four external referent standards, there were more differences in organization and structure than similarities with Colorado’s MCS. In content, the holistic ratings above show that in all four of the four external referents there were more differences than similarities overall with Colorado’s MCS. 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 Colorado's 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's 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 32, the organization and structure of the Colorado MCS differs from the organization and structure of all four of the external referents, based on the categories of grade articulation, hierarchy of standards, number of standards, and the design/format of the document.

Grade Articulation

The Colorado MCS is organized into three grade spans, K–4, 5–8, and 9–12, across which its standards are spirally presented. Similar to the Colorado MCS, all of the referents articulate their standards by grade span instead of by grade level. Their grade span articulations, however, are different from the Colorado MCS. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has three grade spans, but its 9–12 grade span is split into two tracks: Basic study and Extended study. The Basic study is one year and the Extended study is two to four years. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has five grade spans, each of which is two years in length, except grade span K–2. The New South Wales syllabi have seven grade spans, referred to as stages. They are also two years in length, except for Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten). Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* has five grade spans, referred to as levels, starting at Preschool. Each grade span is about 3 years in length, but the levels also overlap. Because the referents mainly have narrower grade spans, they are able to present standards that are more specific and appropriate to grade levels.

Hierarchy of Standards

The Colorado MCS hierarchy of standards includes standards, rationale, and grade span benchmarks. The external referents have different standard hierarchies. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has strands, standards, and learning objectives. It is an interdisciplinary arts curriculum, and dance is one strand within it. Some of the standards, referred to as Connection standards, apply to all of the art disciplines. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is also an interdisciplinary arts curriculum, with dance as one part of it. It has strands, standards, and indicators, and the art disciplines are categorized as standards. Broader strand statements (e.g., Aesthetics, Critique, and World Cultures, History, and Society) encompass the standards. Below the standards level are cumulative progress indicators (CPI) that define the objectives of the standards for the strands at each grade span. The New South Wales syllabi have objectives, outcomes, and indicators. The objectives, which are Dance Composition, Dance Performance, and Dance Appreciation, spiral across the stages. Each stage has specific outcomes, which are similar to the Colorado MCS benchmarks, and indicators that define the expectations of the outcomes. The indicators are further divided into “learn about” and “learn to” categories. The K–6

grade span syllabus also organizes its standards into specific lesson plan units (e.g., “I can dance,” “We’ve got rhythm”). Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* has no formal standards hierarchy. Instead, it has standards that are affirmations of student achievement (e.g., “I have opportunities to enjoy taking part in dance experiences”). These statements generally describe goals and expectations. Some of them are specific to individual levels, but others apply to multiple levels.

Number of Standards

The Colorado MCS has six standards, six rationales, and 18 benchmarks for grade span K–4, 19 benchmarks for grade span 5–8, and 20 benchmarks for grade span 9–12. With the exception of Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence*, all of the referents have more standards and supporting statements (e.g., indicators, learning standards, outcomes), than the Colorado MCS. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has five dance standards, five connection standards, 86 dance learning standards, and 48 connection learning standards. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has five standards, three strands, and 116 cumulative progress indicators. The New South Wales syllabi have four objectives, three to nine outcomes, and between eight and 118 content indicators per stage. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* has between two to five standards per level, without any supporting benchmarks or indicators.

Design/Format

The design and format of the Colorado MCS is mostly different from that of the external referents. The Colorado MCS is 14 pages, including standards that spiral across grade spans, an introduction, a glossary, and a matrix for integrating the MCS dance standards with other MCS subjects. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is a comprehensive interdisciplinary arts curriculum document. Each art discipline is presented separately. The document also includes sections on core concepts of art, guiding principles of art, and several appendices on art in world cultures and history, assessment practices, opportunities to learn art, researching and learning about art, and technology in the arts. As a result, it is 161 pages. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is much shorter, at 19 pages, and is the most similar of the referents to the Colorado MCS. As an interdisciplinary arts curriculum, the art disciplines are presented together within the standards section. It also includes a reference section. The New South Wales syllabi are much more comprehensive than the Colorado MCS. The dance standards are presented across three documents: *Creative Arts K–6: Units of Work*, *Dance: A Guide to the New Years 7–10 Syllabus*, and *Dance Stage 6 Syllabus*. The K–6 grade span syllabus is an interdisciplinary arts document with sections on music, visual arts, theatre, and dance. Each art discipline is presented separately. The dance section is organized into specific lesson plan units. The K–6 grade span syllabus contains teaching strategies, noted indicators for assessment, resources, and links to objectives in other subjects. It is 185 pages, although the dance section accounts for 35 pages. The 7–10 grade span syllabus focuses only on dance. In addition to the standards, it has sections on assessment and life skills. It is 43 pages. The 11–12 grade span syllabus is also focused only on dance. It has sections on assessment, post-school opportunities in dance, and a glossary. It is 79 pages. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* is 12 pages, of which only two are devoted to dance standards. It also has a glossary.

Content

As Table 8 shows, the content of the Colorado MCS has more differences than similarities with the content in the standards of all four of the external referents, based on the six standards and three grade spans of the Colorado MCS.

Standard 1

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from the referents in how it addresses dance elements and principles. Although all of the referents address dance elements and principles in some way, only the New South Wales syllabi are similar to the Colorado MCS in terms of depth and sequencing of content. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the standard with more breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS. For example, it has standards that encourage students to develop strength, coordination, and balance at the lower grade spans. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also addresses the standard with greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS. For example, it has standards on defining and maintaining personal space in dance, and using objects as creative stimuli for dance. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence*, however, addresses the standard with less depth, specificity, and rigor than the Colorado MCS.

Standard 2

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from the referents in how it addresses principles of choreography. Although all of the referents address choreographic principles in some way, only the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is similar to the Colorado MCS in depth, rigor, and sequencing. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the standard with greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS. For example, it has standards that address choreographing in different styles and traditions, comparing choreographic styles, and creating dances with regard to specific criteria. The New South Wales syllabi also address the standard with greater breadth and more appropriate sequencing. They refer to choreography in terms of structure and composition and use a wide variety of methods at each stage. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* addresses the standard with less depth, breadth, rigor, and sequencing than the Colorado MCS.

Standard 3

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from the referents in how it addresses the concepts of creation, communication, and problem solving in dance. Each referent addresses the concepts in some way, but none of them is similar to the Colorado MCS in emphasis. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the standard with greater breadth and depth. An example of greater breadth is that it addresses the use of gestures to enhance the expressive nature of movement. In terms of greater depth, it has a standard that requires students to “present dances or movement phrases; identify and describe movement choices and discuss varied responses to them.” The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also has greater depth. It specifies, “describe the principles of contrast and transition, the process of reordering and chance, and the structures of AB, ABA, canon, call and response, and narrative.” The New South Wales syllabi address the standard with greater breadth and depth. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* addresses the standard with less depth, rigor, and breadth than the Colorado MCS. It treats the standard more

informally than the Colorado MCS. For example, one statement reads, “I can express my ideas, thoughts and feelings through creative work in dance.”

Standard 4

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from two of the referents and mostly similar with two of the referents in how it addresses the role of dance in culture and history. All of the referents address the standard in some way. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is similar in depth with the Colorado MCS, although its standards have clearer expectations in the K–4 grade span and greater rigor in the 9–12 grade span. The New South Wales syllabi are mostly similar in breadth and depth with the Colorado MCS, although they do not address the standard at the earlier stages. As a result, the Colorado MCS sequences the standard better across the grade spans. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* addresses the standards with greater breadth and depth. For example, it has indicators that include the influence of social and political environments on artists, as well as issues of ethnicity, gender, and economic status. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* demonstrates less breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS in this standard.

Standard 5

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from the referents in how it addresses the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness. With the exception of the New South Wales syllabi, the Colorado MCS has greater breadth and depth than the referents in the standard. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* does not address the topic. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also makes little mention of it. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has very little coverage of the benefits of lifelong fitness from dance. It mainly focuses on the development of a positive body image. The New South Wales syllabi cover a broader range of concepts within the topic. For instance, it has standards on identifying health practices to maintain a safe body and for dance, and on learning about how major muscle groups contribute to basic body movement.

Standard 6

The Colorado MCS is mostly different in emphasis from two of the referents and mostly similar with two of the referents in how it addresses the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has similar depth but less specificity than the Colorado MCS. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has similar depth and breadth as the Colorado MCS. The New South Wales syllabi have less breadth and sequence. They do not address the standard in the earlier stages, and they mostly focus on the relationship of technology and dance. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* has less depth, rigor, and breadth than the Colorado MCS.

Grade Spans

The Colorado MCS and the external referents are mostly different in the presentation of the standards across the grade spans. Overall, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has greater specificity, depth, and breadth across the grade spans. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also has greater breadth and depth. The New South Wales syllabi have greater breadth than the Colorado MCS, but the sequencing of its objectives is not as consistent as the Colorado MCS standards. Some of the objectives spiral across every

stage, but some of them appear only in the final stage. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* has less depth, breadth, and sequencing of standards than the Colorado MCS.

Wording/Specificity

The Colorado MCS and the referents are mostly different in their emphasis on word and specificity. Both the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are similar to the Colorado MCS in the wording of their standards. All three use action verbs, such as demonstrate, describe, and create, to indicate the cognitive complexity of their learning standards, benchmarks, or indicators. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* and *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, however, are more specific in the detail of the content in their standards than the Colorado MCS. The New South Wales syllabi also exhibit greater specificity in the detail of content and skills students are expected to acquire. Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* is very different in the wording of its standards. It uses language to structure the standards as affirmations of student achievement, rather than to suggest cognitive levels of instruction (e.g., "I can analyse technical aspects of dance . . .").

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 and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* have similar standard articulations. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* articulates learning standards for grade spans pre-K–4, 5–8, and 9–12. The significant difference between the two documents is that the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has specifications for two different sets of standards: Basic or Extended study for the 9–12 grade span. Differences between the two sets are based on the number of years devoted to instruction in dance. Basic study is intended for one full year of study. Extended study is intended for two to four years of study. The addition of an Extended study allows for higher achievement in the 9–12 grade span for advanced students.

Hierarchy of Standards

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* have some similarities and differences in their hierarchies of standards. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has standards and learning standards that are comparable to the standards and benchmarks of the Colorado MCS. They are different, however, in that the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is a document that covers four arts disciplines: dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. Each art discipline is treated as a strand within the standards hierarchy. There is also a connections strand that includes history, criticism, and links to other disciplines, describing the overall content for what students should be able to accomplish by the end of grades 4, 8, and 9–12.

Number of Standards

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has a greater number of standards and learning standards than the Colorado MCS has standards and benchmarks. Although the Colorado MCS has six dance standards and 52 benchmarks, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has five dance standards and five connection standards. It also has 86 dance-specific learning standards and 48 connection learning standards to support the broader standards. For the dance-specific standards, there is range of 14–24 learning standards per standard. The connection learning standards, in particular, increase the number of standards, and subsequently, the amount of content covered in the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*.

Design/Format

The design and format of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is mostly different from the Colorado MCS. The two documents have some similarities in the presentation of the hierarchy of standards, although the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* uses a numbering system to organize its standards and learning standards (e.g., 1.1) within each grade span. It is also a much more comprehensive document, presenting the standards for the four art disciplines. As such, it includes sections that provide an overarching framework for the arts. There is an introduction, a core concept section, and a section on guiding principles. The core concept section “presents the essential purpose of making the arts part of each

student’s education.” The guiding principles section explains the “underlying tenets of learning, teaching, and assessment in the discipline.” The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* includes five appendices: (1) Arts in world and United States history, (2) Assessment development, (3) Research on the arts and learning, (4) opportunities to learn the arts, and (5) Technology literacy competencies and the arts. It also includes a glossary of key terms in dance, providing definitions for dance concepts and vocabulary. As a result, the document is 161 pages, including the art disciplines.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is more different than similar.

Standard 1

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 1. Each document addresses students’ understanding and demonstrating of dance skills. They each have standards that focus on dance elements and principles. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, however, has greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS. In addition to addressing dance elements and principles, it has learning standards that cover working with a partner in an ensemble. Unlike the Colorado MCS, it also has learning standards at the pre-K–4 grade span that address understanding the element of force, and developing strength, balance, and coordination.

Standard 2

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 2. Each addresses students applying the principles of choreography. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, however, has much greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS. Its greater depth in the standard is indicated by the greater specificity of its learning standards. For example, at grade span K–4 for the Colorado MCS, the first benchmark of the standard indicates that students will be “creating simple movement phrases through improvisation.” The corresponding learning standard of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, on the other hand, indicates that students will “create a dance phrase with a beginning, middle, and end; be able to repeat it, with or without music.” Similarly at grade span 5–8, for the Colorado MCS, the third benchmark indicates that students will be “using a variety of sources to structure a complete dance study.” In contrast, the corresponding learning standard of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* indicates that students will “demonstrate compositional forms in short choreographed phrases, using AB, ABA, theme and variations, canon, rondos, storytelling, and narration.” In terms of greater breadth, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* also addresses creating dances with decision making of the performance space, audience location, entrances and exits of dance, and costume. It has learning standards on different styles and traditions of choreography. It also has learning standards that focus on the analysis of a choreographer’s style and compares that style with those of other choreographers.

Standard 3

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 3. Each addresses creating, communicating, and problem solving through dance. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, however, has much greater depth and breadth than the Colorado MCS. Its greater depth is indicated by the specificity of its learning standards. For example, at grade span K–4 for the Colorado MCS, the third benchmark indicates that students will be “presenting and discussing dances with peers.” The corresponding learning standard of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is more demanding, indicating that students will “present dances or movement phrases; identify and describe movement choices and discuss varied responses to them.” Similarly at grade span 5–8 for the Colorado MCS, the third benchmark indicates that students will be “comparing and contrasting dance compositions.” The corresponding learning standard of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, however, indicates that students will “compare and contrast the movement styles of classical, theatrical, or traditional dance, such as ballet, modern, jazz, folk and social dances, using appropriate dance vocabulary.” In terms of greater breadth, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the ability to work effectively alone, with a leader, with a partner, and with a group. It also has learning standards on the use of gesture to ensure the expressive nature of movement and on how movement can show feelings, images, thought, colors, sounds, and textures.

Standard 4

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* have similarities and differences in emphasis at standard 4. Each addresses understanding and relating the role of dance in culture and history, and their focus is generally similar. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has clearer expectations than the Colorado MCS for its pre-K–4 grade span. It is much more specific about which cultures and historical traditions should be addressed (e.g., observe dances from different cultures and describe their movement; identify characteristic features of the performing arts of native populations and immigrant groups). The Colorado MCS only refers to “dances from various cultures,” and “dance in relation to historical periods” in its two benchmarks at grade span K–4. In contrast, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has learning standards with much greater specificity (e.g., create or learn and perform a dance for invited guests or peers based on one of the following: a ritual from another culture, a traditional dance; Identify and explain the circumstances and settings in which the dance would be performed). At the 9–12 grade span, the Colorado MCS benchmarks are more rigorous than the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*. For instance, the third benchmark of the Colorado MCS indicates that students will be “discussing the historical perspectives of dance and dancers in all historical periods.” The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* focuses on identification and classification of dance through history.

Standard 5

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are mostly different in emphasis at standard 5. The Colorado MCS has more breadth and depth than the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*. The latter does not address understanding the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness in any substantive detail. The few learning standards relating to

the topic focus on the development of a positive body image and the analysis of issues of age and physical conditions in dance.

Standard 6

The Colorado MCS and the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* are mostly similar in emphasis at standard 6. They address understanding the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines in similar depth. The Colorado MCS is more specific in details than the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum*, and the latter is broader in its treatment of the standard. For instance, the Colorado MCS indicates that students should create a “dance that combines an idea from another discipline.” The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* only notes that students should “integrate knowledge of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts and apply the arts to learning other disciplines.” However, unlike the Colorado MCS, the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* also addresses the use of specialized software and other technologies to choreograph dances, the application of knowledge of cultural institutions and cultural resources, and the inventions and technologies through various historical periods that have influenced dance.

Grade Spans

The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* addresses the content found in the Colorado MCS across the grade spans. The main difference between the two documents is that the rigor of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* is more appropriate at each grade span than the Colorado MCS. For instance, the cognitive complexity of the *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* standards at the pre-K–4 grade span is more appropriate. Students are expected to “identify locomotor/non-locomotor movements; develop strength, balance, and coordination.” The Colorado MCS has higher expectations in its standards. Students should be “observing and demonstrating a series of movements in a given order that create a movement phrase through basic non-locomotor and locomotor movement.” The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* also covers more breadth of content at each grade span than the Colorado MCS. Unlike the latter, it addresses the use of objects, props, fabrics, and costumes across the grade spans. It also addresses the development of audience skills, the application of scientific and mathematical concepts to create movement phrases, the concepts of dance notation, rehearsal and refinement, and production elements leading to formal performance.

Wording/Specificity

The Colorado MCS standards have general wording for dance concepts and details without much language specificity. The *Massachusetts Arts Curriculum* has much greater specificity in most of the standards. Each document, however, uses action verbs to dictate the intent of the learning standards and benchmarks, as well as to indicate their cognitive complexity.

New Jersey

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

There are similarities and differences in the grade articulation of the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum*. Like the Colorado MCS, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* articulates its standards by grade span, instead of by grade level, to present its standards across grade spans. However, its grade spans are narrower than those of the Colorado MCS. It has grade spans for K–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, and 9–12. Except for the 9–12 grade span, these narrower grade spans enable standards to be more specific in their cognitive complexity and more grade-level appropriate.

Hierarchy of Standards

The hierarchy of standards between the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is mostly different. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is organized by standard, strand, and indicator. It has five standards: (1.1) Aesthetics, (1.2) Creation and Performance, (1.3) Elements and Principles of the Arts, (1.4) Critique, and (1.5) World Cultures, History, and Society. Dance is one strand in a larger document that includes strands for three other arts disciplines: visual arts, music, and theatre. Cumulative Progress Indicators (CPI) within the strands provide grade-level expectations for the strand. In addition to the four arts discipline standards, there are two interdisciplinary strands, Knowledge and Skills, which apply to all of the art disciplines. The indicators are similar in purpose to the Colorado MCS benchmarks.

Number of Standards

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has a greater number of standards and indicators than the Colorado MCS has standards and benchmarks. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has five standards, three strands (knowledge, skills, dance), and 116 cumulative progress indicators across all standards and strands. There are 40 indicators for the dance strand (1.2 and 1.3), 37 indicators for the knowledge strand (1.1, 1.4, and 1.5), and 39 indicators for the skills strand (1.1, 1.4, and 1.5).

Design/Format

The design and format of the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is mostly different from the design and format of the Colorado MCS. Because the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is an interdisciplinary arts curriculum document, it has standards for the four arts. It presents the standards together within each standard, rather than separating them into individual sections. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also uses a system of numbers and letters to identify individual indicators within each grade articulation. The document includes an introduction section, a reference section, and the five standards and strands in 19 pages. It does not include a glossary of dance terms or provide a matrix for integrating dance standards with standards from other subjects, as the Colorado MCS does.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* is more different than similar.

Standard 1

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 1. Both the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have benchmarks or indicators that focus on dance elements and principles. However, the indicators of the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have greater depth and breadth than the benchmarks for the Colorado MCS. For example, while the Colorado MCS references locomotor movements in the first benchmark of grade span K–4, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicates that students will “create and perform the eight locomotor movements of walking, running, hopping, jumping, leaping, galloping, sliding, and skipping in a dance context,” by the end of grade 4 (1.2.4.A.5). Unlike the Colorado MCS, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* also addresses the use of objects and other art forms as creative stimuli for dance, dancing to a variety of themes, and defining and maintaining personal space.

Standard 2

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more similar than different in emphasis at standard 2. Both the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have standard statements for choreography principles. The depth and rigor of the two documents are similar. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has a little more breadth than the Colorado MCS. It also addresses the use of time, space, and energy in the creation of a dance sequence.

Standard 3

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 3. Both the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have creating, communicating, and problem solving concepts in their standards. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* embeds the concepts of communicating and problem solving in a separate standard, Critique, which applies to the four art disciplines. Each document also addresses reflection and evaluation of dance. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum*, however, has greater depth because of its Critique standard, which spirals analysis and reflection content. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* Critique standard has all students developing, applying, and reflecting on their own creations and the work of others. It also has greater specificity. For example, whereas the third benchmark of grade span 5–8 in the Colorado MCS indicates that that students will be “comparing and contrasting dance compositions,” the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicates that students will “describe the principles of contrast and transition, the process of reordering and chance, and the structures of AB, ABA, canon, call and response, and narrative” by the end of grade eight (1.3.8.A.1).

Standard 4

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 4. Each document addresses the role of dance in culture and history. Nevertheless, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* indicators have greater breadth and depth than the Colorado MCS benchmarks. Because the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has an interdisciplinary standard, History/Culture (1.5), that subsumes dance, it has more indicators to cover the topic in greater depth and breadth. Unlike the Colorado MCS, it addresses the impact of the arts on world culture, the influence of the social and political environment on the artist, the innovations from various historical periods, and issues of ethnicity, gender, and economic status. It also focuses more on evaluation than on performing and creating works from different cultures and historical periods.

Standard 5

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 5. Unlike the Colorado MCS, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does not address the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness in any substantive way. It only has one indicator at grade 12 that mentions age and physical conditioning. It does not address it at the lower grade spans.

Standard 6

The Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* are more similar than different in emphasis at standard 6. Both the Colorado MCS and the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* have interrelationships to other discipline concepts in their benchmarks and indicators. The depth and breadth of the two documents are similar. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has interrelationships to other discipline concepts embedded in its Aesthetics standard. Its indicators on interdisciplinary connections spiral through smaller grade spans. The main difference between the two documents is that the Colorado MCS has benchmarks that address the connections in grade span 9–12. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does not have indicators for the standard at the grade span.

Grade Spans

The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* addresses the content found in the Colorado MCS across the grade spans. The main difference between the two documents is that the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has more breadth at each grade span than the Colorado MCS. The narrower grade spans in the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* allow for a greater range in content in the indicators. Across the grade spans, the Colorado MCS does not address the differentiation between artistic and non-artistic contributions in dance, design, and production of a dance work, arts media and themes in dance, analysis of known dance works, and the relationship between dance movement and movement of everyday life. Of equal importance, the narrower grade spans of the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* allow the cognitive complexity of the standards to be more focused and appropriate for each grade level within the grade spans. As a result, the beginning and endpoints of the indicators are more appropriate for the grade levels. However, unlike the Colorado MCS, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* does not consistently spiral the content of its standards across all of its grade spans. For instance, the topics and skills included in the indicators at grade span 5–6 are not the same as those at grade span 7–8.

Wording/Specificity

Overall, the *New Jersey Core Curriculum* has greater specificity in its indicators than the Colorado MCS does in its benchmarks. The Colorado MCS uses general terms, concepts, and ideas in its benchmarks. The *New Jersey Core Curriculum* lists specific dance terminology in the indicators. The division of the interdisciplinary standards: Aesthetics (1.1), Critique (1.2), and World Cultures, History, and Society (1.5), into knowledge and skills strands increases the specificity of the indicators. Nevertheless, the documents are similar in that each uses action verbs to indicate the cognitive complexity of the benchmarks or indicators (e.g., analyze, describe, identify).

New South Wales, Australia

Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi are more different than similar.

Grade Articulation

There are similarities and differences in the grade articulation of the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi. The latter articulate their standards by grade spans, similar to the Colorado MCS. They refer to grade spans as stages and grade levels as years. More of their dance standards spiral across the stages and increase in cognitive complexity with each stage. The main difference between the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi is the number of grade spans they have. The New South Wales dance syllabi have seven grade spans, ranging from Kindergarten to year 12. Except for the Early Stage for Kindergarten, the other seven stages are two years long. Because the New South Wales dance stages are half the length of the Colorado MCS, their standards are more specific and their cognitive complexity is more appropriate to each grade level.

Hierarchy of Standards

The hierarchy of standards between the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi is mostly different. Although each has a hierarchical structure, the New South Wales dance syllabi have three levels: objectives, outcomes, and stage specific content indicator bullets. The objectives are broad and spiral across the stages. They are dance composition, dance performance, and dance appreciation. A fourth objective, dance as an art form, appears only at Stage 6. Below the objectives are outcome statements, which are specific to each stage, and could be considered as the equivalent of the Colorado MCS grade-span benchmarks. Supporting the outcomes are the specific content indicator bullets, which are further divided into the categories, “learn to,” and “learn about.” In addition to this hierarchy, the *Creative Arts K–6 Units of Work* for stages Early through 3 is organized by unit lesson plans (e.g., “I can dance,” “We’ve got rhythm,” and “Get ready, let’s dance”).

Number of Standards

The New South Wales dance syllabi have a greater number of standards and indicators than the Colorado MCS has standards and benchmarks. The New South Wales syllabi have four objectives per stage. There are also three to nine outcomes per stage. The number of outcomes increases along the stages. Finally, there are eight indicators at each stage in years K–6. In years 7–12, the number of indicators increases to over 100 indicators per stage.

Design/Format

The design and format of the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi is mostly different. The New South Wales dance standards are presented in three separate documents, which combined are much more elaborate in scope than the Colorado MCS. The *Creative Arts K–6: Units of Work* is an interdisciplinary arts curriculum document with individual unit lesson plans. It includes units for visual arts, music, drama, and

dance. The units for each discipline are separate and do not overlap. In addition to the objectives and outcomes, each dance unit also has teaching strategies, noted indicators for assessment, suggested resources, and links to objectives and indicators of other art disciplines and non-arts subjects, such as English and science. The entire document is 185 pages, although the dance section is only 35 pages. *Dance: A Guide to the New Years 7–10 Syllabus* has an introduction, a rationale section, and a Pathway of Learning for Dance in the K–12 Curriculum section. In addition to the objectives and outcomes, it includes a Like Skills Outcomes and Content standards section, which is designed for students with special education needs.¹¹ It is 43 pages. The *Dance Stage 6 Syllabus* includes a High School Certification Program of study section, a section on post-school opportunities in dance, as well as an assessment section, and glossary. It is 79 pages.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi is more different than similar.

Standard 1

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more similar than different in emphasis at standard 1. Both the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi address dance skills, including applying the dance elements of time, space, and energy to movement, creating dance sequences using locomotor and non-locomotor movements, refining technical skills, and responding to music. The New South Wales syllabi have more breadth than the Colorado MCS. For example, at Early Stage 1 and Stage 1, there is a focus on moving safely and expressively (e.g., move safely and expressively in a dance with control and sensitivity to sound accompaniment.)

Standard 2

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 2. Although they both address the concept of choreography and improvisation in each grade span, the New South Wales dance syllabi demonstrate greater breadth and have more appropriate sequencing than the Colorado MCS. The New South Wales dance syllabi refer to choreography in terms of structure and composition. Depending on the stage, they use a variety of methods to address the principles of choreography. For instance, at Early Stage 1, the *Creative Arts K–6 Units of Work* refers to “everyday and fantasy movement ideas as . . . starting points for creating dances.” At Stage 2, it indicates that students should use “a range of ideas . . . based on diverse stimuli” to create dance. By year 11, the *Dance Stage 6 Syllabus* expects students to be able to identify and select appropriate elements in response to a specific concept.

Standard 3

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 3. Although they all address creating and communicating concepts

¹¹ The Life Skills Outcomes and Content Standards section of *Dance: A Guide to the New Years 7-10 Syllabus* was not included in the review due to lack of comparability with the Colorado MCS for dance.

in dance, the New South Wales dance syllabi have greater depth and breadth than the Colorado MCS. Unlike the Colorado MCS, they include the evaluation of major dance works, understanding the range of meanings and interpretations in dance works, and researching and synthesizing information in order to make “discriminating judgments about dance.” They do not, however, address problem solving until Stage 6.

Standard 4

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more similar than different in emphasis at standard 4. Both the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi address the role of dance in culture and history. They have similar depth and breadth in how they treat the role of dance in culture and history. The main difference is that the standard is not introduced until Stage 3 (Years 5–6) in the New South Wales dance syllabi. It is introduced a grade span earlier in the Colorado MCS. The New South Wales dance syllabi also focus on Australian history, addressing the diversity of cultures, beliefs, attitudes, values, and customs in Australian society. They also address student social and cultural experiences, reflecting diverse multicultural and multilingual topics. The Colorado MCS does not indicate specific cultures or historical time periods.

Standard 5

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 5. The New South Wales dance syllabi do not have a specific standard on the concepts of lifelong fitness and benefits of dance. The Colorado MCS has this concept as a specific standard. The New South Wales dance syllabi embed the benefits of dance and lifelong fitness concepts into their curricular concepts as “safe dance practice” for each stage. The outcomes for each stage have well defined content indicating both the knowledge and skills students should attain. For instance, at Stages 4 and 5, they address identifying and explaining the capabilities and limitations of the body, identifying healthy practices to maintain a safe body for dance, learning about major muscle groups and skeletal structures and how they contribute to basic body movement, and applying basic principles of anatomical structure to the study and practice of dance technique. Despite the greater depth of the outcomes of the New South Wales syllabi, they do not address the context of fitness at the lowest stage.

Standard 6

The Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 6. Although the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales dance syllabi address the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines, the New South Wales dance syllabi do not demonstrate as much breadth as the Colorado MCS. Only in the area of technology do they have a greater range of content. Otherwise, the Colorado MCS addresses the relationship between non-technology disciplines and dance in much greater breadth and depth. The New South Wales dance syllabi also do not focus on the standard at the lower stage.

Grade Spans

Overall, the sequencing of content in the Colorado MCS and the New South Wales syllabi is similar for standards relating to dance elements, choreography, and

communication. The concepts of performance, composition, and dance appreciation are spiraled across the stages in the New South Wales syllabi. At each grade span, however, the New South Wales syllabi have a greater breadth of content across the standards than the Colorado MCS. For instance, at grade span K–4, the New South Wales syllabi address moving with intent and using movement to express ideas, feelings, and mood. At grade span 5–8, they address interpreting and viewing dance as a vehicle for expressing various ideas and writing critically about dance. At the 9–12 grade span, they address knowledge of dances that are considered to be works of art, and performances with confidence, commitment, focus, consistency, and performance quality with consideration of safe dance practices. At the 9–12 grade span, the New South Wales syllabi have greater depth of content as well. Unlike the Colorado MCS, the New South Wales syllabi emphasize the study of dance as an art form in Stages 4–6.

Wording/Specificity

The New South Wales dance syllabi have greater specificity of detail in their outcomes/objectives and content statements than the Colorado MCS. They also use more adjectives to describe how activities and skills are to be achieved.

Scotland

Organization and Structure

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

Grade Articulation

There are similarities and differences in the grade articulation of the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence*. Like the Colorado MCS, the *Curriculum for Excellence* articulates its standards by grade span instead of by grade level to present its standards across grade spans. The *Curriculum for Excellence* refers to its grade spans as levels and there are five. The Early level corresponds to pre-school and Kindergarten; the First level corresponds to grades 1–3; the Second level corresponds to grades 4–6; the Third level corresponds to grades 7–9, and the Fourth level overlaps the Third level and extends to the grade 10. There are also two additional levels in the Scottish educational system beyond the Fourth level that are not listed in the *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Hierarchy of Standards

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* have hierarchies of standards that are mostly different. Unlike the Colorado MCS, which has standards and benchmarks, the *Curriculum for Excellence* has no specified hierarchy. Instead, it has standards that are referred to as experiences and outcomes. These standards are also different on presentation. They are intended to be affirmations of student achievement rather than statements about what students should be able to learn. For instance, at the Second level, standard EXA 2-08a reads as, "I can explore and choose movements to create and present dance, developing my skills and techniques." There are specific experiences and outcomes standards, written for each level to focus on various aspects of dance content. These standards tend to spiral across the grade levels. Each successive grade level has a corresponding standard that has increased cognitive complexity. There are also broader experiences and outcomes standards, which are shared by multiple grade levels, pertaining to communication and responding skills. Unlike the specific standards, these do not spiral in cognitive complexity across the grade levels. They represent and share the same standard at each level. In addition to specific dance experiences and outcomes standards, there are also interdisciplinary arts experiences and outcomes in a section referred to as Participation in Performances and Presentations.

Number of Standards

The Colorado MCS has a greater number of standards and benchmarks than the *Curriculum for Excellence*. The Colorado MCS has six standards, six rationales, and 57 benchmark bullets across all grade spans. The *Curriculum for Excellence*, on the other hand, has a total of 25 standards. There are five at the Early level, five at the First level, five at the Second level, four at the Third level, and six at the Fourth level. These include the six standards from the Participation in Performances and Presentations.

Design/Format

The design and format of the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are mostly different. The *Curriculum for Excellence* is an interdisciplinary arts curriculum, which includes art and design, dance, drama, and music. Accompanying them are the interdisciplinary Participation in Performances and Presentation standards. Each discipline is treated separately and the experience and outcome standards are enumerated. Similar to the Colorado MCS, it has a glossary, but it is shorter at 12 pages. Only two of these are devoted specifically to dance.

Content

The content of the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* is more different than similar.

Standard 1

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 1. Each document has standards addressing students understanding and demonstrating dance skills. Overall, the *Curriculum for Excellence* has less depth, rigor, and breadth at the standard than the Colorado MSC. The *Curriculum for Excellence* is much narrower and more specific about the dance skills learned. For instance, at the First level, standard EXA 1-08a reads, “I enjoy creating short dance sequences, using travel, turn, jump, gesture, pause, and fall, within safe practice.” The *Curriculum for Excellence* also does not use dance terminology, such as, time, space, and energy/force. Instead, its standards have a tone that is more immediately accessible to students, such as, “I can move rhythmically, expressively and playfully” (EXA 0-08a).

Standard 2

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 2. The *Curriculum for Excellence* has less depth, rigor, and breadth than the Colorado MCS. It only addresses choreography at the Fourth level (grade span 9–10). At that level, it has standards that address dance motifs instead of creating movement phrases, in contrast to the Colorado MCS. It also does not address the concept of improvisation.

Standard 3

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 3. The *Curriculum for Excellence* has less depth, rigor, and breadth than the Colorado MCS. Although each document has standards that address the concepts of creating and communicating at each grade span or level, such as giving and accepting criticism, the *Curriculum for Excellence* is much more informal in its tone (e.g., “Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express my ideas, thoughts and feelings through creative work in dance” [EXA 2-09a]). As a result, there is not sufficient detail to determine a level of cognitive complexity. Moreover, the *Curriculum for Excellence* also does not address problem solving through dance at any level, which demonstrates the narrower breadth of its standards.

Standard 4

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 4. Although the *Curriculum for Excellence* has standards that address the role of dance in history and culture, they do not have the breadth, rigor, or depth of standard 4 of the Colorado MCS. For instance, at the Third level, the *Curriculum for Excellence* has only one standard, which indicates, “I have created and taken part in the dance from a range of styles and cultures” (EXA 3-08a). Unlike the Colorado MCS, it does not require students to discuss the historical perspective of dance, evaluate or compare dances from various cultures, or analyze how dance is viewed throughout history. As a result, the *Curriculum for Excellence* lacks the cognitive complexity in understanding the relationship between history, culture, and dance.

Standard 5

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 5. The Colorado MCS has a standard on the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness. The *Curriculum for Excellence* does not have any standards that address the benefits of dance for fitness. Instead, it refers to the physical benefits of dance in the brief introduction of the dance standards section, “Creating and performing will be the core activities for all learners, and taking part in dance contributes to their physical education and physical activity.” As a result, it is difficult to determine at which levels the *Curriculum for Excellence* expects the physical merits of dance to be introduced to the students, or at what degree of rigor.

Standard 6

The Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are more different than similar in emphasis at standard 6. The *Curriculum for Excellence* does not address understanding the relationships and connections between dance and other disciplines in a substantive way. Its Participation in Performances and Presentation standards do not indicate how dance can be integrated with other disciplines. Only at the Fourth level does it have a standard that addresses theatre technology, “I can apply theatre arts technology to add excitement and drama to performances” (EXA 4-08a).

Grade Spans

Overall, the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are different in emphasis across the grade spans. Although they address similar content at the different grade levels, the grade spans of the Colorado MCS are more rigorous and has greater depth and breadth than the corresponding levels of the *Curriculum for Excellence*. Moreover, the grade spans of the Colorado MCS have more coherent beginning and endpoints; this is partly because it does not have standards that apply to multiple grade spans. The *Curriculum for Excellence*, on the other hand, uses many of the same standards for multiple grade levels. For instance, the standard, “I can respond to the experience of dance by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others’ work” (EXA 0-11a, EXA 1-11a, EXA 2-11a, EXA 3-11a) applies to grade levels Early, First, Second, and Third. Consequently, it is difficult to determine the beginning and endpoints for the standard, or the appropriate rigor of the standard at each level.

Wording/Specificity

The wording and specificity of the Colorado MCS and the *Curriculum for Excellence* are mostly different. The Colorado MCS is more specific in its standards than the *Curriculum for Excellence*, particularly at the lower levels. It also uses action verbs to guide instruction and to indicate the cognitive complexity of each standard at each grade span. The *Curriculum for Excellence* is less pedagogical in tone and more focused on the student. Less emphasis is placed on action verbs than on self-affirmation of student accomplishments at each standard (e.g., “I have taken part in dance from a range of styles and cultures, demonstrating my awareness of the dance features” [EXA 2-10a]).

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

As described in the Methodology section of this report, analysts analyzed Colorado’s draft dance standards for 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.

Dance Model Content Standards and the 21st Century Skills and Abilities

Critical thinking and reasoning

Critical thinking and reasoning skills are rated as Fully across all grade spans at all standards. Specifically, these skills are found in benchmarks, such as, “creating and evaluating movements while justifying artistic choices.” Knowing how to create and evaluate dance, and being able to discuss personal choices that contribute artistry to the dance, are essential skills to develop.

Information literacy

Information literacy is rated as Fully across the grade spans at standards 1, 4, and 6. It is rated Partially across the grade spans at standards 2, 3, and 5. With the addition of knowledge acquisition content and some language revision, literacy could become fully present at these standards.

Collaboration

Collaboration skills are rated as Fully across the grade spans at standards 1 and 4. It is rated as Partially at standards 2 and 3. It is rated as No at standard 6, because collaboration is not currently stated in the standard. By adding a phrase such as, “create an interdisciplinary project in a small group,” collaboration could be added to the benchmarks with minor wording adjustments. Collaboration is not a necessary skill at standard 5.

Self-direction

Self-direction skills are rated as Fully across the grade spans at standard 1. They are rated as Partially at standards 2, 3, and 5. It is rated as No at standard 6 because the concept is not currently in the standard and should be. The discipline of dance requires both collaboration and self-direction skills when creating and performing. Therefore, these skills should become part of all the content area standards. The skills and abilities could be presented in developmentally appropriate tiers from, “working independently with a partner,” to “working in a small group of 3–5,” to “working in a large group of 5–8 people.” Self-direction is not a necessary skill at standard 4.

Invention

Invention is rated as Fully across the grade spans at standard 1. It is rated as Partially at standards 2 and 3. It is rated as No at standard 6, because the discipline of dance requires creativity, innovation, and integration of ideas. Invention is an important skill to be included in the standards and benchmarks. Revised standards could include phrasing, such as, “there are multiple way to solve movement problems,” or “the integration of

language arts and social studies concepts can provide insights to historical time periods and cultures.” Invention is not a necessary skill at standards 4 and 5.

Dance Model Content Standards and the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Skills

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

The application of reading, writing, and computing skills with minimal remediation are rated as Fully at standard 6. They are rated as Partially at standards 3, 4, and 5. Requiring students to record and analyze their movements could increase the skill at standard 3. Standards 1 and 2 were not found to be an appropriate fit for this skill.

Logical reasoning and argumentation abilities

Logical reasoning and argumentation abilities are rated as Fully at standards 4, 5 and 6, and rated as Partially at standard 3. In standard 3 the critical analysis or critique process should be defined and clearly stated. An example of terms for a progression of critique skills are, “describe, analyze, interpret and then evaluate.” Standards 1 and 2 were not found to be an appropriate fit for this skill.

Identification and solving of problems

Identification and solving of problems are rated as Fully at standards 1, 3, 4, and 6. They are rated as Partially at standards 2 and 5. Problem-solving skills are critical to learning the discipline of dance and necessary components of every standard.

Information management skills

Information management skills are rated as Fully at standards 3 and 6. They are rated as Partially at standards 1, 2, 4, and 5. Given the state’s inclusion of “adapting to new information,” the definition for information management skills is somewhat narrow, but “adapting to new information” is directly related to dance.

Human relation skills

Human relation skills are rated as Fully at standard 3. They are rated as Partially at standards 1, 2, 4, and 6. Because of the collaborative nature of dance, human relation skills are essential and should be included in the dance standards. Human relation skills were found to be not directly relevant to, and not an appropriate fit for, standard 5.

Analysis and interpretation skills

Analysis and interpretation skills are rated as Fully at standards 3 and 4 and Partially at standard 5. Teaching observation, analysis, and interpretation of a non-verbal art form is essential to the dance discipline. Analysis and interpretation skills were found to be not directly relevant to, and not an appropriate fit for, standards 1, 2, and 6.

Recommendations

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

Internal Quality Review of Colorado's Dance Model Content Standards

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

Breadth:

- Provide fewer, broader standards. For example, content relating to the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness (standard 5) should be incorporated into the standard. This content should address connections between dance and other disciplines since the physical benefits of dance pertain to the discipline of physical (and mental) health.
- Provide more identification and definition of actual content in benchmarks. For example, for history and culture, identification of specific cultures or historical periods (e.g., western/European dance traditions, dance in America, classical/modern/popular dance traditions, etc.) would help focus the amount of content.

Depth:

- Provide clear and specific expectations for benchmarks, especially those at the elementary level. For example, benchmarks for choreography should include specific terminology to account for formal structures (e.g., AB, ABA, canon, narrative, call and response).
- Avoid ambiguous statements, such as, “demonstrating performance skills,” which does not offer detail on the level of performance skills expected. Also, such statements are problematic because it is unclear how they differ from other statements that imply performance (e.g., “demonstrating more complex mechanical movement skills,” and “transferring a rhythmic pattern from the auditory to the kinesthetic,” presumably include demonstrating performance skills).

Coherence:

- Provide sufficiently low beginning/endpoints for the lowest grade span in standards relating to creating, communicating, and problem solving and culture and history. This task is particularly challenging when creating one set of benchmarks for grade spans with multiple grade levels that have significant differences in skill levels (i.e., K–4).
- Provide logical sequencing of content, so that the more demanding content expectations are placed at higher grade spans.
- Provide starting points for content that should be covered at each grade span. For example, development of thinking skills (e.g., reflection, analysis, evaluation) should be included at all grade spans.

Rigor:

- Provide appropriate levels of challenge in the content expectations, especially at the lowest and highest grade spans. Concerns noted in this review include expectations that are overly challenging at the lowest level, and, in a few instances, expectations that are not challenging enough at the highest level.

External Referent Review for Dance

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

Overall Organization and Structure:

- Articulation of standards:
 - Articulate benchmarks at each grade level. If possible, two levels of benchmarks for high school will allow those students with the intent to pursue a career in dance to strive for higher expectations than those who do not intend to pursue dance studies beyond high school.
 - Include a secondary set of expectations for students with special education needs (Life Skills Content in *New South Wales*) would provide content for a broader student population than is captured by one set of expectations regardless of educational needs.
- Supplemental materials:
 - Provide additional content resources, such as descriptions of various performance levels and expectations for demonstration of the standards through local assessment examples, would be valuable additions to the standards.
- Adopt a numbering or coding system to facilitate identification of individual benchmarks within standards.
- Glossary:
 - Reorganize the glossary (e.g., move locomotor, literal, and nonliteral to the movement category) and supplement the glossary (e.g., include choreographic forms).

Content:

- Wording/Specificity:
 - Provide greater specificity in defining benchmarks. This could be accomplished either by including content-specific terminology in the actual benchmarks, or by maintaining a thorough glossary that provides further definition of content.
- Breadth: Based on the external referents, Colorado should consider broadening the range of content:
 - Standard 1: Consider incorporating some provision for developing a personal style at the highest grade span.
 - Standard 3: Consider including some provision for studying major dance works and/or choreographers.
 - Standard 4: Consider including the concept of dance style/genre (e.g., ballet, jazz, tap) in the history and culture category.

- Consider incorporating concepts of rehearsal and preparation for performance, design and production of a dance work, and research and synthesis of dance-related topics.
- Coherence: For standard 3, consider extending the concept of analysis and evaluation of dance to the lowest grade span.
- Rigor: Both higher and lower level content expectations—appropriate to the grade span—were found in the external referents. Although in some cases this was due to different articulations of content, overall, Colorado should consider whether the appropriate range of rigor is reflected in benchmarks.

Suggestions for consideration of additional external referents

No additional external referents are suggested. New Jersey, Massachusetts and New South Wales, reviewed for this report, provide clear models for their standard organization and structure, grade-level spans and spiraling curriculum.

Recommendations from the Review of Colorado’s Dance Standards for 21st Century Skills and Abilities and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

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