

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards
Schedule and Process for Revising the State Standards
07.24.2012

Standards review schedule

Minnesota’s K-12 academic standards are reviewed in one content area per year, following the schedule specified in Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, subd. 2. The schedule is as follows—

Mathematics.....	Revision in 2006-07; implementation by 2010-11; Revision in 2015-16.
Arts.....	Revision in 2007-08; implementation by 2010-11; Revision in 2016-17. (Districts may use state or local standards.)
Science.....	Revision in 2008-09; implementation by 2011-12; Revision in 2017-18.
Language Arts.....	Revision in 2009-10; implementation by 2012-13; Revision in 2018-19.
Social Studies.....	Revision in 2010-11; implementation by 2013-14; Revision in 2019-20.
Physical Education.....	MDE must adopt the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) standards as the state standards. Implementation by 2012- 13. (Physical Education Standards and Healthy Kids Awards Program, Chapter 396, SF 2908. Signed 5/25/2010).

Academic standards in Health, Career and Technical Education, and World Languages must be established locally and reviewed on a locally determined periodic review cycle (Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, subd. 2).

The timeline for revising the state standards in each content area is posted on the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) website at <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>.

Preparation for the standards review

MDE prepares for the standards review process in each content area by completing the following tasks:

1. The commissioner creates the timeline for the standards committee’s work in accordance with the review schedule established in Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, subd.

2. The timeline includes the dates of standards committee meetings, the Public Review and Comment Period(s), and the Expert Review Period(s).
2. The commissioner establishes the *Assumptions for Guiding the Standards Committee's Work*. The Assumptions identify the non-negotiable items or “givens” for revising the standards in a particular area. Items on this list may include such things as legislative mandates, expectations of the commissioner, and the like. For example, an assumption for the mathematics revision process was, “The Mathematics standards should be revised with the assumption that all students will complete Algebra I or its equivalent by the end of eighth grade, and Algebra II or its equivalent in addition to other graduation requirements.”
3. MDE invites the public to apply online for the Standards Review Committee in the content area to be revised. Applicants are asked to read and agree to the *Assumptions for Guiding the Standards Committee's Work* which is posted with the application on the MDE website.
4. MDE invites the public to provide feedback about the current standards using the form posted on the MDE website. Feedback collected from this process will be shared with the Standards Review Committee.
5. The commissioner selects a Standards Review Committee of approximately 25-45 members. During the review process, the commissioner considers advice from various groups of stakeholders, including parents, teachers and principals, school boards, postsecondary faculty teaching core subjects, and the business community (Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, subd. 2). These groups have representation on the committee and/or are solicited for their input at various points in the review process. The names of committee members are posted on MDE's website.
6. The commissioner appoints postsecondary and K-12 standards committee co-chairs.
7. The commissioner establishes one or more technical writing teams. A technical writing team is a subset of 8-15 standards committee members who make wording and format changes to the standards according to the direction provided by the larger standards committee.
8. MDE prepares a binder of materials for each committee member. Materials include list of committee members, timeline, *Assumptions for Guiding the Standards Committee's Work*, relevant state and federal statutes and rules, background information on the subject area and national standards efforts, criteria for writing quality standards, the current Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in the subject being reviewed, information about college and work readiness skills, and technology and information literacy (both required by Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, subd. 2 to be included in the standards), information about the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities (required by Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, subd. 1 to be included in the standards), national and

international standards documents and assessment frameworks, “model” standards from 3 or more states and/or countries, and all comments submitted by the public during the online feedback process.

Standards review process

The Standards Review Committee revises the standards by completing a number of tasks that are accomplished more or less in the following order, depending on the content area and issues that need to be addressed. Committee members are asked to do the following:

1. Learn about critical issues relevant to revising the standards. These include legislative requirements regarding content, course credits and special topics/issues and expectations identified by the commissioner. (Science examples: 1. Students must take biology and chemistry or physics. 2. Students must have three science credits. 3. Include the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities. 4. Include technology and engineering in the standards.)
2. Examine public feedback about the standards collected online and from other sources.
3. Compare the Minnesota standards in the content area to national standards and, where available, national assessment frameworks. (Science examples: NSES, AAAS Project 2061, 2009 NAEP)
4. Review reports of national significance and scholarly research pertaining to new developments in disciplinary knowledge or pedagogy in the content area.
5. Analyze student achievement and other kinds of data in the content area.
6. Compare the Minnesota standards in the subject to exemplary or “model” standards from other states and/or countries. (Science examples: Massachusetts, Michigan, Virginia.)
7. Examine the findings from the “gap analysis” conducted in steps #1-6 and identify issues that need to be addressed and changes that need to be made to the Minnesota standards.
8. Write the first draft of the revised standards.
9. Collect public feedback on the first draft of the revised standards. Feedback is typically collected in three ways—
 - Town Hall meetings held across the state
 - Commissioner’s team meetings with targeted stakeholder groups
 - Online feedback
10. Review the public feedback and begin revising the draft standards.
11. Finish the second draft of the revised standards.

12. Examine the vertical alignment (the development of knowledge and skills in a strand of standards from one grade level to the next) and the horizontal alignment (the “fit” among the standards from all strands at a grade level). Adjust the standards, as needed, to ensure a smooth progression of knowledge and skills within and across grade levels.
13. Conduct expert reviews of the second draft. (MDE typically contracts with 3-6 people who have been nationally recognized for their expertise in K-12 standards and/or for their knowledge of special issues or topics related to K-12 standards in the content area. Expert reviewers submit their comments in a written report that is shared with the standards committee.)
14. Conduct a special education review of the draft to ensure accessibility of the standards for students with disabilities.
15. Review reports from the expert and special education reviews and decide which suggestions should be incorporated into the next draft.
16. Write subsequent drafts of the standards as needed.
17. Conduct additional expert reviews, if needed.
18. Vote whether to approve the final draft of the revised standards. If the committee approves it, send the final draft to the commissioner. The commissioner will approve the committee’s final draft or request that changes be made, and then approve the modified version.

Rulemaking process

After the commissioner approves the draft submitted by the standards committee, the proposed standards proceed through the administrative rulemaking process, as required by Minn. Stat. § 120B.02. The rulemaking process can take from 11 to 18 months to complete. Here are a few important steps of the process:

1. The final approved standards draft is sent to the rulemaking coordinator and the formal rules adoption process begins. The proposed rules (i.e., standards) are posted on the MDE website with a notice that this is the draft that will be used for rulemaking.
2. MDE seeks approval from the governor’s office to proceed with rulemaking and receives an approved draft of the rules from the Revisor.
3. MDE develops a Statement of Need and Reasonableness (SONAR), a summary of the evidence and argument that MDE is relying on to justify why the rules (i.e., standards) are needed and reasonable.

4. MDE publishes a Dual Notice. The Notice identifies a hearing date and states that the hearing will be cancelled and the rules (i.e., standards) will be adopted without a hearing if fewer than 25 persons request a hearing. The Dual Notice must be published at least 30 days before the end of the public comment period.
5. If 25 or more persons request a hearing, MDE will issue a Notice of Hearing in the State Register and mail a copy of the Notice to those who requested a hearing.
6. If fewer than 25 persons request a hearing, the rules will be adopted without a hearing and submitted to the Office of Administrative Hearings for review.
7. The standards are considered “final” once they are promulgated into rule by the administrative law judge. The benchmarks are published in the state register and made accessible to the public, but they do not go through the rulemaking process.
8. If the proposed standards are changed during rulemaking, the new version is posted on the MDE website.

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