STANDARDS FOR 9 - 12 SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

Introduction

The social studies standards describe the knowledge and skills beginning teachers must have to meet North Carolina expectations for providing quality instruction in the public schools. They reflect a strong emphasis on knowledge of content, dedication to a philosophy of pedagogy that serves the needs of all students through student-centered instruction and integrated units, an appreciation and respect for diversity, and the importance of continuous professional development. The standards contained in this document are based on *Every Child’s Teacher in North Carolina: Core Standards for the Teaching Profession* by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission.

The *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* for social studies is a developmentally appropriate framework for establishing the curriculum at the local level. Social studies in Grades 9 to 12 is taught as discipline-based courses such as Economic, Legal and Political Systems, World History, World Geography, World Cultures, United States History, and other elective social studies classes.

Teachers of social studies have a broad knowledge of United States and world history, geography, world cultures, and the political and economic systems by which people organize their lives. Teachers understand the central concepts and conceptual frameworks of history and social science disciplines.

Social studies affords the secondary teacher opportunities to teach in specific disciplines of the social studies. Social studies involves students in a variety of meaningful learning opportunities through the study of history, political and economic systems, geography and other social studies fields. Emphasis is placed on the use of primary and secondary sources. Textbooks are best used as resources that support the curriculum. The use of units as the basic planning organization for social studies instruction allows teachers to effectively plan instruction that incorporates mandated objectives while meeting the learning styles and needs of all students within the necessary time frame. These standards emphasize the need to teach in a hands-on, experience-saturated environment. They also emphasize the assimilation and application of information over rote memorization of isolated facts.

Beginning teachers have knowledge of the big ideas of social studies: citizenship, historical perspectives, global interdependence, life skills and spatial perspectives. Focusing on citizenship as the overriding goal, teachers structure a learning environment that allows students to internalize the roles they play as citizens in the classroom, community, nation and world. Social studies teachers consciously connect learning activities to the development of citizenship ideals. Teachers accomplish this goal by designing units to teach concepts and generalizations rather than simply following a strict chronological presentation of facts. Teachers identify a range of issues, present information in a variety of formats, aid in student research utilizing numerous resources, and facilitate student construction of new knowledge. This student-centered approach to the teaching of social studies diverges from the traditional teacher-centered delivery of information.

Students who are taught to construct information and reflect on the learning process perform as well or better in testing situations than students who are taught by rote. They identify with the information; therefore it takes on unique meaning. Knowledge is not learned for knowledge’s sake, but is learned and used as a tool for improving the quality of life, understanding current situations and resolving problems.

Approved by the NC State Board of Education
March 7, 2002
Social studies requires a variety of assessment tools to measure student learning and mastery of concepts and skills. Assessment tools should be fair, free of bias, and afford the student an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the subject in a variety of ways.

By its very nature social studies identifies the similarities and differences among peoples and stresses how these similarities and differences contribute to the richness of life. The natural emphasis on diversity in social studies embraces content in the affective, ethical, and cognitive domains, contributing to the development of respect and appreciation for others. Diversity is woven through the fabric of this standards document, just as diversity is the woof and warp of the social studies curriculum. By virtue of the subject area social studies teachers have the privilege of celebrating the similarities and differences of our interdependent world. Respect for diversity begins in the classroom. Diversity is embedded in all social studies standards.

Professional development is vital to the continued intellectual growth of social studies teachers as leaders in education. It may take many forms such as collaborating on integrated units and lessons or attending local, state, and national social studies meetings. Advocacy for the teaching of social studies as an integral part of the curriculum is crucial to the future of social studies education.

Teachers exercise leadership in social studies by staying informed about educational policy issues and supporting professional development. Social studies teachers participate in co-curricular activities. While all teachers may provide leadership in student and curriculum involvement, social studies teachers connect these activities to the development of citizenship ideals in their students.

Social studies teachers continuously improve as professionals through participating in state and national social studies professional organizations, reading professional literature, contributing articles to newspapers and journals, and serving on professional committees.
Standards and Indicators

Standard 1: Social studies teachers have a broad knowledge of content.

Indicator 1: Social studies teachers should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the tapestry of world cultures. Social studies teachers:
- know and appreciate creative works of world cultures
- value the contributions of world cultures and religions
- have an awareness of, an appreciation for and sensitivity to diverse cultures
- recognize the impact of social diversity in a complex world.

Indicator 2: Social studies teachers understand the social science disciplines. Social studies teachers:
- understand the interdisciplinary nature of social studies
- know spatial and temporal concepts and their relationships
- are aware of the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship
- have the commitment to seek and acquire new knowledge in the social sciences

Standard 2: Social studies teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.

Grades 9-12 social studies teachers should have knowledge of:

Indicator 1: Political science
- United States Government - local, state, federal
- United States Founding Documents
- Comparative Governments
- United States Judicial Systems

Indicator 2: History and historical concepts
- North Carolina History
- United States History
- World History
- Sense of chronology
- Cause and effect/multiple causation
- Continuity and change
- Differences in historical perspectives
- Historical Analysis and Interpretation

Indicator 3: Geographic concepts
- Five Themes of Geography
- Six Essential Elements of Geography
- Interpreting thematic maps and other graphic representations

Indicator 4: Economic concepts
- Interdependence/international trade
- Limited resources & resource allocation
- Economic Systems
- Free enterprise/market economy
- Planned/command economy
- Mixed economy
- Industrialization/technology
United States financial and banking institutions

Indicator 5: Cultural anthropology
   - Societal structures
   - National and cultural identity

Indicator 6: Sociology
   - Groups and institutions
   - Major social problems

Indicator 7: Psychology
   - Human growth and development
   - How humans adapt and react to a variety of environments

Standard 3: Social studies teachers connect social studies with the broad curriculum.

Because it is the most inclusive content area, social studies is the ideal vehicle for teaching and enriching the broad curriculum. Teachers use the scope and sequence of the social studies curriculum to teach skills through the integration of the social studies content with the areas listed below.

Indicator 1: Communication. Teachers incorporate in their lessons:
   - A wide range of reading materials including primary documents, biographies, and children's multicultural literature.
   - Writing assignments in a variety of styles including expository, persuasive, and analytical
   - Development of speaking skills by assigning oral reports, historical debate, and speeches
   - Critical listening skills utilizing propaganda and historic recordings.
   - Critical viewing of videos, posters, works of art, and other visual items.

Indicator 2: Humanities. Teachers enhance students’ understanding of cultures and historical periods by incorporating:
   - World and American literature
   - Visual arts
   - Performing arts
   - Languages

Indicator 3: Science. Teachers enhance lessons by making connections with:
   - Scientific discoveries
   - Technological innovations

Indicator 4: Math. Teachers incorporate in their lessons:
   - Measurement through map scale and distance
   - Interpretation of quantitative data through charts and graphs
   - Coordinate graphing through grid patterns, latitude and longitude

Indicator 5: Technology skills. Teachers incorporate in their lessons:
   - Collecting data
   - Organizing and sorting data
   - Displaying data in a variety of ways
Standard 4: Social studies teachers know relevant applications of the content.

Indicator 1: Citizenship. Teachers in social studies classrooms:
- Promote concepts of citizenship as vital to the development of responsible members of society
- Provide students a forum to explore controversial issues and addresses social issues constructively

Indicator 2: Historical perspectives. Teachers in social studies classrooms:
- Link current events to past events and future trends
- Highlight continuity in the human experience
- Foster a respect and appreciation for enduring traditions
- Demonstrate the ability of groups or individuals to initiate changes

Indicator 3: Global interdependence. Teachers in social studies classrooms:
- Develop understanding of our nation’s place in the global economy
- Foster understanding of our nation's role in global politics
- Shape understanding of world environmental problems

Indicator 4: Life Skills. Teachers in social studies classrooms:
- Provide for critical thinking and effective use of information.
- Emphasize the use of maps for practical purposes
- Require consideration of views outside an individual's realm of experience

Indicator 5: Spatial perspectives. Teachers in social studies classrooms:
- Develop a sense of place - human and physical
- Aid in understanding of patterns and distributions such as people, ideas and resources

Standard 5: Social studies teachers plan appropriate instruction.

In planning, social studies teachers:

Indicator 1: Align instruction with the North Carolina Social Studies Standard Course of Study and incorporate National Council of Social Studies and discipline-specific national standards.

Indicator 2: Establish an inviting, stimulating environment for learning about people, places and times.

Indicator 3: Conceptualize units of study that are cross-cultural and/or representative of people in regions and historical periods studied.

Indicator 4: Select the appropriate historical and geographical content that best represents the learning objectives.

Indicator 5: Integrate units with appropriate literature, arts, and communication and information skills.

Indicator 6: Produce quality instructional materials that reflect historical accuracy and that are geographically current.
Indicator 7: Select and use appropriate audio-visual, information, and technology resources, including primary sources, historical documents, economic data, legislation, and thematic maps.

Indicator 8: Evaluate materials for historical and geographic accuracy, bias and stereotypes.

Standard 6: Social studies teachers use appropriate teaching methods.

The 9 - 12 social studies teacher:

Indicator 1: Plans for a variety of appropriate instructional methods, including lecture, demonstration, and modeling; small group instruction; seminars and debates; role playing and mock trials; simulations, inquiry, case studies, and analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Indicator 2: Assigns group work to foster collaborative skills, utilizing cooperative learning, participatory democracy, and service projects to develop civic responsibility.

Indicator 3: Assigns visual projects for students to create and interpret political cartoons, propaganda posters, collages, models, and displays.

Indicator 4: Uses technology as a tool for research, communication and managing information (e.g., word processing reports and projects, obtaining information from the Internet, using databases and spreadsheets to organize and manipulate data, constructing multimedia presentations, and communicating through electronic mail and video-conferencing).

Standard 7: Social studies teachers use appropriate tools for assessment.

In assessing students the social studies teacher

Indicator 1: Develops pre-assessment techniques that measure a student’s background in social studies concepts.

Indicator 2: Uses a variety of instruments, including: portfolios; written and oral reports; charts, graphs, and timelines; tests; essays; and visual projects, models, and demonstrations.

Indicator 3: Utilizes diverse assessment strategies, such as student conferences, oral questioning, and authentic assessment.

Indicator 4: Constructs valid test items that measure the knowledge and skill objectives of social studies.

Indicator 5: Engages students in peer- and self-assessment and in the development of rubrics

Indicator 6: Uses assessment data to evaluate teaching methods and plan future instruction.

Standard 8: Teachers are successful in teaching a diverse population of students, and respect and care about students.
The Social Studies Teacher:

Indicator 1: Recognizes cognitive differences by developing a repertoire of teaching strategies, gathering and incorporating appropriate instructional materials, and utilizing a variety of assessment procedures.

Indicator 2: Accommodates instruction for physical differences by providing classroom arrangements to meet the needs of all students and adapting lessons to meet visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic needs.

Indicator 3: Acknowledges and affirms different cultural backgrounds by providing an open trusting environment for sharing ideas and valuing and encouraging the expression of multiple perspectives on issues and concepts.

Standard 9: Social studies teachers develop as leaders in their schools and communities.

The Social Studies Teacher:

Indicator 1: Involves students in activities outside the classroom and sponsors activities related directly to social studies.

Indicator 2: Participates in meetings that discuss and/or establish policy.

Indicator 3: Participates in the selection of textbooks and resource materials that augment the social studies curriculum such as maps, primary sources, and software.

Indicator 4: Communicates with administrators concerning needs within the Social Studies Department including funds for field trips and guest speakers, materials unique to the subject, and professional development study and travel.

Indicator 5: Establishes an inviting environment for discussing, researching, and displaying constructed knowledge about people, places, and times.

Indicator 6: Collaborates with colleagues to strengthen social studies content, research, and pedagogy.

Indicator 7: Invites classroom observation by other professionals both inside and outside the department and initiates professional conversations on teaching improvement.

Indicator 8: Participates in civic activities.

Standard 10: Social studies teachers grow and develop as professionals as they interact with the learning community and the resources it provides.

Social Studies teachers:

Indicator 1: Attend school, local, state, and/or national social studies meetings and conferences.

Indicator 2: Read professional journals and literature.
Indicator 3: Reflect individually and with colleagues on daily lessons and long-term units to improve instructional skills and develop the knowledge base for increased student learning.

Indicator 4: Participate in professional development and travel.

Standard 11: Social studies teachers advocate for the inclusion of social studies as a vital component of the basic curriculum.

Indicator 1: Because of its intrinsic merit social studies teachers advocate for the inclusion of social studies as a core subject in the basic curriculum at all grade levels for all students, regardless of state testing mandates.

Indicator 2: Social studies teachers devote adequate time within the school day, throughout the school year, for the teaching of social studies.

Indicator 3: Social studies teachers request up-to-date resources and supplies.

Indicator 4: Social studies teachers take advantage of opportunities to promote the significance of social studies in a comprehensive education.
This page is blank.