2020-21 Social Studies Standards Committee’s Guiding Assumptions

Committee membership and expectations

1. Members of the standards committee will commit to the committee’s meeting schedule and workload.
2. The standards review committee will represent stakeholders in the following areas (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 2(a)).
   a. Teachers, administrators, school board members, higher education, business/industry, and citizens.
   b. Content specialists with expertise across all developmental levels (PreK, K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12).
   c. Content specialists with expertise in the core social studies disciplines.
   d. Diverse educational settings: traditional public schools, charter schools, alternative learning centers; urban, suburban, and rural communities.
   e. Diverse backgrounds and experiences: racial and linguistic diversity.

Review process

1. The committee will review public input, such as from town hall meetings, focus groups, or electronic surveys.
2. The committee will study exemplary standards from other states and national organizations as well as state, national, and international assessment frameworks and data.
3. The committee will receive feedback directly from the Tribal Nations Education Committee throughout the process.
4. The standards will be coherently aligned with those of other K-12 content areas and the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs), Minnesota’s early learning standards.

General standards expectations

1. The knowledge and skills described in the following documents must be integrated into the state’s social studies standards:
   a. Technology and information literacy standards must be embedded into the standards areas (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 4(a)). This will include standards from sources such as the Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).
   b. Computer science concepts and skills must be integrated into the standards as appropriate. This will include standards from sources such as the Computer Science Teachers Association Framework and Standards.
c. The standards and benchmarks should be aligned with the knowledge and skills needed for career and college readiness and advanced work (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 4(a)).

2. The standards “must include the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities as they relate to the academic standards...” (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 4(a).

3. The standards will include both standards and grade-level benchmarks identifying the learning that is to be mastered by all students by the end of each grade level in grades K-8, and by the end of grade band 9-12. Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.023, subdivision 1(a).

   a. academic standards: a summary description of student learning in a required content area under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021.

   b. grade-level benchmarks: specific knowledge or skill that a student must master to complete part of an academic standard by the end of the grade level or grade band. (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.018, subdivision 3) Grade K-8 must be grade specific and grade 9-12 may be grade banded.

4. The standards and benchmarks must “be clear, concise, objective, measurable, and grade-level appropriate” as well as “not require a specific teaching methodology or curriculum” (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 2.)

5. The revised standards will identify a smooth progression of increasingly sophisticated knowledge and skills from kindergarten through high school.

Social Studies standards expectations

1. The standards must be grounded in current research. The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History will be used in revising the standards.

2. The revised standards will include literacy in social studies.

3. The standards will include personal finance and/or financial literacy.

4. The committee must take into account:

   a. Designing standards that ensure opportunities for students to demonstrate an understanding of ideas, concepts, theories, and principles from the social studies disciplines by using them to interpret and explain specific, concrete information or events.

   b. Designing standards that represent diverse points of view, experiences, and approaches to problem solving.

   c. Designing standards using language that promotes culturally sustaining learning and that reflect students’ cultural backgrounds.

   d. Designing standards that provide students with multiple ways of demonstrating competence in social studies.

5. K-12 standards will be identified in each of five core social studies disciplines. At the high school level, students must earn 3.5 social studies credits (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.024, subdivision 1).

   Therefore, the amount of content specified in the revised standards will not exceed what can be reasonably taught in 3 ½ years of social studies courses.

   a. Credit: the determination by the local school district that a student has successfully completed an academic year of study or mastered the applicable subject matter. (Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.018, subdivision 4).