



## **Greenwich Public Schools Curriculum Overview**

### **Law in America**

Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

*Note: Teachers retain professional discretion in how the learning is presented based on the needs and interests of their students.*

### **Course Description**

This course will focus on the American legal system, with specific emphasis on the criminal and civil justice systems. Special attention will be paid to the interpretations of the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 14th Amendments and contemporary legal issues. The course content will be enriched by a variety of readings, case studies, outside speakers and multimedia resources.

### **Unit Pacing Guide**

- Unit I: Introduction to Law and the Justice System (approx. 2 Weeks)
- Unit II: The Criminal Justice System (approx. 7 Weeks)
- Unit III: Structures and Institutions (approx. 5 Weeks)
- Unit IV: Juvenile Law (approx. 5 Weeks)

### **Enduring Understandings for the Course**

The legal system in the United States balances the individual's Constitutional rights to due process and equal protection under the law with the need to maintain order in society.

## **Enduring Understandings By Unit**

- **Unit I: Introduction to Law and the Justice System**
  - a. Students will understand the roles and duties of citizens, legislators, attorneys, and judges within the U.S. justice system.
  - b. Students will evaluate the courts' ability to address changes in values and uphold fundamental principles underlying the U.S. Constitution.
- **Unit II: The Criminal Justice System**
  - a. Students will understand the criminal justice process from the investigation phase through sentencing and corrections.
- **Unit III: The Civil Justice System**
  - a. Students will analyze the difference between tort law and criminal law, including how torts developed historically, various circumstances under which a person can sue or be sued; the processes by which torts are adjudicated; and the role of insurance in tort law.
  - b. Students will understand the rights and responsibilities of consumers, giving students the tools they need to protect themselves and to manage their finances effectively (optional).
- **Unit IV: Conflict Resolution**
  - a. Students will analyze the juvenile justice system and evaluate whether juveniles should be treated differently than adults under the law.
  - b. Students will analyze the role of local, state, and federal government in family life in order to evaluate the government's ability to balance protection and assistance while respecting the privacy of individuals.

## **Standards**

### **Connecticut Core Standards**

Adopted in 2010 | English Language Arts Standards, History/Social Studies, Grade 11-12 at <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12/>

### **Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks**

Adopted in February 2015 | Pages 101 through 131 at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Social-Studies/ssframeworks.pdf>

#### **DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY**

- INQ 9–12.1 Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.
- INQ 9–12.2 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.
- INQ 9–12.3 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.
- INQ 9–12.4 Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge.
- INQ 9–12.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

#### **DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS**

(See below, beginning with “Civic and Political Institutions”)

#### **DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE**

- INQ 9–12.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- INQ 9–12.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by examining how experts value the sources.
- INQ 9–12.8 Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantially from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.
- INQ 9–12.9 Refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

#### DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

- INQ 9–12.10 Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.
- INQ 9–12.11 Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear or non-linear), examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation given its purpose (e.g., cause and effect, chronological, procedural, technical)
- INQ 9–12.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- INQ 9–12.13 Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.
- INQ 9–12.14 Critique the use of the reasoning, sequencing, and supporting details of explanations.
- INQ 9–12.15 Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.
- INQ 9–12.16 Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning.
- INQ 9–12.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic strategies and procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts.

(applicable DIMENSION 2 main concepts are listed below)

#### Civics and Government: Civics

##### Civic and Political Institutions

- CIV 9–12.1 Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions.
- CIV 9–12.2 Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans' participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.
- CIV 9–12.3 Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.
- CIV 9–12.4 Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.

### Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles

- CIV 9–12.7 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.
- CIV 9–12.9 Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.
- CIV 9–12.10 Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

### Processes, Rules, and Laws

- CIV 9–12.11 Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved.
- CIV 9–12.12 Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.
- CIV 9–12.13 Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.
- CIV 9–12.14 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

### **Greenwich Public Schools Vision of the Graduate**

- Pose and pursue substantive questions
  - Students will develop and explore their own research question during a variety of research assignments including development of the Capstone project, 9th grade assured research, and Grade 10 research paper.
- Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information
  - Students will critically interpret, evaluate and synthesize information by analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources and by conducting historical research. This source evaluation and research will allow students to gain a variety of historical perspectives.
- Explore, define, and solve complex problems
  - Students will apply historical knowledge to critically analyze current problems and issues. High school elective courses will allow for an in-depth study of many complex modern issues.
- Communicate effectively for a given purpose
  - Students will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively through a variety of methods. Through persuasive writing assignments, class discussions and presentations, students will continue to develop and improve their communication skills.
- Advocate for ideas, causes and actions
  - Students will evaluate past advocacy successes and failures and determine when others have chosen to fight for causes and taken action. Case studies in Law in America, for example, will be used to evaluate advocacy successes and failures.

- Generate innovative, creative ideas and products
  - Students will demonstrate their mastery of curriculum objectives with innovative projects. Students will explore answers to essential questions through creative and varied assignments with research structured by the use of GPS research process.
- Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding
  - Students will learn to collaborate with one another while working in structured groups in a variety of cooperative learning activities in order to create a final product.
- Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership
  - Through the study of different world leaders and political systems, students gain the skills they need to evaluate qualities of an effective leader. Through student council, community service requirements and other school organizations and responsibilities students will contribute to the community.
- Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner
  - Historical situations will be analyzed so students gain perspective and information in order to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
- Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view
  - Through the teaching of cultures from around the world students will recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view. By developing an understanding and empathy for others, students will appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities
  - Students will have choice in many assignments and will be able to pursue their interests culminating in the Capstone project.
- Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience
  - Students will reflect on their writing and group work, in order to analyze what they did well and where they can improve. Frequent and constructive feedback by teachers and peers will be used to ensure continuous reflection and refinement.
- Be responsible for their own mental and physical health
  - Social studies classes will help students develop study skills, and reduce stress through organization and planning.

## **Resources**

### **Suggested Resources Include**

- The Bill of Rights (primarily Amendments 1, 4, 5, 6, 8)
- 14th Amendment
- Explore [Connecticut Judicial Branch](#) to identify differences between civil and criminal court in CT.
- *Tinker vs. Des Moines*.
- *NJ vs TLO*