



## **K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Review Year 2 Developing**

West St. Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan Area Schools  
School District 197



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## Background

**The background information below is regarding the 2011 MN Social Studies standards, which sunset in the spring of 2026. We are operating under these officially until then, however, there are elements, due to the legislative changes passed in spring 2023, that will be implemented prior to 2026. These elements are noted within the report.**

The 2011 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies set the statewide expectations for K-12 student achievement in the disciplines of citizenship and government, economics, geography and history (United States and world). The 2011 standards are guided by a vision of citizenship and college- and career-readiness. As required by law, the standards identify the academic knowledge and skills that prepare students for postsecondary education, work, and civic life in the 21st century (Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, Subd.4).

In order to meet this vision, the standards require students to understand the facts, concepts, principles and perspectives that shape the social studies disciplines. Students need deep knowledge of this information in order to make sense of their world. In addition to mastering a body of knowledge, students must be able to apply their understanding to complex situations and contexts, some of which are yet to be envisioned. To prepare for these future challenges, the standards also require students to think critically about important issues and communicate their findings, and engage in the processes of problem-solving and discipline-based inquiry.

The social studies standards represent the required social studies disciplines addressed in state statute (Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, Subd.1). Students must receive instruction in these four disciplines so that they are able to satisfactorily complete the state standards (and the benchmarks which supplement the standards). These four disciplines are identified below;

- Citizenship and government
- Economics
- Geography
- History

The 2011 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies represent the minimum requirements that must be addressed by the school curriculum, rather than the curriculum in its entirety. Additional social studies disciplines not represented in the standards, such as psychology, sociology, archeology and anthropology, have strong traditions of instruction in Minnesota schools. Schools may choose to continue offering courses in these disciplines as local traditions, interest and school priorities dictate. The current standards in place in Minnesota in the area of social studies were adopted in 2012.

### **Graduation requirements:**

- State statute requires that all public school students in Minnesota satisfactorily complete all Social Studies standards and their corresponding benchmarks in order to graduate (Minn. Stat. § 120B.024, subd. 1(5)).
  - The 2026 Social Studies standards include an Ethnic Studies strand.
- Students are also required to satisfactorily complete three and one-half (3.5) credits of social studies, encompassing at least U.S. history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in social studies.
  - The 2026 Social Studies standards include an Ethnic Studies strand are best aligned to the geography content. There is not enough time in the current semester based geography course to meet both the geography and ethnic studies standards. Administration has recommended that the graduation requirements for students who completed 8th grade in 2023-2024 increase to 4 credits and include a year long Human Geography and Ethnic Studies course.

### **Standards Organization:**

- Grade-specific benchmarks in grades K-8 are mandated by law. Thus, they must be addressed in the specific grade where they are assigned. The Social Studies Standards contain grade-specific standards for each of the four main disciplines.
- The high school social studies standards are banded and must be taught within the grade span of 9-12.
- At any grade level, the benchmarks from multiple disciplines can be combined to facilitate integrated, or interdisciplinary, learning experiences.

**Assessments:** Minnesota does not have a test in social studies. According to state statute, the Commissioner is forbidden to develop statewide assessments for academic standards in social studies, health and physical education, and the arts (Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, subd. 1a).

**Civics Test Requirement:** In 2016, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law requiring Minnesota students in public schools to pass a civics test. The test consists of 50 out of the 100 questions in the United States Custom and Immigration Services (USCIS) Naturalization Test. The 50 questions are selected by Learning Law and Democracy Foundation, in consultation with civics teachers, and are posted on the Minnesota's Legacy website. Schools or districts determine how to administer the test questions and the logistics for recording the results, which are not reported to the Minnesota Department of Education. Students must pass 30 of the 50 questions, and may be given the questions as often as necessary to pass. Passing this test is not required for graduation. Read the [Civics Test Questions Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) for more information.

**The Civics Test is no longer a state requirement, due to the legislative changes passed in spring 2023.**

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**The section below is regarding the current State Social Studies Standards Review process, which results in new standards and requirements beginning no later than fall 2026.**

Minnesota's K-12 Academic Standards are statewide expectations for student learning in K-12 public schools. School districts and charter schools are required to teach these standards to ensure that all Minnesota

students have access to high-quality content and instruction. An academic standard is a summary description of student learning in a content area and consists of one or more benchmarks. A benchmark supplements the standard and is the specific knowledge and/or skill that a student must master to meet part of an academic standard by the end of a grade level or grade band.

Academic standards are not curriculum. Curriculum are the resources, assessments, learning experiences and plans that educators use at the local level to instruct students on the content of the academic standards. By statute (Minn. Stat. 120B.021, subd. 2(b)), Minnesota academic standards do not require a specific curriculum. Districts, schools and educators make curriculum and instruction decisions to support the teaching and student mastery of standards. As a result, local school districts, schools and educators choose what curriculum is used and what classes are taught in their schools to ensure that students meet the academic standards. Ultimately, local educators make the decisions about how to deliver instruction to meet the rigorous learning expectations of the academic standards.

The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies committee has 36 members, and includes K-12 teachers, administrators, college faculty, informal educators and community members. Minnesota Statutes outline who must be represented on the committee, including parents, currently licensed and in the classroom teachers, licensed school administrators, school board members, post-secondary institution faculty teaching core subjects and business community members.

The social studies content-area empowers learners to become inquisitive, informed, and engaged members of society who use critical thinking, inquiry, and literacy to prepare for civic life, college and careers. The review process centers on making revisions to the standards in social studies that will help prepare Minnesota students to learn, live, work and thrive in local and global societies.

The Standards have been submitted for the rulemaking process. The statutory rulemaking process for the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies is not complete until the Notice of Adoption is published in the State Register. Each content area includes an implementation date in the adopted rule language. If adopted, the proposed K-12 academic standards in social studies will be implemented in the 2026-27 school year.

Once approved, the academic standards and their supporting benchmarks will be organized into five strands: Citizenship and Government, Economics, Geography, U.S. and World History, and Ethnic Studies. The contributions of Minnesota's American Indian tribes and communities are integrated into each strand and all standards. Each of the strands have between three and six standards.

As the team reviewed the most recent and published drafts of the social studies standards, they were asked to reflect on how they are similar or different with the current set of standards which are set to sunset in 2025-2026. Two frequently mentioned insights from this review are summarized below.

- Some grades are somewhat similar, and some have changed quite a bit, such as 8th grade content. However, the changes most often have led to improvements in focus or adding in missing content.
- There are several ways in which the new standards address inclusivity, including but not limited to the straightforward addition of ethnic studies as one of the strands across all of K-12.



## Social Studies standards expectations from MDE

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).

## Summary

Beginning In the fall of 2021, a review team (Appendix A) was put together including a representative K-12 group of teachers, as well as building and district administrators, to begin the work of year two tasks associated with the curriculum review process. Due to many factors, largely due to issues surrounding the staffing and sub shortages, the work of the committee was organized by level (elementary, middle, and high school), however each group conducted a similar approach to the work to be accomplished, which is outlined below.

- Exploring and identifying resources to support each grade level's changes in standards.
- Evaluating resources through the use of the department-developed instructional materials criteria rubric
- Developing an implementation plan to ensure all students are prepared for full implementation of the new social studies standards which according to state requirements, can occur no later than school year 2026 - 2027.
- Exploring how to integrate, with relevance and authenticity, the American Indian standards, as well as the Ethnic Studies strand, in curriculum and instruction planning.

Due to the landmark legislation passed at the conclusion of the 2022 - 2023 school year, there are some areas that overlap with social studies content which require additional attention in the 2023 - 2024 school year. These are noted below.

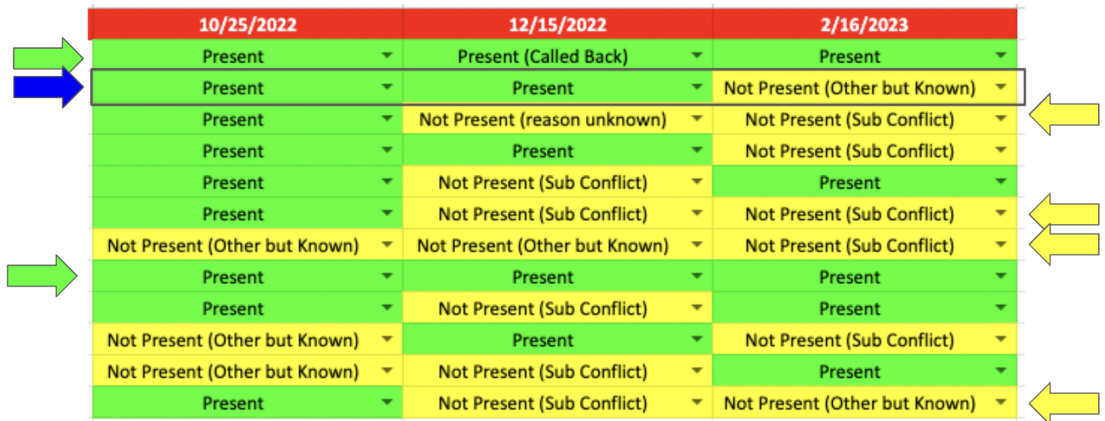
- Ethnic Studies: Starting in the 2026 - 2027 school year, school districts must offer a high school course focused on ethnic studies. Starting in the 2027 - 2028 school year, school districts must provide ethnic studies instruction in elementary and middle schools.

- Holocaust, genocide of Indigenous peoples, and other genocide education: School districts must offer Holocaust and genocide education in middle and high school curriculum by the 2026 - 2027 school year in accordance with rules on social studies standards and benchmarks.
- Personal Finance: Students who begin grade 9 in the 2024 - 2025 school year and later must successfully complete a course for credit in personal finance in grade 10, 11 or 12.

Updates on how our district and social studies department are approaching these three requirements are included in this report.

The K-4 committee arrived at final recommendations for their core set of instructional materials. They will begin implementing these new resources beginning in the fall of 2023. That process is outlined later in this report

The middle and high school committees were unable to arrive at a final recommendation for their core set of instructional resources, and intend to do so by the second semester of the 2023 - 2024 school year. The main reason for the delay is due to the circumstances related to sub shortages



10/25/2022	12/15/2022	2/16/2023
Present	Present (Called Back)	Present
Present	Present	Not Present (Other but Known)
Present	Not Present (reason unknown)	Not Present (Sub Conflict)
Present	Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)
Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)	Present
Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)	Not Present (Sub Conflict)
Not Present (Other but Known)	Not Present (Other but Known)	Not Present (Sub Conflict)
Present	Present	Present
Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)	Present
Not Present (Other but Known)	Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)
Not Present (Other but Known)	Not Present (Sub Conflict)	Present
Present	Not Present (Sub Conflict)	Not Present (Other but Known)

this year, as well as multiple weather-related cancellations and difficulties associated with severe weather, which greatly limited our teachers ability to participate in the days where we were reviewing resources. The graphic included here is indicative of the difficulty the team faced, where only two staff members were able to attend all three sessions, and most staff able to, at best, make only one of the two sessions in December and February. It is not prudent to move ahead in a process that impacts so many staff and students with so few staff able to join consistently, if at all.

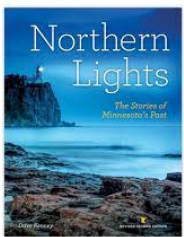
The updated process for how they intend to arrive at this recommendation is outlined later in this report. In addition to the legislative requirements noted above, and the review of instructional materials, the high school department will propose their final course sequence this fall.

**Important note for 6th Grade:** Due to the nature of the standards in 6th grade, which are centered mostly on Minnesota-specific standards and includes a significant focus on the American Indian standards for Minnesota, they (6th grade) will not be included in the same instructional materials review process as the rest of the grades, 5-12. The instructional materials that are being used currently, called Northern Lights (published by the Minnesota Historical Society), are used by over 85 percent of Minnesota's sixth graders, and are the only set of core resources that provide the type of focus, depth, and authenticity that is required to meet the 6th grade standards. Our team anticipates using the current set of Northern Lights resources, which still match the 2011 standards, until the Minnesota Historical Society completes their instructional materials update to match the new set of standards.

## American Indian Education in Social Studies

Throughout the curriculum review process, there have been several ways in which the whole team, and small work groups within the team, have been exploring how to authentically integrate American Indian history, perspective, and contributions to science in our current and future science programming. These are noted below.

**Connections between core science resources and American Indian standards.** As the team begins using their selected core resources, one of their ongoing focus areas will be to see where overlaps with our states' American Indian standards in science exist with the resources they are using. Because the resources are typically developed for a nationwide audience, many times they do not include all the important requirements that each state might include in their standards, and American Indian education standards in science for Minnesota is one of these gaps. This will be ongoing and iterative work as the team works through their implementation process.



**Grade 6 Minnesota Studies:** Minnesota is the central focus for standards in 6th grade, and our state standards pave the way for all of our 6th graders to learn critical thinking skills, encourage inquiry and explore multiple perspectives, particularly as it relates to the histories of our American Indian communities. Students explore how history, civics, economics, and geography work together to tell the stories of Minnesota and its people.

**Immersive Experiences:** The high school 9th grade social studies team has been developing, and implementing a Bdote-focused unit which includes field trips and immersive experiences that bring students to a variety of important landmarks related to the American Indian part, present and future. Students learn about the multiple histories associated with Fort Snelling, and most importantly, the impact that Fort Snelling had on the American Indian community. Students also stop along the Oheyawahi Trail (pictured here) at Oheyawahi/Pilot Knob, which is a place of cultural significance in the history of Minnesota statehood. It is a traditional sacred site of the Dakota people, and overlooks the mouth of the Minnesota River, or Bdote Minisota. With the intended changes to the 9th grade Geography course, it is the department's intention to bring all 9th graders along for this experience.



**Partnerships with Dodge Nature Center.** Several opportunities for integrating American Indian histories and perspectives into how and what students learn about social studies are found in the various activities that Dodge Nature Center provides for our students. One example is found in a sixth grade Dodge experience where connections are made between plant fibers and cloth to aspects of life and experiences of the Dakota people. Another example comes from the elementary level where second graders learn about how Minnesota American Indian Tribes and communities connect the natural world around them with the resources that exist geographically through a maple syruping activity in March.

## K-4 Instructional Materials Selection

Before previewing resources, the committee reviewed and updated the Instructional Materials Criteria Rubric developed during Year 1 of the review process. The Instructional Materials Criteria Rubric can be found in Appendix B. This rubric would be used to help evaluate resources at each stage of the review process, which is outlined below.

In October 2022, the Social Studies review team reviewed programs that could be further considered. Nine programs were identified as candidates to share with the K-4 Committee. The committee reviewed materials sent by vendors for review. The goal of the team was to narrow this list of nine down using the following criteria;

- Identify at least 4, but no more than 6, sets of resources to proceed with the review.
- Materials must have defensibility for how they are authentically culturally relevant.

In addition to the Instructional Materials Criteria Rubric, the committee used the following criteria;

- General impact reports (Best Evidence Encyclopedia, What Works Clearinghouse)
- State or district evaluations of each program
- Independent Reviews: EdReports

As a result of this first stage of the review, the committee narrowed the program list down to four to explore more thoroughly. These four programs are listed below;

- Inquiry Journeys
- National Geographic
- My World Interactive
- Studies Weekly

On December 7th, the K-4 social studies review team began officially exploring the four sets of curricular resources identified by the review team during the initial resource scan. The team was tasked with identifying two or three resources that they may want to review further and try in their classrooms. The review team used the instructional materials criteria rubric they developed to guide their decision-making process.

Each program provided a 45-minute overview and a 15-minute question-and-answer session afterward. After all presentations were complete, teachers could ask questions and debrief on what they saw.

The committee's recommendation following these two days was to move forward with three programs;

- Inquiry Journeys
- MyWorld Interactive
- Studies Weekly

At this point in the review, Inquiry Journeys and Studies Weekly were the clear favorites regarding content and structure. However, they were both very different in structure from our typical curriculum resource, so we also added My World Interactive to be sure we had a more traditionally structured curriculum as an option.

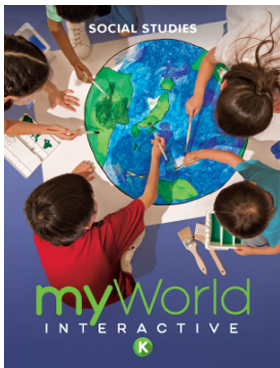
Teachers were assigned one of the three resources to explore by using them in their classroom from February through May. On February 15, 2023, teachers were trained to use their assigned resources. The morning was spent training, and the afternoon was spent planning and preparing for teaching.

Teachers taught the resources in their classrooms until May 17th, when the team met again to gather feedback. Feedback on each of the resources was as follows:



## **Inquiry Journeys**

Teachers found Inquiry Journeys to be high-quality and engaging learning experiences for students. All materials were digital for the teacher to access and print for student use. Learning was structured using the Inquiry process and guided by an Inquiry Question. Some concerns with Inquiry Journeys was the amount of time and preparation that was required to teach the program. The structure of the inquiries also had grade-level standards spread across many grade levels, making it challenging to teach standards where the state of Minnesota requires. When asked to rank the three resources, Inquiry Journeys was 23% of the team's first choice and 53% of the team's second choice. Of those who taught this resource, 60% said they would recommend implementing Inquiry Journeys.

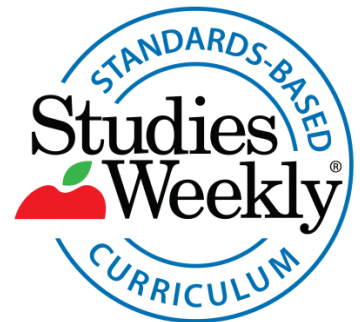


## **MyWorld Interactive**

MyWorld teachers found the resource poorly aligned with standards and an overabundance of resources for a teacher to sift through. While there were a lot of resources, they were found to be not of high quality and not as representative of multiple perspectives as the team would like to see. The videos in the product were engaging, but the print resources were text-heavy and not engaging. When asking the team as a whole, no one ranked MyWorld as their first or second choice. 100% of those who tried MyWorld said they would not recommend implementation.

## **Studies Weekly**

Studies Weekly is a weekly publication that teaches social studies standards. Teachers found the format easy to use and covered most of the MN standards. Teachers found that students were engaged with the newspaper/magazine format and loved the online games and videos that went with the print. Teaching students how to engage with the text was a positive feature of the resource. The version of Studies Weekly that we explored was lacking in inquiry learning structure. This has been added in the new version moving forward. If implemented, this would be a focus of training and development so that students experience the inquiry process. Teachers felt the resources were engaging and flexible so that teachers could use them in various ways that fit their weekly schedule and the needs of their learners. Of the team, 73% said Studies Weekly would be their first choice, and 23% ranked it as their second choice. After trying out the materials, 100% of those who taught Studies Weekly in their classroom said they would recommend implementation.



## **Recommendation**

After considering the feedback from the team, it was decided that Studies Weekly would be implemented for K-4 Social Studies. Some reasons for this decision are:

- Engaging non-fiction text format
- Flexibility in how to use the resource
- Ease of implementation and fidelity of use
- Minnesota Social Studies standard coverage - some additional development is needed here. This work will begin over the summer of 2023.
- High-quality print and digital resources

## Middle and High School Instructional Materials Selection Process

As described above in the summary segment of this report, the middle school and high school committees were charged with conducting a full instructional materials review process in order to make a final recommendation for their core set of resources. As noted earlier, due to the circumstances related to sub shortages this year, multiple weather-related cancellations and difficulties associated with severe weather, both the middle and high school committees were forced to consider a different timeline for making this decision. However, this delay does provide our team with a way to more fully try out new materials in a classroom without feeling rushed or overwhelmed, as well as be able to participate in a more robust training and preparation process prior to the start of evaluating these resources in their classroom use.

In the fall of 2022, the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department conducted a wide review of social studies programs that could be explored with the review team. Nine programs in all were identified as candidates to share with the larger K-12 Committee. During the month of October, each level of committee met in-person to begin the process of narrowing this list of nine down using the following criteria;

- Identify at least 4, but no more than 6, sets of resources to move forward with the review
- Ideally, at least one set of resources for each grouping below;
  - Set of materials that span K-6 and/or a set material that span K-8
  - Set of materials that span K-12
- Materials must have defensibility for how they are authentically culturally relevant

As a result of this first stage of the review, the middle and high school committees narrowed the program list down to seven in all to explore more thoroughly (some for middle or high school only). These programs are listed below:

	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Studies Weekly (K-6)	Yes		
Inquiry Journeys (K-5)	Yes		
TCI (K-8)		Yes	Yes
National Geography (K-8 + AP)		Yes	Yes
McGraw Hill (K-12)		Yes	Yes
Houghton Mifflin (6-12)		Yes	
Savvas (K-12)	Yes	Yes	Yes

In December, the middle and high school review teams met to begin officially exploring the sets of curricular resources from the list above. The team was tasked with identifying two or three resources that they may want to review further. The review team used the instructional materials criteria rubric that they developed to guide them in their decision-making process.

The process for this portion of the review is listed below.

- Each vendor had 50 minutes to share components of program
- Some presentations needed to be virtual, some were in person
- Print materials from vendors, when provided, were available for review

- Optional follow-up office hours were available after all presentations
- Each staff member was asked to complete a rubric for each vendor

In addition to using the instructional materials criteria rubric as a tool for their recommendation development, each staff member was asked to reflect on the following questions;

- Is there a program(s) that stands out above the others?
- If yes, what are the specific aspects that account for that? Are there instances from our rubric that can be considered?
- Do you have any specific concerns about this program?
- Is there at least one other program that you think should still be considered? What about that program makes you think it could be further considered?
- Are there ways that your experience in the various presentations could be influencing your decision? If yes, which presentations (positive or negative) might have been impacted?

While some of the review team members were able to contribute to this portion of the review, and there was some preference for which programs to move ahead with in the process, the group did not feel any firm decisions could be made without more input from those who were not able to attend. Also, some members from the high school in particular felt that some programs might have left a better impression should they have been sharing their program in-person, rather than virtually.

Therefore, additional steps were taken with the middle school and high school review teams to help provide defensibility in this stage of the review process. Those steps are outlined below by each level.

### **High School:**

Step 1: The team met again in February to take a closer look at any programs that they felt may have been impacted by the vendor's virtual-only presentation in December. An intended outcome for this meeting time was to have a firm recommendation for at least two programs to continue to review more thoroughly, and the review team was able to meet this expectation.

The high school team formally recommended the two programs listed below to move forward in the review process:

- Savvas
- McGraw Hill

The two programs that remained were statistically above, in terms of their evaluations, than any of the remaining programs.

Step 2: The team had to make a decision at this point about whether to conduct a program exploration of materials this spring, or delay it until fall of 2024. After deliberation, the team recognized that any type of program exploration this late in the year would not be done to the standard that we would want, therefore the team moved to recommend a fall 2024 program exploration option instead.

However, some staff were interested in continuing to unofficially review the resources throughout the spring. In order to not create any unintended consequences by allowing staff to continue to unofficially review resources, an optional process was created that staff were to review and agree to following that would prevent these unintended consequences from occurring. An agreement form was created that outlined these parameters and any interested staff completed the form and agreed to the process. Because this was an optional experience, and the logistics even for an optional experience felt difficult to manage, there was little to no interest in participating in this option for the high school staff.

Therefore, the final recommendations for next steps at the high school are;

- Recommendation 1: Move forward with a program exploration for the Savvas and McGraw Hill programs. Each program would be used for one full quarter the following year.
- Recommendation 2: Use the Training Academy structure to help provide time and compensation for preparing for the program explorations. This support allows for 18 hours of time to prepare, including a mix of in-person/synchronous and asynchronous/application sessions.



### **Middle School:**

Step 1: Another meeting was scheduled in mid- February to attempt to bring the whole review team together for the vendor presentations that were limited in December due to staff absences. The morning of February 16th, one of the school's entire team was needed back at their building for the whole day due to sub shortages that were a result of other reasons (not due to curriculum review). The members from the other middle school that were able to attend still did attend, and the presentations continued on without issue. However, again, due to an entire middle school not being able to join, the remaining group felt we needed to take an additional step before moving ahead.

Step 2: Due to a weather-related school closure, we were able to pull together a shortened virtual-only meeting with the team members from the middle school that were unable to attend on 2/16. The summary of the February 16th meeting was shared with the team, and some potential next steps were shared.

It was at this point for the middle school that the team was ready to move forward with some tentative plans, which are outlined below:

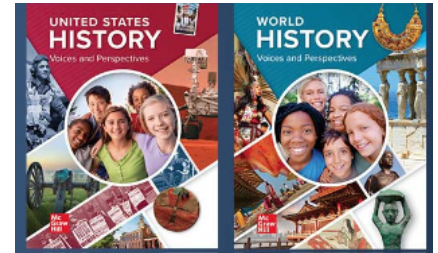
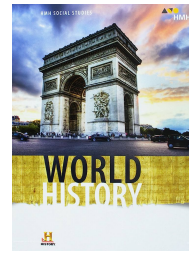
- The team was ready to recommend the following programs to move forward in the process:
  - Houghton Mifflin-Harcourt
  - McGraw Hill
  - TCI
- (This is exactly the same as the process described above for high school) The team had to make a decision at this point about whether to conduct a program exploration of materials this spring, or delay it until fall of 2024. After deliberation, the team recognized that any type of program exploration of this late in the year would not be done to the standard that we would want, therefore the team moved to recommend a fall 2024 program exploration option instead.
- (This is exactly the same as the process described above for high school) However, some staff were interested in continuing to unofficially review the resources throughout the spring. In order to not create any unintended consequences by allowing staff to continue to unofficially review resources, an optional process was created that staff were to review and agree to following that would prevent these unintended consequences from occurring. An agreement form was created that outlined these parameters and any interested staff completed the form and agreed to the process. Because this was an optional experience, very few staff members participated.

As the school year came to an end the team wanted to try one last time to meet as a large group to wrap things up for this year and prepare for next year, so the team met in May. An intended outcome from the team was to reduce the



number of programs they would be reviewing to two instead of three. Fortunately, nearly the entire middle school team was able to join this meeting, and as a result, the team came out of this meeting with a unified set of recommendations for next steps, including their final recommendation for two programs to conduct a program exploration during the first semester of 2023 - 2024.

- Recommendation 1: Move forward with a program exploration for the Houghton Mifflin-Harcourt and McGraw Hill programs. Each program would be conducted for one full quarter the following year.
- Recommendation 2: Use the Training Academy structure to help provide time and compensation for preparing for the program explorations. This support allows for 18 hours of time to prepare, including a mix of in-person/synchronous and asynchronous/application sessions.



### **Middle and High School Program Exploration Process for 2023 - 2024**

In preparation for the first semester program explorations scheduled to begin the fall of 2023, ongoing meetings were held with each of the vendors to have them share their model program exploration approach, so that our committee was able to use their resources with the most fidelity as possible, which ultimately would lead to the most informed recommendation on each program. As a result, the following considerations were made while developing the implementation of each program exploration.

- Provide training on the sets of resources ahead of their use in classrooms
- Ensure that any integrations with Canvas and/or Campus are made prior to use
- Provide hardbound classroom sets of the textbooks for each class/teacher
- Provide digital licenses for all staff as well as every student
- Establish multiple checkpoints before and during the implementation of each program exploration to problem solve along the way
- Develop and implement, at least twice per program exploration period, an Implementation Expectations survey that staff will complete to inform what portions of the programs were used, how often, etc.
- Use summer sessions as a method in which to review each program
- Use summer sessions, when possible, to provide training for each program
- Use natural breaks in calendar to make program transitions (end/beginning of quarters)
- Sufficient time to explore each program (one per quarter)
- Keep teams of teachers at sites together whenever possible
- Minimize the number of programs/preps for any one teacher (e.g., Grade 7 and 8 at HMS)
- Allow flexibility for staff to make final decisions on what content/unit and when

Over the course of the summer Training Academy in-person sessions, as well as during their self-paced/asynchronous application/preparation sessions, staff were able to;

- Participate in formal training from each vendor, which included time spent on instruction, materials, pedagogy and assessments
- Utilize digital components that are integrated in each program, as well as training on how those digital components can be used in Canvas
- Selecting the specific unit(s) that they would be teaching for each program
- Identifying what materials would be necessary to teach the units they were selecting
- Developing scope and sequences and unit plans that would be used to pace their instruction accordingly
- And lastly, reviewing the Implementation Evaluation tools for each program which will be used following their use of that program to help determine what level of use the staff member had for the program.

The tentative timeline for each program exploration and the decision making process is outlined below.

Summer 2023	September thru October	End of October/ Early November	November thru January	Early/Mid December	January/February
Participate in training for program exploration 1	Up to 6 hours preparation time  Mid-quarter virtual support w/vendors	Meet to review first program exploration, and train second program exploration	Up to 6 hours preparation time  Mid-quarter virtual support w/vendors	Quarter 2 Check-in	Meet to review second program exploration & make final recommendation

An update on the final recommendations for both the middle and high school can be scheduled, pending completion of this phase of the process, in the spring of 2024.

## Legislative Updates

Due to the landmark legislation passed at the conclusion of the 2022 - 2023 school year, there are some areas that overlap with social studies content which require additional attention in the 2023 - 2024 school year. These are noted below.

- Ethnic Studies: Starting in the 2026 - 2027 school year, school districts must offer a high school course focused on ethnic studies. Starting in the 2027 - 2028 school year, school districts must provide ethnic studies instruction in elementary and middle schools.
- Holocaust, genocide of Indigenous peoples, and other genocide education: School districts must offer Holocaust and genocide education in middle and high school curriculum by the 2026 - 2027 school year in accordance with rules on social studies standards and benchmarks.
- Personal Finance: Students who begin grade 9 in the 2024 - 2025 school year and later must successfully complete a course for credit in personal finance in grade 10, 11 or 12.

## High School Curriculum Review Additional Topics

In addition to both the materials review process and the legislative updates noted earlier in this report, the high school review team will be focused on the topics below throughout the course of the 2023 - 2024 school year.

- High School course sequence in social studies
- Year 1 implementation of AP Government and Politics
- Year 2 Implementation of AP Human Geography Enrichment
- General support for AP courses (updated resources, enrollment, exam performance)
- Common assessment development
- Common scope and sequence development
- Implementation of the new social studies standards, including those mentioned above in legislative update
- Professional development as needed beyond materials training
- Prepare for re-implementation of Civics course in grade 12

## Educational Equity Analysis / Four Way Equity Test

Throughout the entire curriculum review process, the team is charged with routinely asking how the questions included in the Four Way Equity Test could be used to address findings from each particular stage in the review process. Examples for how this work was integrated throughout the process are noted below.

For reference, the 4- Way Equity Test questions are provided below as well.

1. Does this help to provide opportunities for students who have historically been underserved, underrepresented, or disadvantaged by the current system?
2. Does this help to ensure equitable access for all?
3. Does this help to eliminate barriers based on gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age or other protected group?
4. Does this ensure the same rigorous standards for academic performance exist for all students?

Specific Areas to Address in Year 1 Four-Way Equity Test	Examples of evidence from within the review process
<p>Having a commonly developed curriculum plan, and having updated instructional materials will be a top priority. Updated materials include resources which are contemporary, relevant, and engaging, and authentically represent the people and content within them.</p>	<p>Decisions on instructional materials, scope and sequences, and assessments are being made collaboratively across grades and sites. Each course and grade level will have a unified approach to what they teach, resources they use to teach the course, and how they plan on assessing student learning.</p>
<p>Teacher training and collaboration across all grades and schools, particularly elementary, will be essential, particularly as it relates to topics that are found in the Ethnic Studies strand.</p>	<p>At the secondary level, due to the frequency of meeting time across sites and grades, the collaboration level within the staff is higher than has been seen in a very long time.</p> <p>In the fall of 2023, all K-4 staff will be included in several professional development experiences that will bring grade level teams together to plan and prepare.</p>
<p>There is limited time in the elementary for social studies, so we need to be intentional about what to teach, and these topics must be importantly chosen so that all students and their cultures, perspectives, and backgrounds are included.</p>	<p>In the summer of 2023, a smaller work group was established to make decisions on what content would be covered, with important considerations made to ensure standards were not missed, as well as taking into account the amount of instructional time that is available in k-4 classrooms.</p>
<p>In general, teachers were clear about the need for updated resources, including materials to match their students' needs, backgrounds, and interests. This finding confirms our previous findings from multiple elements within the review process.</p>	<p>Each of the resources that have been moved ahead in the process were advanced in particular due to their strength in being culturally inclusive and providing authentic ways in which contributions from a variety of cultures are integrated into what students learn.</p>
<p>We need to find ways in which to continue to encourage all students, and specifically students of color, to enroll in advanced courses and then to provide the necessary support for them to be successful.</p>	<p>The implementation of AP Human Geography Enrichment has had a statistically important impact on both students' performance and enrollment in that particular course, but also residual effect on enrollment and success in the next AP course, AP World History.</p>

## Next Steps

### Elementary (Kindergarten through Grade 4)

- Continued collaborative planning for social studies instruction (creating a common scope and sequence).
- Implementation of new Studies Weekly resources by classroom teachers.
- Training on new resources during Workshop Week.
- Reflection and collaboration on the depth of MN state standards covered in the curriculum
- Creating supplemental materials to meet MN state Social Studies Standards thoroughly.
- Virtual support sessions for teachers in November.
- Ensure social studies standards are being covered consistently across elementary schools.
- Continuing to focus on authentically integrating our American Indian standards into the curriculum.

### Middle School

- Conduct product explorations for both programs (McGraw Hill and HMH) as described earlier in this report
- Arrive at consensus on which program to recommend for implementation beginning no later than fall 2024
- In addition to both the materials review process and the legislative updates noted earlier in this report, the high school review team will be focused on the topics below throughout the course of the 2023 - 2024 school year.
- Common assessment development
- Common scope and sequence development
- Implementation of the new social studies standards, including those mentioned above in legislative update
- Professional development as needed beyond materials training

### High School

- Conduct product explorations for both programs (McGraw Hill and Savvas) as described earlier in this report
- Arrive at consensus on which program to recommend for implementation beginning no later than fall 2024.
- In addition to both the materials review process and the legislative updates noted earlier in this report, the high school review team will be focused on the topics below throughout the course of the 2023 - 2024 school year.
  - High School course sequence in social studies
  - Development and implementation of full year Geography and Ethnic Studies course
  - Year 1 implementation of AP Government and Politics
  - Year 2 Implementation of AP Human Geography Enrichment
  - General support for AP courses (updated resources, enrollment, exam performance)
  - Conversion to from AP to Concurrent Enrollment Macro and Microeconomics
  - Common assessment development
  - Common scope and sequence development
  - Implementation of the new social studies standards, including those mentioned in legislative update
  - Professional development as needed beyond materials training
  - Prepare for re-implementation of the Civics course in grade 12

## Appendix A: K-12 Social Studies Review Team

Team Member	Title	Site
Abigail Hendricks	Kindergarten Teacher	Garlough Environmental Magnet School
Jessi Nelson	Kindergarten Teacher	Pilot Knob Elementary
Jordan White	Kindergarten Teacher	Somerset Elementary
Andrew Christenson	First Grade Teacher	Mendota Elementary
Tiffany Brandner	First Grade Teacher	Moreland Arts and Health Sciences Magnet
Meghan Colon	First Grade Teacher	Pilot Knob Elementary
Jennifer Christiansen	Second Grade Teacher	Mendota Elementary
Debbie Weum	Second Grade Teacher	Moreland Arts and Health Sciences Magnet
Allison David	Second Grade Teacher	Somerset Elementary
Emilie McHugh	Third Grade Teacher	Garlough Environmental Magnet
Karen Harvey	Third Grade Teacher	Mendota Elementary
Connor Pfaltzgraff	Third Grade Teacher	Pilot Knob STEM Magnet
Marina Radle	Third Grade Teacher	Moreland Arts and Health Science Magnet
Megan Tulia	Fourth Grade Teacher	Somerset Elementary
Bryor Hellmann	Fourth Grade Teacher	Garlough Environmental Magnet
Anna Banti	Fourth Grade Teacher	Moreland Arts and Health Science Magnet
Breena Boone	Fourth Grade Teacher	Pilot Knob STEM Magnet
Aaron Ashley	8th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Shannon Guscetti	7th and 8th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Phil Hayes	7th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Rachel Cafferty	5th and 6th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Chris Halvorsen	5th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Sara Walberg	5th grade SS teacher	Friendly Hills Middle School
Fran Foster	5th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Payton Stites	5th and 6th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School

Team Member	Title	Site
Leigh Danner	5th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Suzy Moulton	6th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Sara Mercado	7th and 8th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Matt Huron	7th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Harry Jenness	7th and 8th grade SS teacher	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Connor Kenefick	7th and 8th grade SS teacher, HMS Dean	Heritage E-STEM Middle School
Mary Beth Townsend	Geography, World History Teacher, DLC	Two Rivers High School
Jeremy Christiansen	World History Teacher	Two Rivers High School
Kathy Glusick	US and World History Teacher	Two Rivers High School
Matt Klebe	Geography, US and World History Teacher	Two Rivers High School
Sarah Lund	US History Teacher, HS SS Dept. Chair	Two Rivers High School
Ben Geiger	Geography, AP Human Geography	Two Rivers High School
Brian McCarthy	AP Human Geography	Two Rivers High School
Tom Myers	World History and Psychology Teacher	Two Rivers High School
Stan Eskierka	US History teacher	Two Rivers High School
Charlie Skemp	US History, AP Government, Political Sci.	Two Rivers High School
Matt Malmberg-Merthan	Special Education Teacher	Two Rivers High School
Mark Quinn	Principal	Moreland Elementary
Connor Kenefick	Principal	Friendly Hills Middle School
Scott Karlen	Principal	Two Rivers High School
Miles Lawson	Secondary Curriculum Coordinator	School District 197
Jennifer Miller	Special Education Coordinator	School District 197
Kate Skappel	Elementary Curriculum Coordinator	School District 197
Andrea Saenz	ESL Coordinator	School District 197
Cari Jo Drewitz	Director- Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	School District 197

## K-12 Social Studies Instructional Materials Criteria Template

Program	Grade	Reviewer

<p><b>Culturally Inclusivity / Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Represents various experiences (such as: race, culture, disability status, gender, sexuality, age, socioeconomic status, etc)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there attention paid to the spectrum of gender identification?</li> <li>Are individuals with disabilities depicted in active roles?</li> <li>Have older, middle-aged, and younger characters been included?</li> <li>Are people of different income levels (socioeconomic) included?</li> <li>Are different types of family structures (two-parent, one parent, extended family, same-sex, etc.) included?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How are non-western points of view/cultures/depicted?</li> <li>Authentic and diverse points of view</li> <li>Stereotyping is avoided</li> <li>Groups and individuals represented in a balanced and realistic manner</li> <li>Existence of bias, privilege, sexism, racism, etc. are acknowledged</li> <li>Language is unbiased</li> <li>Does this selection provide an important or necessary contribution to the whole selection of resources?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b></p>
<p><b>Interest Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the material reflect the experiences/perspectives/backgrounds of our student population?</li> <li>Are the lessons and units authentically engaging students in learning about social studies concepts?</li> <li>Does the material touch on modern/current issues in society?</li> <li>Do the materials offer students a way to make personal connections to material? Are students asked to critically engage with concepts?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b></p>



<p><b>Alignment to the department's Outcomes That Matter to All / pedagogical approach. How do the resources support learning experiences described below? Are there concrete examples that can be provided to illustrate them?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will engage in the civic process at the state, national and local community level and take action to influence change.</li> <li>• Students will engage in civil discourse with people with whom they disagree.</li> <li>• Students will use evidence-based inquiry to analyze and problem-solve.</li> <li>• Students will be able to evaluate primary and secondary sources to support a claim.</li> <li>• Students will use historical context to evaluate current events to make inferences about possible outcomes.</li> <li>• Students will be able to evaluate the composition of data and narratives to understand the validity and perspective.</li> <li>• Students will learn from diverse perspectives.</li> <li>• Students will be able to communicate their thoughts and opinions verbally and in writing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b></p>
<p><b>Minnesota Standards Aligned</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned with state standards.</li> <li>• Lessons and units provide appropriate levels of flexibility within scope and sequence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b></p>
<p><b>Useability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the resources easy to use and navigate for staff?</li> <li>• Are the resources easy to use and navigate for students?</li> <li>• Are the resources easy to use and navigate for families?</li> <li>• In what concrete ways are teachers provided with options for differentiation? Where are these options found, and what ready-made resources might be available for on the spot use?</li> <li>• What resources can be given to work with building and district EL reps to have a better understanding of our individual classroom backgrounds?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b></p>

<b>Accessibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available in multiple languages?</li> <li>• Available in multiple formats?</li> <li>• Are there options for digital text to be read to students?</li> <li>• Concerning print-based materials, are the concepts derived from examples that they could be used in an evolving world? How are print resources kept relevant in an evolving world?</li> </ul>	<b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b>
<b>Digital tools and integration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What options are available for integration with Canvas/SeeSaw?</li> <li>• Which devices are compatible w/digital resources, and to what extent?</li> <li>• Availability of technology-enhanced resources</li> <li>• Are there options for downloading PDF versions of the digital resources to allow for efficiencies in creating lessons that require marking the text or annotating?</li> <li>• Are lessons, activities, resources available online and offline?</li> <li>• What types of technology supports are available?</li> </ul>	<b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b>
<b>Appropriateness/Readiness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maturity level</li> <li>• Language / violence / sexuality</li> <li>• Vocabulary / Lexile range (Available in multiple lexile levels)</li> <li>• How are the resources balanced between visual and text information?</li> </ul>	<b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b>
<b>Instructional Supports (C3 Framework):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dimension 1 - Developing questions and planning inquiries</li> <li>• Dimension 2 - Applying disciplinary tools and concepts</li> <li>• Dimension 3 - Gathering and evaluating sources</li> <li>• Dimension 4 - Communicating conclusions and taking informed action</li> </ul> <b>Instructional Supports (General):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance and Authenticity: Engages students in authentic and meaningful scenarios that reflect the real world.</li> <li>• Student Ideas: Provides opportunities for students to express, clarify, justify, interpret, and represent their ideas and to respond to peer and teacher feedback orally and/or in written form as appropriate.</li> <li>• Building Progressions: Identifies and builds on students' prior learning.</li> </ul>	<b>Elaboration, comments, notes</b>

- Historical Accuracy: Uses accurate and grade-appropriate information, and representations to support students' learning.
- Provides opportunities to brainstorm or learn about different ways of taking informed action
- Are there resources that provide both formative and summative assessments via different learning styles? ie. projects, tests/quiz, etc.
- Differentiated Instruction: Provides guidance for teachers to support differentiated instruction by including:
  - Appropriate reading, writing, listening, speaking supports
  - Extra support (e.g., representations, tasks) for students who are struggling to meet expectations.
  - Extensions for students with high interest or who have already met expectations.
  - Leveled resources and texts available?