



Clayton County Public Schools

Division of Teaching and Learning & Strategic Improvement

1058 Fifth Avenue • Jonesboro, Georgia 30236 • (770) 473-2700

ANTHONY SMITH, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DELPHIA YOUNG, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
& Strategic Improvement

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Dear Clayton County Public Schools Stakeholders,

The Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) Departments of Elementary and Secondary Social Studies ensure that both teachers and students have access to a well-rounded, academically challenging curriculum that supports the teaching of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE). We provide core and supplemental resources to support the learning and mastery of social studies standards. It is important to note that while we vet and select teaching and learning resources based on quality, relevance, and standards alignment, Clayton County Public Schools is not responsible for the views expressed in such documents.

The Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) reflect the minimum requirement to be taught. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) primarily organized the GSE for Social Studies into four domains: geography, history, government, and economics. These domains cover a variety of topics, including but not limited to, the founding philosophy and principles of the United States of America, the structure of our government, slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, women's suffrage, and the history of minority groups such as American Indians. CCPS Departments of Elementary and Secondary Social Studies train teachers to teach the GSE and to use instructional materials as written and provided by the GaDOE and those approved by our local board of education. For further guidance, we direct teachers to the Teacher Notes and Teacher Content Tutorial Videos from the GaDOE. Clayton County Public Schools is not responsible for the views expressed in documents, videos, and images that are not created by the school district.

According to the historical thinking skills developed by the National Center for History in the Schools, students must understand multiple perspectives, which means learning about historical events and people that have diverse views. In order to teach students how to “think like a historian,” we must expose our students to historical documents with varied viewpoints. The teacher must provide a historical context that allows students to think critically about multiple perspectives and helps them understand the historical setting of each document. The Social Studies Georgia Milestones assesses all the aforementioned skills. Therefore, we must do our due diligence to prepare students to be successful by exposing them to a variety of educational experiences.

America's history, as well as the world's history, is full of events that will continue to show up in our state standards. Also, our curriculum would not be complete without making connections between the past and the present, discussing current events, and making it relevant for our students now. When doing so, it, in part, is our job as social studies educators to 1) provide students the opportunity to learn about history and current events using the content standards, 2) afford students the opportunity to learn about varied perspectives, 3) teach students to think critically about how historical trends manifest into current events and systems, and 4) support students in the learning process as they determine the beliefs and ideals they will adhere to for their lives.

Clayton County Public Schools acknowledges parents' rights to direct the upbringing and education of their minor children. Should you decline your child's participation related to certain topics that extend to the standards, teachers in collaboration with the principal and parents may provide standards-based alternative assignments for your child. We encourage parents to visit the following I-policies and their corresponding regulations to learn more about instructional considerations: IKB (Controversial Issues); IFAA (Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption); and IFBC (Media Programs).

Sincerely,

Anthony W. Smith, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools/CEO

Charmine Johnson, Ed.D.

Timothy Guiney, Ed.D.