



FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

# K - 12 SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM



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# **SECTION A: INTRODUCTION**

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## **WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE**

The Board Curriculum Advisory Committee, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education and the many teachers, administrators, parents and community members who have so willingly given of their time and expertise in the planning and revision process of this document.

# PHILOSOPHY

The study of social studies is a process that develops from kindergarten through high school. This development helps students to understand their place in the world and their roles and responsibilities.

The study of history is important to students because past events provide context for understanding present and future challenges. Studying geography will provide a basis for understanding nature and the influence of climate and terrain on human cultures. Understanding how the social sciences play a significant role in the growing global economy will provide valuable preparation for students. The social sciences will help students appreciate the uniqueness of individuals and the diversity within and among groups of humans as well as compare the United States society to other societies.

Social studies education provides students the opportunities to gain and apply historical knowledge and to perform the skills as indicated below. The students will:

- Develop critical-thinking skills, responsible decision-making and competency in problem solving, interpreting data and differentiating between fact and opinion.
- Prepare to participate competently and productively as concerned citizens in society.
- Address the ever-changing global issues of our world.
- Become aware of their roles as citizens in society and prepare to participate actively, competently and productively.
- Utilize literature, community resources and technology.

Through activities, students will be engaged directly and actively in the learning process. Activities will include:

- Using factual knowledge.
- Examining values.
- Communicating with others.

Studying the social sciences will enable the learner to make appropriate decisions about social and civic affairs in a climate that stimulates students to respond to the human condition in the world today.

## MISSION

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District will provide opportunities for active exploration and critical evaluation of complex and diverse Social Studies issues through participatory citizenship activities. School and community projects that model democratic principles will be implemented to provide decision-making and problem-solving experiences for students.

The core curriculum will encompass the social studies strands of history, geography, civics/government, economics and cultural studies. The study of Alaska, America's heritage and world civilizations will include multicultural perspectives and an understanding of global interdependence.

Central themes will be carried across a coherent and relevant K-12 continuum. Interdisciplinary studies and cooperative learning environments at all grade levels will promote higher-level thinking skills and civic efficacy. Research based instructional materials, programs and technology will be used to master the processes necessary to function in an information rich global society.

We are committed to three key research-based principles of curriculum based on *Schooling By Design*, by Wiggins and McTighe (2007).

- Success at transfer depends on understanding the big ideas that connect otherwise isolated or inert facts, skills and experiences so that new challenges can be met and new experiences understood.
- An understanding is a learner realization about the power of an idea. Understandings cannot be given; they have to be engineered so that learners see for themselves the power of an idea for making sense of things.
- Learners need clear, completely transparent priorities and a practical understanding of how learning goals are to be met in terms of work products and standards of excellence.

# EXPLANATION OF TERMS

## ***Alaska Cultural Standards***

Standards endorsed by the State Board of Education serve to encourage enrichment of the content standards. They are used as a guide to ensure that schools are aware of and sensitive to their surrounding physical and cultural environments.

## ***Alaska State Standards***

High academic standards are an important first step in ensuring that all Alaska's students have the tools they need for success. These standards reflect the collaborative work of Alaskan educators and national experts from the nonprofit National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment. Further, they are informed by public comments. Alaskan teachers have played a key role in this effort, ensuring that the standards reflect the realities of the classroom.

## ***Benchmark***

A benchmark is a point of reference against which individuals are compared and evaluated. The high school benchmark equivalent, called the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE), is also required of students before they can receive a high school diploma.

## ***Essential Learnings***

Each of the Essential Learnings is what the FNSBSD expects students to know at a mastery level by the end of each grade level or course.

## ***Essential Questions***

Essential questions drive the knowledge and skills that students need to know, understand and be able to do in order to succeed in school. The essential questions are determined by unpacking state standards and creating measurable targets.

## ***Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum***

A guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC) is one that guarantees equal opportunity for learning for all students. Similarly, it guarantees adequate time for teachers to teach content and for students to learn it. A guaranteed and viable curriculum is one that ensures that the curriculum being taught is the curriculum being assessed. It is viable when adequate time is ensured to teach all determined essential content.

## ***Informational Text***

This is text designed to convey factual information rather than tell or advance a narrative. Informational text may employ techniques such as lists, comparing/contrasting or demonstrating cause/effect, and may be accompanied by graphs or charts. Most textbooks consist of primarily informational text.



**Learning Targets**

Learning Targets are the essential skills and concepts our students master during classes and investigations.

**National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) Standards**

Intended as a companion to content standards, the social studies curriculum standards are an indispensable framework for the implementation of content standards. The standards continue to be structured around the themes of social studies.

**Ongoing Learner Goals**

These are goals that that are fostered and reinforced on every suitable occasion. Mastery is not assigned to a specific grade level or course.

# STANDARDS ALIGNMENT CODING

The Social Studies curriculum has been aligned with the Alaska Content and Alaska History State Performance Standards. The complete text of the standards may be found in the appendix. The following coding is used throughout this document to correlate the core objectives with the Alaska Content and Alaska History State Performance Standards.

## ALASKA CONTENT AND CULTURAL STANDARDS

*This example is History.*

Content Standard      →      **H.B.8a**      ←      Standard and Subdivision (if necessary)

↙  
Key Element of the Content Standard

- E/LA = English/Language Arts
- M = Mathematics
- S = Science
- GY = Geography
- G/C = Government and Citizenship
- H = History
- HL = Skills for a Healthy Life
- A = Arts
- WL = World Languages
- T = Technology
- EM = Employability
- L/IL = Library/Information Literacy
- CS = Cultural Standards

## ALASKA HISTORY PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Alaska History Performance Standard      →      **AH.PPE.2**      ←      Standard

↙  
Theme

- PPE = People, Places, Environment
- CPD = Consumption, Production, Distribution
- ICGP = Individual, Citizenship, Governance, Power
- CC = Continuity and Change

**National and Alaska State Standards  
may be accessed in the Appendix of this document.**