

## Social Studies - Preface

The Social Studies Curriculum Standards include the Process Standards, Content Standards, Learning Expectations and Accomplishments necessary to insure that K-12 Tennessee students develop the social studies skills needed to succeed in school, in the workplace, and in their lives.

The foundation of the curriculum standards includes the four process standards: communication, data analysis, historical awareness, and acquiring information and six content standards: culture, economics, geography, government and civics, history, and individuals, groups, and interactions.

However, the guiding philosophy of this document is that the process and content standards should be taught in an integrated manner, not in isolation.

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**Learning expectations** identify the essential and broad core of learning. The grade level specific accomplishments delineate the skills and knowledge necessary to master the learning expectations at each grade. The learning expectations and accomplishments mastered within each grade cluster will be assessed at the benchmark grades of three, five, and eight.

**Performance Indicators** detail the level of achievement for each grade cluster. These performance indicators are divided into two categories: state assessed and teacher observed. The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) will evaluate the state performance indicators.

Classroom teachers will assess the **Teacher Performance Indicators** through observation and other authentic methods. Within each category the indicators are leveled as follows:

- Level 1: Below Proficient
- Level 2: Proficient
- Level 3: Advanced.

All students should master all three levels by the end of the grade cluster. Unlike the End of Course assessments and Gateway examinations, Level 3 indicators are not extensions of learning but are part of the required mastery.

The Social Studies Standards include standards, learning expectations, and performance indicators for the following curriculum areas: K-8 Social Studies, American History, World History, World Geography, Government, Civics, Sociology, Economics, and Psychology.

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**Development** - In Tennessee the mandate to develop curriculum standards for Social Studies is dictated by policy. According to Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards for the Governance of Tennessee Public Schools: "The State Board of Education shall adopt a curriculum framework

for each subject area, grades K-12 . . .The approved framework shall be the basis for planning instructional programs in each local school system."

With this charge the Tennessee Department of Education formed the Social Studies Curriculum Standards Committee consisting of K-12 Social Studies teachers, state department personnel, and higher education representatives. The curriculum standards committee used the current Tennessee standards, the ten National Council for the Social Studies standards, curriculum guides from other states and current educational research to aid in revising the K-12 curriculum. Although social scientists have the reputation of being a contentious lot, this committee agreed on the importance of creating a cohesive and comprehensive social studies curriculum and unanimously worked together in harmony to achieve their set goals.

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**Purpose** - The curriculum standards are designed to provide guidelines in planning and implementing curriculum at the state, local system and individual school levels. This document is based on the important concept that the social sciences are a symbiotic set of disciplines that require a competency within each rather than a mastery of only one. Students at every grade level apply similar social studies process skills and concepts to increasingly complex and new materials. Students build upon and refine their knowledge, gaining sophistication and independence as they grow.

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**Philosophy** - The Tennessee Social Studies K-12 committee believes that the Social Studies Standards will guide K-12 institutions in understanding a comprehensive and statewide social studies coursework for Tennessee's school children. The Social Studies Standards integrate many philosophical and instructional approaches in order to enable students to achieve a true understanding of the world. These standards encourage a dialogue among students, teachers, and parents throughout the student's entire social studies coursework.

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**Vision** - The Tennessee Social Studies Standards K-12 present a vision of every child matriculating into a civic minded citizen armed with the six content and four process standards of knowledge. These standards guide and support school systems in their attempts to build a rigorous Social Studies Curriculum. The Social Studies committee wrote these standards for all students regardless of their age, gender, cultural or ethnic group, disabled, or interest in the social studies. The Social Studies committee developed these standards with different learning styles and multiple assessments specifically in mind.