

Social Studies (K-5)

The district views social studies as an integrated study of social sciences that promotes civic competence. It provides a coordinated study of economics, geography, history, civics and government, family and consumer sciences, and career education and work aligned to PA Standards as well as applications across content areas such as the arts, humanities, science, mathematics, and students' own interests and experiences.

Effective social studies teaching integrates across the curriculum and provides opportunities for students to read and study text materials, appreciate art and literature, communicate orally and in writing, and develop and display data in order to synthesize knowledge and skills taught in all subject areas. Information obtained from websites, computer programs, films, videos, and other electronic media enhances multiple dimensions to student learning. To prepare students for college and career, they also have the opportunity to develop literacy in multiple areas: digital, textual, visual, technological, and informational.

Social studies is powerful when it employs active learning strategies, when discussions are meaningful, and when the content is value-based, challenging, and interactive.

Classroom interaction focuses on sustained examination of designated topics rather than the superficial coverage of many. Meaningful learning activities focus students' attention on the most important ideas embedded in what they are learning. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

The nation depends on a well-informed, civic-minded population to sustain its democratic traditions and its shifting roles in a changing world and to achieve the outcome of fostering productive citizens.

Social studies engages students in the process of confronting dilemmas and encourages them to speculate, think critically, and make personal and civic decisions based on information from multiple perspectives. Through sound social studies instruction, students are able to: foster individual and cultural identity along with an understanding of the forces that hold society together or pull it apart; observe and participate in the school and community; address critical global issues; make decisions based on democratic principles; and appreciate the benefits of diversity. Exemplary social studies instruction also prepares students to connect knowledge with beliefs and action using thinking skills involving: acquiring, organizing, interpreting, and communicating information; processing data in order to investigate questions, develop knowledge, and draw conclusions; generating and assessing alternative approaches to problems; and interacting with others in responsible ways.

