

GUIDE TO SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENTS, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR 2016-2017

WHAT MATTERS MOST IN SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION?

Students should build an understanding of **CONTENT** and develop and express **CLAIMS** to demonstrate their understanding.

This means students should:

- Examine authentic sources to build knowledge of social studies content;
- Explore meaningful questions about sources and content to build understanding;
- Make connections among ideas, people, and events across time and place;
- Express understanding of content using evidence from authentic sources and outside knowledge.

To ensure these priorities are met in every social studies classroom in the state, you need strong and coordinated curriculum, assessments, and professional development in social studies. The Department continues to [review curriculum](#) and will post reviews throughout the spring and summer. Curricular choices are local decisions and districts are free to use any materials that they choose. Below are recommendations to support local decision making.

	DESCRIPTION	DISTRICT NEXT STEPS
Curriculum	High-quality curricula should include (1) what content should be taught when and (2) strong daily lessons with purposefully sequenced sources and related questions that ask students to develop claims about social studies content.	<p>Option One: Use the Department's scope and sequence documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in the content with aligned current resources. • Fill in the content with high-quality tasks,¹ such as the Department's instructional tasks, Reading Like a Historian, Teaching Literacy through History Lesson Plans, DocsTeach, or Classroom Materials from the Library of Congress. <p>Option Two: Use a Tier 2 or 3 program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the scope and sequence of content. • Identify the specific areas of weakness. • Supplement with high-quality tasks.
Assessments	High-quality assessments in social studies should include item sets and tasks that assess the scope of content included in the curriculum.	Use the released sample item and task sets from the Department as models to update assessments; consider revising or adding different item types, including tasks with aligned rubrics.
Professional Development	Support for teachers should focus on showing them how to help students analyze sources and write and speak knowledgeably about social studies content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try out different social studies professional development vendors offering sessions at the June Teacher Leader Summit. • Access professional development from the Vendor PD Course Catalog, such as Gilder Lehrman, Library of Congress, and the DBQ Project.²

¹ The Department will be engaged in a review of supplemental materials through December 2016, to identify additional tasks for use by districts.

² The Department is working with additional vendors to include in the Vendor PD Course Catalog. Those will be added through June 2016.