

Update on Social Studies Standards Work in Kentucky, January 2014

Senate Bill 1 (2009) requires that Kentucky revise all required content standards to reflect the necessary knowledge and skills needed to ensure all students are college and career ready. SB 1 suggests that all standards should be rigorous, world class, and internationally benchmarked, while also allowing for deeper engagement around fewer concepts/topics. Adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics was the first step taken to address SB 1. Despite the fact that the ELA standards include a section for Literacy in History/Social Studies, there is still a need for a set of comprehensive social studies content standards that fully addresses the needs of Kentucky's 21st century learners.

What social studies standards work has occurred to date?

In February of 2013, a team of elementary, middle, high school, higher education, and key social studies advocacy group representatives was established to begin setting a vision for and drafting new social studies standards for the Commonwealth. These new standards will be guided by a document called the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Inquiry in Social Studies State Standards*.

The C3 Framework, developed by the National Council on Social Studies (NCSS)—led by University of Kentucky's Kathy Swan, focuses on the disciplinary and multidisciplinary concepts and practices that make up the process of investigation, analysis, and explanation within the social sciences. It is designed with explicit connections to the Common Core ELA standards. Work on the C3 Framework began in 2010. Members of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO's) Social Studies Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction (SSACI) collaborative (of which Kentucky is a member) provided feedback and guidance during this process. The C3 Framework was released nationally on Constitution Day last year—September 17, 2013.

The KY team has been working with a near-final draft of the C3 Framework since late last spring and has been able to begin some prioritization of desired characteristics/elements for a new set of standards—and has even begun to draft some models of what the new standards might be. Small writing teams will work to capture the thinking of the team and the intent of the Framework to draft a complete set of standards throughout 2014. During this period other key stakeholders and experts in various related fields will be asked for comments and feedback to ensure the quality of the work.

When will KY have new content standards for the social studies?

The goal is to have a solid, defensible, world-class draft of college/career- ready standards to present to the Kentucky Board of Education in 2014. Progress updates will continue on a regular basis during Network meetings and in KDE's ISN Newsletters and Webcasts.

When will KY have new statewide assessments for social studies?

Until the standards development and adoption processes are complete, it is not possible to define a specific date. However, it typically takes a minimum of 18 months to develop and implement new assessments.

As the networks build strong understanding of balanced assessment systems through the focus on assessment literacy, participants will be prepared to provide more informed guidance on both local and state assessment work.

What are the plans for Kentucky’s Social Studies Leadership Networks? Why should social studies teachers be involved before new standards are completed?

Participants in Kentucky’s Leadership Networks for Social Studies (set to launch in January 2014) will focus on developing their capacity to implement and support highly effective teaching, learning, and assessment practices in the social studies. The work will begin with the Literacy in History/Social Studies standards alongside the C3 Framework’s implications for teaching and learning.

It’s important to keep in mind that the Leadership Networks are designed to build and support a DISTRICT’s capacity to transform teaching and learning by engaging the district leadership team’s participants in ongoing learning and networking opportunities that focus on highly effective teaching, learning, assessment, and leadership skills and practices—skills essential to successful implementation of the PGES system and the KCAS. The addition of Social Studies Teacher Leaders to each district leadership team (i.e., the teacher leaders already identified in ELA, mathematics, science, the school leaders, and the district leaders) ensures that all core areas have a voice, develop deeper content-specific and pedagogical expertise, and can leverage the cross-/inter-disciplinary implications called for in KCAS as the district develops and implements rigorous and congruent curricula, including classroom, school, and district based assessments.

The participants will have multiple opportunities to provide input/feedback on the standards revision work, too, as they will have the most extensive knowledge of all the pieces-alongside their practical experience of supporting students’ understanding of the social studies. Collectively, the participants will be authors of the vision for 21st century social and civic education in the Commonwealth.