
A CALL TO ACTION:

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS

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Dear New Hampshire school administrators, school board members, and parents,

These Guidelines for Social Studies Education address the marginalization of social studies in New Hampshire schools. This decline has occurred across the nation, but it is even more pronounced here in New Hampshire, in part because of our tradition of local control. With little state support and minimal testing requirements, social studies has been neglected for far too long in our educational system. This document seeks to reverse that trend and provide parents, school board members, and administrators with the information they need to address the problem.

With the introduction of No Child Left Behind in 2001 and its successor, the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015, the focus of educators at all levels shifted to English language arts and math, with both social studies and science relegated to the sidelines. Science managed to claw its way back into our schools; social studies did not.

A listening tour of Granite State elementary teachers and administrators, conducted by the New Hampshire Historical Society in 2018, made clear that educators were well aware social studies had been getting short shrift, but they faced a number of obstacles in correcting course, even as they acknowledged that the problem extended far beyond the elementary grades. Substantial corroborating evidence supported this view, garnered most notably by the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies. For school administrators, the lack of updated academic standards (known in this state as frameworks) was chief among those obstacles.

Even if revised academic standards were available, they would be insufficient to guide the kind of change we need to renew social studies in our schools, especially if those standards were based on the last version of New Hampshire's social studies frameworks, which were produced in 2006. The world of education has changed too much for old models, particularly as those models were flawed to begin with. The Guidelines offer some suggestions to move forward even without updated state standards.

This document provides substantive guidance to rebuild social studies programs on solid intellectual and pedagogical foundations. The Guidelines laid out here are ambitious and require New Hampshire school districts to make substantial changes. Even if districts can only

implement some of these suggestions, adopting any of the reforms suggested here will be an improvement over what we're doing now.

Let us not forget, though, that this *is* New Hampshire, where we have a long tradition of local control, especially in regard to our schools. School administrators are free to follow the guidance offered here or ignore it, modify it to suit their needs or adopt it wholesale, implement it in part or not at all.

As this document will argue, the value of social studies does not lie merely in the cultivation of patriotism, a greater willingness to reconcile with the past, and an improvement in problem-solving abilities. It also provides meaning to all other subject areas of student learning. More and more evidence suggests that the marginalization of social studies is contributing to America's stagnant English language arts (ELA) test scores, despite all the investment made in education in the past several decades. Social studies offers the contextual knowledge that is necessary to raise those scores (especially for disadvantaged students); it shows how mathematics influences our lives, particularly in a world where decision-making is increasingly dependent on algorithms and data-driven information sources; and it highlights the impact that scientific and technological change brings to all of us across the globe. Social studies is, as one of my colleagues recently noted, the glue that holds all the other disciplines together.

Finally, in a society that is quick to cast blame but slow to solve problems, we want to be clear that there is no bad guy in this story, no villain to this piece. It's been a slow, inexorable downward spiral of neglect and distraction, with many well-intentioned actors but poor end results. Let's see if we can change that—if a group of ideologically diverse people can come together to solve a shared problem by employing the Yankee traits that have shaped our culture: pragmatism, common sense, and good old-fashioned Granite State determination.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements and Credits	2
Introductory Letter	3
Executive Summary	7
Part I. The Argument for Revision and Renewal of K-12 Social Studies Curricula	10
1. What Are Social Studies, and Why Should We Study Them?	10
2. Where Does New Hampshire Stand in U.S. Rankings of Social Studies Programs?.....	11
3. What Are the State’s Expectations in Regards to Social Studies?.....	12
Part II. Guidelines for Social Studies Education in NH Schools: Eight Key Principles	14
1. Social studies programs are based on high-quality, integrated content knowledge and skills standards	15
2. Social studies is taught in grades K–12 in a spiral curriculum that offers increasing depth and complexity as students progress	23
3. Inherently cross-curricular, social studies integrates with and enhances other disciplines	27
4. Social studies educators are trained professionals prepared to facilitate the learning of complex topics	32
5. Social studies employs dynamic instructional practices that teach students to form their own conclusions	35
6. Social studies has common themes that produce narrative arcs for K–12 education	41
7. Social studies incorporates multiple perspectives	43
8. Social studies helps students become fully functioning adults in a modern, self-governing society.	48
Part III. Next Steps: Where Should School Districts Go from Here?	50

Appendices

A. NH Code Admin. R. Ed Section 306.461: Social Studies Program, July 1, 2015	51
B. Five Ideas Every NH Kid Should Know By the New Hampshire Historical Society	56
C. “Moose on the Loose” Content Standards, Grades 3–5 By the New Hampshire Historical Society	57
D. Curated Resources	62

Executive Summary

Social Studies in Crisis. Both nationally and in New Hampshire, the amount of time K–5 students spend on social studies has dropped markedly since the early 2000s, a casualty of No Child Left Behind and its exclusive focus on English language arts and math. In many New Hampshire schools, social studies has virtually disappeared from the elementary curriculum. What little instruction offered is a hodgepodge of disconnected topics and old materials, which fail to educate students on even the important milestones of our history. Across every metric social studies has been in decline—instructional time, resources, teacher preparation, state standards (or the lack thereof). The crisis is most pronounced in grades K–7/8 but extends into grades 9–12 as well. Without a foundation in the earlier grades, full understanding of social studies at the high school level is nearly impossible to achieve.

Nearly three-quarters of Americans think we need more and better social studies instruction. The required changes are structural, in the way we prioritize the subjects we teach and in how we allocate educational resources. Marginalized in our schools for decades for a variety of reasons, social studies needs to be accorded the same time, energy, respect, and resources as the other core subjects, which has clearly not been happening in the past decades.

These Guidelines summarize the current situation in social studies education in New Hampshire, offer best practices for instruction, and present curated resources when possible. School districts are encouraged to adopt these Guidelines in full or in part, but collectively the eight principles laid out here provide the foundation for a strong social studies K–12 program.

Why Social Studies Is Important. As this document will illustrate, a robust social studies curriculum is integral to an adequate education, and the state of New Hampshire has expectations for the teaching of social studies at every grade level that are laid out in statute and in general administrative rules.

Beyond those expectations, there is evidence all around us as to the importance of social studies education: flat ELA scores, an assault on public education, a growing partisan divide, an economy in flux, a shifting world order, and a wide variety of social challenges—all of which will require the best versions of ourselves to resolve. Our children must be prepared for these challenges, as they will surely inherit many of them.

Social studies offers a way forward. It informs and contextualizes the world in which we live, leading to better decision-making, greater empathy for others, and lifelong curiosity and learning. It provides meaning to all the other subject areas, making abstract ideas and concepts both tangible and relevant. There is also a growing body of evidence that a solid grounding in social studies raises student performance across **all** subject areas, particularly when taught in a well-balanced curriculum of content knowledge, skills, and inquiry-based instruction. When paired with other subjects—whether ELA, math, and science, or music, art, business, and technology—social studies provides our best chance for helping students become fully functioning, independent-thinking, self-sufficient adults, which are the foundation of a self-governing republic.

The Eight Key Principles in a Strong Social Studies Curriculum

1 . Social studies programs are based on high-quality, integrated content knowledge and skills standards. New Hampshire school districts must look to social studies standards produced by other states or by national organizations to renew their social studies programs, ones that balance content and skills while offering the chronological scaffolding necessary for student learning.

2. Social studies is taught in grades K–12 in a spiral curriculum that offers increasing depth and complexity as students progress. New Hampshire schools should be teaching social studies from kindergarten through 12th grade and should vertically realign their social studies curricula in a spiraling, coherent program.

3. Inherently cross-curricular, social studies integrates with and enhances other disciplines. Social studies has enormous potential, when integrated with other subjects, to improve learning across the board. Rather than looking at instructional time as a zero-sum game—i.e., any increase in one area necessitates a decrease in another—educators should recognize social studies’ ability to scaffold all learning through cross-cutting concepts.

4. Social studies educators are trained professionals prepared to facilitate the learning of complex topics. Integrating social studies with other subjects does not obviate the need for well-trained social studies teachers. In fact, just the opposite is true. Administrators should recognize that social studies—both its content and its skills—are unique to this discipline and that those who teach this subject should be acknowledged for their expertise, which means including them on cross-curricular teams and supporting their professional development.

5. Social studies employs dynamic instructional practices that teach students to form their own conclusions. As social studies touches on almost every aspect of our lives, opportunities abound for educators to incorporate vibrant teaching techniques that challenge and engage students while helping them see the relevance of their academic pursuits to the world around them.

6. Social studies has common themes that produce narrative arcs for K–12 education. The use of themes to teach social studies provides intellectual cohesion and a pedagogical framework by which students can approach and master complex material over the course of their educational careers. Themes are a powerful teaching tool, as long as they are employed with respect for intellectual scaffolding, such as chronology.

7. Social studies incorporates multiple perspectives while simultaneously promoting our shared heritage. Authentic social studies instruction requires the consideration of multiple, diverse perspectives that mirror the variety of perspectives found in society. Students should develop their abilities to listen with understanding and learn from people who are different from themselves. Doing so is the only pathway to creating sustainable, equitable solutions for society’s challenges. However, the purpose of education in American society has always been to foster a sense of our collective culture, which is more important than ever before in these divisive times. These two considerations must be carefully balanced in a well-constructed social studies program.

8. Social studies helps students become fully functioning adults in a modern, self-governing society. The discipline of social studies is uniquely equipped to offer students ongoing, academically relevant opportunities to practice the skills that will allow them to navigate complex challenges, exercise self-control, interact with those around them in productive and responsible ways, and learn to overcome personal setbacks.

PART I: THE ARGUMENT FOR REVISION AND RENEWAL OF K–12 SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULA

New Hampshire schools are desperately in need of social studies reform after decades of neglecting this subject area. The information in this document outlines a number of crucial elements that must be introduced, updated, or changed so that social studies is returned to its rightful place in the curriculum—as an equal and supporting partner of the other three core subject areas. We begin with answers to relevant questions and then discuss eight principles that are key to effective social studies curricula.

1. What are social studies, and why should we study them?

Social studies offers a coordinated, systematic, and integrative study of the world. This expansive academic subject helps young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good, while practicing necessary skills for citizens of a democratic society in a culturally diverse and interdependent world.

Social studies integrates the humanities and the social sciences in three areas that prepare students for life in a complex world: 1) the development of skills; 2) the acquisition of knowledge; and 3) the cultivation of intellectual curiosity. These three elements help foster the ability to negotiate multifaceted issues, solve difficult problems, and make informed and productive decisions, thereby grounding a lifetime of informed civic engagement.¹

Generally, social studies is comprised of four major subject areas: history (local, state, national and world), civics, economics, and geography. At the high school level, it may include courses in anthropology, archaeology, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, but the focus of these Guidelines—and almost all national and state discussions related to social studies—is on the four major subject areas, particularly U.S. history and civics.

The evidence of neglect in these four subject areas is everywhere around us, between low student proficiency scores in understanding how the U.S. government works to strong polling

¹ A recent legal challenge from students in Rhode Island claimed that the state’s poor instruction in social studies had, in essence, deprived them of their constitutional rights under the Fourteenth Amendment (*Cook v. Raimondo*). Although the case was decided against the students in 2020, the court clearly expressed the need for better civics education nationwide.

numbers that show most Americans—perhaps as much as three-quarters—believe students should be spending more time on social studies in school. But the reasons to study social studies extend far beyond public opinion and national test scores. Why should we spend time on social studies? The answer to that question is woven throughout these Guidelines—to develop better citizens certainly, but also to improve student performance across all subject areas and to cultivate productive, compassionate, creative, and curious adults capable of exercising and enjoying all the benefits and responsibilities of living in a democratic society.

The good news is that improvement is achievable, and many states are investing right now in creating high-quality social studies programs. New Hampshire should be one of them.

2. Where does New Hampshire stand in U.S. rankings of social studies programs?

Student Achievement. Because New Hampshire does not participate in national social studies assessments, there is no comparative data on our students' performance. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NEAP, or the Nation's Report Card), which provides social studies testing for many other states, consistently finds that only about 25% of American students are proficient in social studies. New Hampshire students are probably on the high end of this score, given the state's overall ranking in K–12 schools as fourth best in the nation.²

Rigor of State Law. Most comparisons of state laws regarding social studies focus exclusively on civics. A 2019 survey by the Center for American Progress showed that New Hampshire's state laws related to civics education placed it in the middle of state rankings.³ States that rank ahead of New Hampshire in these assessments also require a middle school civics course, which New Hampshire does not. However, confusion over K–7 social studies in this state, including when and if it is a required subject, means New Hampshire students are starting their social studies education later than students in many other states.

Quality of Standards. Although the Center for American Progress gave New Hampshire a score of 4 out of 5 for its civics standards, the Thomas B. Fordham Institute gave New Hampshire's

² *U.S. News & World Report*, February 2022. This ranking is historically consistent, as New Hampshire schools typically rank among the top ten in national comparisons, in both *U.S. News & World Report* and other rankings.

³ Ashley Jeffrey and Scott Sargard, "Strengthening Democracy with a Modern Civics Education," Center for American Progress, December 2019, cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2019/12/13123249/CivicsEducation-report.pdf.

state social studies frameworks a failing grade in both civics and U.S. history.⁴ New Hampshire’s social studies standards—or lack thereof—are discussed in more detail below in Part II, No. 1.

3. What are the state’s expectations in regards to social studies?

There is some misunderstanding about state expectations regarding the teaching of social studies in New Hampshire schools. RSA 189:11 states that instruction in U.S. and N.H. “history, government, and constitutions” must begin no later than 8th grade. In that law, the implication is that social studies instruction prior to that, in grades K–7, is optional.

In fact, the state has much more extensive expectations for the teaching of social studies, encompassing grades K–12. (See Appendix A: Section ED 306.461 for specific requirements.) In addition, the General Court Administrative Rules for Education lay out expectations for social studies teachers in both teacher certification standards (ED 500s) and educator preparation standards for teacher certification (ED 600s). The standards listed in these three sections require that social studies be taught at *all grade levels by qualified social studies teachers*.

In addition, the NH DOE produced state social studies frameworks to guide districts when creating curriculum, even though those frameworks, last revised in 2006, are now out of date and unaligned with national standards. When they were adopted, many educators had concerns about the quality and usefulness of the frameworks. Some of these concerns are articulated elsewhere in this document. By tradition, the frameworks are revised every 10 years, so updated frameworks are now more than five years overdue. The NH DOE began a limited revision of the frameworks in 2018, but that effort stalled the following year.

Competencies are another area that illustrate the marginalization of social studies. New Hampshire is a national leader in competency-based education and has been actively promoting it since at least the mid-1990s. The NH DOE has established model competencies for ELA, math, and science but not for social studies.

Since the early 2000s, New Hampshire no longer participates in statewide social studies testing through NAEP. The state of New Hampshire does require students to pass the U.S. Citizenship

⁴ Jeremy A. Stern, et. al., “The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021,” Thomas B. Fordham Institute, June 2021, fordhaminstitute.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/20210623-state-state-standards-civics-and-us-history-20210.pdf.

and Immigration Services exam, which is generally considered a poor assessment for long-term knowledge retention as it requires students to memorize random facts instead of demonstrate understanding of important concepts.

These Guidelines align with and reinforce the minimal expectations that the state of New Hampshire mandates for social studies. School districts that implement the practices laid out in this document will be operating in accordance with state requirements.

A note about the Freedom from Discrimination / Divisive Concepts law: As of this writing, there are two pending lawsuits related to this law, and several legislative bills to extend, revise, or eliminate it have been or currently are moving through the legislative process. These Guidelines do not discuss this law or address how schools should proceed in their social studies programs in regards to it; nor is any of the guidance offered in this document affected by this law. Until there is greater clarity on the scope of this law, the state government's commitment to it, and its impact, we encourage educators to proceed in good faith in offering Granite State students intellectually honest, well-balanced instruction in social studies.

PART II: THE GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS: EIGHT KEY PRINCIPLES

The New Hampshire Historical Society and the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies worked together to create these Guidelines for Social Studies Education.⁵ They summarize the current situation in social studies education in New Hampshire, offer best practices for instruction, and present curated resources when possible. The guidance presented here is offered as suggestions for school districts to consider, modify, and implement—or not—as each district deems feasible.

For the good of our students and our country, social studies should be accorded the same time, energy, respect, and resources as the other core subjects (English language arts, math, and science).⁶ This document helps school districts begin to address the marginalization of social studies while honoring our tradition of local control in determining curriculum in our schools. Educators are under enormous pressures on a number of fronts, not least of which is a great deal of public focus on what we teach in social studies and how we teach it. Ironically, this core subject area is garnering more attention than the other core subject areas, yet it is the most neglected by educators and state educational leaders. These Guidelines were created to redress that neglect and to help school administrators understand the best practices for teaching social studies with the hope that they will implement these practices where and when they can.

Social studies has been so marginalized in our schools that the authors of this document strongly recommend that all districts in the state conduct an audit of their social studies programs and re-evaluate them based on these Guidelines. (See Part III: Next Steps for more information.) Following here are the eight key principles that together produce a rigorous and effective social studies K–12 curriculum.

⁵ Representatives from each organization, along with educators who had a special interest in social studies, met over the course of several work sessions in the summer of 2020 to create the framework for these Guidelines and discuss each of the eight points. All participating partners reviewed this document, or a draft version, before signing their names to it.

⁶ By some estimates, American schools are spending 1,000 times as much on science education as they are on social studies. Or put another way, American schools spend, on average, \$55 per student per year on science and just 5 cents per student per year on social studies.

THE EIGHT KEY PRINCIPLES IN A STRONG SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

1 . SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAMS ARE BASED ON HIGH-QUALITY, INTEGRATED CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS STANDARDS.

Summary: New Hampshire school districts must look to social studies standards produced by other states or by national organizations to renew their social studies programs, ones that balance content and skills while offering the chronological scaffolding necessary for student learning.

This section and the one that follows comprise a disproportionate share of these Guidelines, which is fitting considering their importance to social studies education. The two topics are closely related, although for the sake of clarity, we have attempted to separate them into two distinct discussions. This section relates to content and skills academic standards, known in this state as social studies frameworks, which were last updated in 2006.

It is not the purpose of this document to offer a full review of the 2006 frameworks. Suffice it to say that for years educators have complained about these frameworks—the lack of specificity, the unwieldy organization, the erratic coverage of topics, the over-reliance on themes, the confusion over the proper role of the examples. The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a conservative educational think tank, agrees, giving the New Hampshire frameworks failing grades in three separate critiques of state social studies standards.⁷ Some may object to the Fordham Institute’s ideological positions, but their 5-page review of New Hampshire’s U.S. history and civics standards is illuminating. The Fordham Institute’s reports call the New Hampshire frameworks “vague,” “incomplete,” and even “baffling.” Among the problems cited with New Hampshire’s frameworks are the lack of guidance on course sequencing, the absence of historical coherence or a chronological outline to scaffold learning, and the failure to provide

⁷ The Fordham Institute has issued three state-by-state critiques of social studies standards. The first two reports (“Effective State Standard for U.S. History: A 2003 Report Card,” by Sheldon M. Stern, et. al., September 2003, and “The State of State U.S. History Standards 2011,” by Jeremy A. Stern and Sheldon M. Stern, February 2011) looked only at U.S. history standards. The third, “The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021,” by Jeremy A. Stern, et. al., June 2021, looked at both U.S. history and civics. The findings may be influenced by the continuity of the authors across all three reports, but the 2021 publication includes statements from leading academics and educators in the field testifying to the quality of the effort and the importance of high-quality state standards in teaching social studies.

any substantive direction regarding what material New Hampshire students should actually be learning.

The general lack of guidance from the state over the past several decades has left districts to design their own social studies programs, but the result in most schools has been a hodgepodge of topics compiled with no rhyme or reason, particularly in K–8 education. In the lower grades, social studies, if taught at all, usually revolve around random units of study handed down from now-retired educators or projects designed by individual teachers with special interests, none of which is presented chronologically or with any intellectual scaffolding.

In most schools, there is little vertical alignment, and when districts look carefully at their social studies programs, they will almost certainly find that some topics are inexplicably taught repeatedly in a student’s academic career (without cross-grade coordination) while others are not taught at all. The Fordham Institute cites these problems as further evidence of the poor quality of New Hampshire’s frameworks, stating, “U.S. History scope and sequence are simply nonexistent. There is no suggestion of what content is to be taught when. And the only hints of content are the examples attached to the expectations, which jump randomly across time. Nothing is offered that might help teachers structure a course, and there is nothing to suggest students across the state will share exposure to essential content.” The issue of vertical integration is covered more thoroughly in the next section, but the need to define content standards that address these concerns and assign specific content to specific grade levels in a coherent fashion should be a high priority for any district hoping to revise its social studies program.

Well-balanced and clearly defined content and skills standards are indispensable for districts to move forward. True historical, economic, civic, and geographic literacy—that is, a deep understanding of society (past and present) that will provide useful context for tackling today’s problems—must be based on a foundation of content knowledge that students demonstrate through the application of social studies skills. High-quality social studies programs are based on the principle of integrating skills with content knowledge. One without the other is not sufficient.

Furthermore, it is important that social studies programs are developed to promote student learning of ideas balanced with demonstrable facts. Content standards should support the development of these ideas and not devolve into checklists of people, places, or events.

One option for high-quality state social studies standards is to bring educators together to write them ourselves, independent from the NH DOE. The New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies and the New Hampshire Historical Society are exploring this option, but we do not underestimate the scope of this task. School administrators will be notified if our organizations decide to move forward with this effort.

Resources: Where, then, can districts look for these content and skills standards? Devising such standards is a big job, one in which many states have already invested. With few other options, New Hampshire educators can look to the work done by these other states or by national organizations to provide the guidance they need. Administrators, though, will need to determine which of these alternative standards are best suited—or could be best modified—for their own districts.

As detailed below, Massachusetts and New York both produced consistently good social studies standards across the board, and if educators are looking for standards to emulate, either state would be a good starting point in almost every standards component.

U.S. HISTORY AND CIVICS

Massachusetts: The recently adopted “[Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks](#)” (2018) are built around a unifying theme that spans the entire K–12 experience: America’s founding principles and Americans’ ongoing attempts to live up to those principles. Each grade level in K–8 receives its own summary, which lays out clearly the topics to be covered and the aims for each year of student learning, while integrating all social studies subjects (rather than breaking them out in subject strands as New Hampshire’s 2006 frameworks do). U.S. history is covered throughout the younger grades, with a particularly strong focus in Grade 5, and then again in high school. In civics, the standards utilize the 8th grade year as a capstone to the introductory civics instruction students have received during their elementary and middle school years. This capstone year reinforces critical knowledge and ideas so that high school students are well prepared to study civics and government and its relationship to U.S. history in more depth and greater complexity. Social studies skills are defined for the entire K–12 span with age-appropriate progressions in difficulty.

New York: The “[New York K–12 Social Studies Framework](#)” (2014) lays out broad goals that students pursue throughout their K–12 education. The program is divided among all 12 grades, with specific topics assigned to each grade level. The K–12 sequence holds together

chronologically and provides students with two surveys of U.S. history, one in grades K–8 and another at the high school level. Within a grade level, the frameworks define conceptual understandings and then provide content specifications. The frameworks also include a separate, detailed chart of the progression of social studies skills developed K–12. The K–8 civics curriculum is ambitious: civics is introduced as a discrete topic in very early grades, civic dispositions and skills are emphasized throughout elementary and middle school years, and civics is explicitly integrated with state and national history. The structure of the federal government is covered three times *before* students reach high school, with deepening complexity at each pass. The standards also call for civics to be taught in both 11th and 12th grades, ensuring that students are well-grounded in civics and government by the time they graduate and just as students are on the cusp of becoming voters themselves.

Alabama: The “[Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies](#)” (2010) may seem a surprising choice when New Hampshire schools routinely outperform Alabama schools in national rankings, but these standards make some excellent organizational choices. For example, the Alabama standards present goals for grade spans and then more specific aspirations for each grade level in clearly written summaries that lay out learning intentions. Within each grade, the standards define key concepts, subtopics, and teaching examples, all of which work together to provide a cohesive narrative arc. They call for two full sequences of U.S. history, with two years devoted to it at the elementary level and a two-year survey at the high school level. But they also integrate state history with U.S. history throughout all grade levels, helping students tie national trends and events to more familiar circumstances closer to home. (New Hampshire’s General Education Rules call for this practice as well, but it is rarely followed in New Hampshire schools.) Likewise, the civics standards explore the connections between theory and practice, and between ideas and events, linking them with real-life case studies from the past and the present.

The [U.S. History National Content Standards](#) were published in 1994 and immediately sparked controversy, becoming an early victim of the culture wars. Produced by the UCLA Public History Initiative and written by the well-regarded academic historian Gary Nash, they focus primarily on content for grades 5–12. There is material for the younger grades, but it is less detailed. The name is also a bit of a misnomer: these standards offer guidance on both content and skills, and they cover world history as well as national history. Each subject is organized by era and then divided into multiple standards and supporting competencies.

The [Advanced Placement](#) program offers standards for U.S., European, and world history, although they would need to be modified for the general student population. Although the amount and complexity of content covered in these courses is extremely ambitious, even for advanced students, they do cover a phenomenal amount of content and align well with historical thinking skills that are essential for all students (analyzing sources, causation, comparison, contextualization, and continuity and change over time). The course structure and the learning targets are highly structured and geared toward the appropriate AP test. The College Board closely guards instructional materials. Even the online guides are incomplete, but they provide valuable information about comprehensive coverage of these subjects.

The [Educating for American Democracy Roadmap](#) was released in 2020 in conjunction with a national multi-pronged effort to provide nonpartisan support for better and more civics education in U.S. schools. The Roadmap is designed to work in conjunction with existing state standards and/or help guide states that are creating new state standards. There is a [guide](#) specifically on the relationship between the Roadmap and state standards. The Roadmap presents seven content themes supported by key concepts that are focused on civics with some U.S. history, although economics and geography can be worked into them as well. The Roadmap also presents five design challenges intended to provide guidance for inquiry-based instruction that align with the seven content themes. Each design challenge presents a series of queries or dilemmas that relate to modern civic life. It is vertically spiraled across four grade bands, with key concepts and driving questions.

The Center for Civics Education (CCE) created the [National Standards for Civics Education](#) in 1994, and they have been sanctioned and distributed throughout the world by the U.S. State Department in an effort to educate people, here and abroad, in the principles of American democracy. Broken out by grade span, these standards are presented in the form of inquiries, with a table providing an overview of content to be covered in each grade span. The CCE expands on these standards and suggested teaching practices in an accompanying book.

NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORY

New Hampshire history was incorporated into the 2006 frameworks in a haphazard fashion that ultimately diminished the importance and potential of the state's past in developing historical literacy in our students. New Hampshire's indigenous heritage is thousands of years old, and its European heritage places it among America's earliest English colonies. The state's history mirrors American history and provides many teaching opportunities to explore national topics

at a local or state level, which foster student connections to their past and makes their history more relevant to their lives when they can see the effects of that history all around them.

The New Hampshire Historical Society has written state social studies standards for grades 3–5, in conjunction with five key ideas (Appendices B and C). These standards could be expanded to encompass other grades as well and be used as a launching point to create complementary U.S. history standards.

ECONOMICS

Minnesota: Currently in the final stages of revision, the [Minnesota Social Studies Standards](#) (3rd draft) incorporate economics at every grade level, and at each level both a standard and benchmark are represented, clearly outlining what should be known and how it can be shown. Although the standards are careful not to dictate how this subject should be taught, they do provide very specific guidance as to what should be taught.

Georgia: The [Social Studies Georgia Standards of Excellence](#) adopt a more general approach organized around five economics areas: “fundamental concepts, microeconomics, macroeconomics, international economics, and personal finance.” Each area includes 3–6 standards, followed by benchmarks. Unfortunately, no grade spans are attached to the standards, and Georgia states that, “These sections and the standards and elements therein may be taught in any order or sequence.” However, the standards lend themselves to educational environments where social studies content is blended or taught through an interdisciplinary model, or where grade levels are not distinct.

The Council for Economic Education presents the [Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics](#) (2nd ed., 2010) with explicit K–12 standards in economics and financial literacy. The standards are expansive, numbering 20 in all, complete with competencies and grade span benchmarks.

GEOGRAPHY

The National Council for Geographic Education established the [National Geography Standards](#) in 1994 and revised them in 2012. The standards are divided into six “Essential Elements” and then further broken down into 18 “knowledge” standards with learning targets for three grade

bands that collectively cover K–12 education. The standards are not available online and must be purchased from the Council.

GEOGRAPHY AND WORLD HISTORY COMBINED

For most schools, there is a fair amount of overlap between geography and world history, so these subject area standards are often combined. There has been much debate about this subject area in recent decades, as educators attempt to balance world history with the more traditional survey of Western civilization, which ignores the history of huge portions of the globe. In this approach, Africa, Asia, and South America are viewed almost exclusively through the lens of European, and to a lesser extent American, colonization. In addition, many schools struggle with what time period to cover given the amount of material that comprises world history. For example, the Advanced Placement World History exam has come under a fair amount of criticism for only covering the period from 1450 to the present, a portion of time where Western (i.e., European) civilizations emerged as colonizing forces in the world.

Massachusetts: The “[Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks](#)” (2018) start students thinking and learning about world history in elementary school, although the focus is geared toward pre-Columbian North American history, rather than the world. Two years at the middle school level are devoted to ancient world history and geography, which lay the foundation for two courses on world history at the high school level, beginning in the year 500 and going up to the present. The standards separate topics into seven different historical themes to structure student learning. The overall quality of content, themes, and scope is excellent. Massachusetts teaches true world history rather than just Western civilization.

New York: The “[New York K–12 Social Studies Framework](#)” (2014) has minimal world history/geography in the early grades (K–4) with just a brief introduction to communities around the world. At this age level, most of the attention is focused on understanding social studies closer to home, with just a nod to the wider world. Social studies instruction in grades 5 and 6, however, is dedicated to modern world history and geography, with one year devoted to the Western Hemisphere and another year devoted to the Eastern Hemisphere. The high school program is much more ambitious, encompassing two full years of coursework and structured around nine sections delineated by regions and historical timelines. It covers the entire span of human history beginning with prehistory in 10,000 BCE. Like Massachusetts, New York’s standards call for true world history rather than just Western civilization.

Michigan: The state of Michigan has a very active geographic alliance that has worked to integrate geography into the “[Michigan K–12 Social Studies Standards](#)” (2018) at every grade level. Unlike other state standards, where geography often seems like an afterthought, Michigan’s standards include multiple, embedded geography targets throughout students’ educational careers. The entire 6th grade year is devoted to world geography with a follow-up year in 7th grade for both world history and geography. The standards also make a point of referring to U.S. history as “integrated” U.S. history, and substantial geography instruction is incorporated into these courses of study as well. At the high school level, one year is dedicated to world history and geography and another to U.S. history and geography, emphasizing once again its centrality to Michigan’s social studies goals.

INTEGRATION OF ALL SOCIAL STUDIES SUBJECT AREAS

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework incorporates all social studies subject areas into an integrated and innovative teaching method focused on the inquiry design model. Developed under the auspices of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in 2013, the C3 Framework is shaped around four “dimensions” that focus on the inquiry process. Students address a compelling question based on their findings in a series of supporting questions, which require the use and analysis of primary and secondary sources. The authors of the C3 Framework explicitly state that it was *designed to work in conjunction with state content standards* while also requiring students to look to the skills specific to each social studies discipline (history, civics, economics, and geography) to address compelling questions. The C3 Framework offers the potential for dynamic, meaningful instruction that highlights social studies’ relevance to our world today and cultivates problem-solving techniques that rely on evidence-based conclusions and clear communication of students’ findings.

New Hampshire educators have shown increasing interest in the C3 Framework in recent years but have had few opportunities to become familiar with it. The C3 and the inquiry design model it employs has great potential for student learning, but it requires a certain level of training before teachers can responsibly introduce it to their students. The NCSS published a book, [College, Career, and Civic Life, The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards](#) (NCSS Bulletin 113, 2013), to provide guidance in developing C3 instruction, and the [C3 Teachers website](#) offers a platform for educators to share IDMs and other teaching resources. In addition, the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies has recently launched a [state C3 Hub](#) to promote the use of IDMs in Granite State classrooms. As promising as the C3 is, it is intended to supplement traditional classroom learning, not replace it.

2. Social studies is taught in grades K–12 in a spiral curriculum that offers increasing depth and complexity as students progress.

Summary: New Hampshire schools should be teaching social studies from kindergarten through 12th grade and should vertically realign their social studies curricula in a spiraling, coherent program.

This one statement includes several key elements of high-quality social studies programs that need to be addressed.

New Hampshire students are starting social studies too late. With many schools not beginning serious social studies instruction until 8th grade, some students may not receive social studies at all in the years from kindergarten through 7th grade. Even when social studies is included in the curriculum at lower grades, it is receiving considerably less time than the other core subjects. It is often treated more like an elective or enrichment program than a crucial pillar of student learning.

Furthermore, many New Hampshire schools teach social studies in a non-spiraling curriculum. Students are only getting one opportunity to learn difficult and complex topics, and this one opportunity often comes when they are too young and developmentally unprepared to fully understand the material. The most egregious example is U.S. history. In general, for high schools in this state, the U.S. history survey begins with Reconstruction (i.e., after 1865) and does not include the colonial, revolutionary, or antebellum periods. Early grades are supposed to cover American history before 1865, but in practice they do so erratically, if at all. Many students begin their high school U.S. history course without knowing who won the Civil War. Even if districts were committing the time and resources to cover U.S. history in the early grades, it would be at a basic level given the developmental stage of the students. Students would never learn about the American Revolution or slavery at even a high school level. This single, incomplete pass in U.S. history, along with similar neglect shown to civics, economics, and geography, prevents students from developing their understanding of complex and important topics, many of which continue to affect society today.

A typical K–8 social studies education in New Hampshire schools covers an odd and disjointed collection of topics, often not presented in chronological order. This lack of historical cohesion is shocking for a subject that is naturally structured around a narrative arc. That arc should provide an intellectual scaffold, which is critical for student learning. Oddly enough, scaffolded

learning seems to be accepted in other subject areas but not the one that is most obviously structured around the chronological passage of time. Even the Next Generation Science standards present their content in grade spans that are called “storylines,” implying a scientific narrative. Yet social studies is taught with little regard to the idea of continuity and change over time or that history is a collection of interconnected stories that are deprived of meaning when explored out of chronological order or without proper contextualization.

Most New Hampshire schools have not vertically aligned their social studies programs in years, so what little social studies offered in grades K–8 is not the result of a deliberate course of study but rather a random assortment of topics, usually presented without any sort of chronological cohesion.

All of these problems are compounded by a general erosion of social studies time in elementary and middle schools. At best, elementary students spend 30–45 minutes per week on social studies *or* science, which in practical terms ends up being time spent heavily in favor of science. In some elementary and middle schools, social studies time has been eliminated altogether. Instead, ELA, math, and science teachers are asked to work social studies into their instruction where and when they can. In some schools social studies is becoming more of an elective, often accorded less dedicated time than art, music, world languages, or physical education, or is relegated to a co-curricular, with little if any foundational classroom instructional time. For schools that still have dedicated social studies time in grades K–8, this period tends to be viewed by teachers and administrators as a time when students can be pulled out of the classroom for special services, club meetings, or other non-social studies activities. This lack of time in K–8 instruction has an adverse effect on high school social studies, with high school teachers reporting that they have to spend more time on rudimentary social studies than in the past, which cuts into their own instructional time and ultimately curtails how much high school material they can cover in their classes. No other core subject is marginalized in this manner.

So how can this multitude of problems be addressed?

First, school districts should revise the scope and sequencing of their curriculum to begin substantive, but age-appropriate, social studies instruction as early as possible, preferably in kindergarten. Introducing social studies to children at such young ages not only helps establish the intellectual scaffolding that is necessary for more in-depth social studies in the older grades but has also been shown to improve ELA test scores. (More about the cross-curricular nature of social studies is covered in Part II, No. 3.)

Second, school districts should conduct social studies audits, including vertical realignments. Altering a course of study that may have been in place for decades (even if only on paper) will no doubt be disruptive, but it is necessary if school districts are to stop repeating the mistakes of the past.

The overarching idea is that children’s social studies education should start by exploring ideas surrounding families, schools, and communities in the younger grades, gradually expand to local, state, and U.S. history and civics (in that order) in the upper elementary and early middle school years, then cover economics, world geography and history before or during 8th grade, and finally circle back to all topics to reinforce and deepen learning in high school, particularly in U.S. history, civics, and economics. At least two complete passes of U.S. history are necessary, and civics requires multiple passes to reflect the complexity of living in a modern democracy.

Many school districts also need to re-evaluate their approach to state history, which the state of New Hampshire expects to be taught at every grade level. New Hampshire is fortunate in that its history mirrors national history and can therefore reinforce U.S. history instruction. In fact, a comprehensive and multi-year course of study in New Hampshire history in the elementary years (grades 3–6) could provide students’ first pass at U.S. history and civics.

Resources: The various state and national standards listed above in Part II, No. 1, provide excellent examples of spiraling social studies standards. They all outline a course of study that begins in kindergarten and deepens in complexity as students progress through Grade 12. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, they all lay out social studies programs that provide—at a minimum—two complete passes of U.S. history and civics instruction that is reinforced multiple times during the course of students’ academic careers.

In the past, one obstacle to substantive social studies learning in the younger grades has been the lack of age-appropriate curricula. More options have recently become available for this age group, including one that was developed specifically for New Hampshire students:

[“Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids”](#) was created by the New Hampshire Historical Society and geared toward upper elementary students (grades 3–6). This free, online resource is a complete curriculum focusing on New Hampshire state history, along with civics, economics, and geography. It is organized around 18 units of study, each unit of

which can be used independently or in conjunction with other units. Two units are devoted specifically to civics and government, both state and national. The “Moose on the Loose” provides lesson plans, assessments, projects, student readings, online and printable activities, suggested field trips, virtual field trips, age-appropriate primary and secondary sources, instruction in social studies skills, primary source sets, IDMs, explainer videos, and much, much more. The entire curriculum is aligned to national standards for ELA, math, and science, with a heavy overlap in ELA skills. The “Moose on the Loose” is essentially an ELA curriculum that uses social studies to provide context.

The [*We the People*](#) curriculum, developed by the Center for Civics Education, focuses on national civics and government beginning with upper elementary students and extending through Grade 12, with textbooks, resources, and lesson plans available for purchase.

Many other organizations offer supplemental material that range from individual lesson plans to more comprehensive programs of study. They are discussed in the appropriate sections of Part II, below.

3. Inherently cross-curricular, social studies integrates with and enhances other disciplines.

Summary: Social studies has enormous potential, when integrated with other subjects, to improve learning across the board. Rather than looking at instructional time as a zero-sum game—i.e., any increase in one area necessitates a decrease in another—educators should recognize social studies’ ability to scaffold all learning through cross-cutting concepts.

Integrating social studies into the other subjects, with the input of trained social studies teachers, offers opportunities not only to educate in this important subject area but also to improve the quality of education in the other core subject areas. Social studies, or the study of people and societies, provides the context for all other subject areas, making them meaningful and relevant to our world today. Social studies allow students to see the import of each subject area reflected in our history, our government, our economy, and in our ability as a society to make decisions and solve problems. Social studies is the glue that holds all other disciplines together.

Literacy and Cultural Literacy. Classroom time spent on social studies in K–8 education continues to shrink, squeezed out by subjects that are tested and therefore demand accountability. Particularly in ELA, content-light and skills-heavy instruction has further marginalized social studies. It is not enough to read an occasional story about Rosa Parks or do a project about the Fourth of July—activities that are typically done in isolation and without context. Such disjointed coverage does not foster true understanding of social studies or reap the benefits that contextual knowledge can provide in supporting literacy or reading comprehension. It is critical that foundational learning in social studies begins in the elementary grades, not just to introduce the study of history, civics, economics, and geography, but also to support English language arts, which is the subject area where elementary students spend the majority of their time.

A growing body of research is starting to substantiate a solid connection between social studies education and literacy, particularly in the elementary grades.⁸ In fact, some scholars believe

⁸ Smith, Reid, et al., “The Role of Background Knowledge in Reading Comprehension: A Critical Review,” *Reading Psychology* 42.3 (2021): 214–40. Adam Tyner and Sarah Kabourek, *Social Studies Instruction and Reading Comprehension: Evidence from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study*, Thomas B. Fordham Institute, fordhaminstitute.org/national/resources/social-studies-instruction-and-reading-comprehension. This conclusion

that the marginalization of social studies education is directly linked to America’s stagnant ELA test scores, despite all the investment made in education in past decades. Educators are increasingly coming to understand that skills alone—particularly ELA skills—are insufficient for real and sustained learning. Students must have contextual knowledge in order to authentically practice those reading comprehension and literacy skills.

This connection is summarized by the Fordham Institute, which argues, “students read better when they have some basic understanding of the subject matter, and they may even acquire new vocabulary more quickly when they are in a better position to infer its meaning from the context. And of course, both fiction and nonfiction are stuffed with references and allusions to U.S. History and civics content—from Thomas Jefferson to the Civil Right movement—which may explain why recent research suggests that elementary students’ English language arts performance improves more quickly when they spend more time on social studies.”⁹

The development of cultural literacy—which is exactly what social studies does—is particularly important in improving reading comprehension. Social studies instruction, when well-taught, introduces students to many of the cultural references in art, music, literature, folk art, sports, and popular culture that adults take for granted. Greater familiarity with a topic, its context and meaning, leads to better long-term learning outcomes.

Inquiry-based instruction, a model that is being adopted by school districts all over the country to teach social studies, exemplifies how social studies supports literacy education. In an article published on the C3 website, the authors of the C3 Framework explain how teaching with the inquiry design model inevitably expands literacy skills: “We intuitively know that inquiry in social studies involves the use of sophisticated literacy skills; after all, when we ask and answer questions, we typically read and write and speak and listen. The national English Language Arts standards provide a foundation for inquiry in social studies through its emphasis on reading rich informational texts, writing evidence-based arguments, and speaking and listening in public venues. These foundational literacy skills support the pedagogical directions advocated in the

has even moved from the academic world to public discourse with books like journalist Natalie Wexler’s *The Knowledge Gap: The Hidden Cause of America’s Broken Education System—And How To Fix It* (2019).

⁹ “The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History in 2021,” June 2021.

*C3 Framework.*¹⁰ An exploration of the C3 Framework clearly shows that intersection between social studies inquiries and a broad swath of English language arts skills, including the ability to write persuasively; understand and evaluate sources; compose evidence-based arguments; and communicate effectively. Learning in social studies and English language arts effectively support and reinforce one another.

If the development of cultural literacy improves literacy in all children, the benefits are even more pronounced in disadvantaged student populations. Comprehensive social studies education can begin to redress student inequalities by creating intellectual frameworks for students who might not have learned them at home. Otherwise, those gaps between students from affluent backgrounds and disadvantaged backgrounds will only grow. As Natalie Wexler writes in her study of American educational practices, “Whatever the causes, it’s clear that children with certain risk factors begin school with skills that may be almost a year behind those of their peers. And the gap only widens over time. The more knowledge a child starts with, the more likely she is to acquire yet more knowledge. She’ll read more and understand and retain information better, because knowledge, like Velcro, sticks best to other related knowledge.”¹¹ In short, while literacy has long been recognized as foundational for academic success in all disciplines, cultural literacy plays an equally if not more important role in determining student outcomes.

Mathematics. The link between social studies and mathematics is less clear, but social studies provides opportunities for students to practice their math skills in real-life situations, particularly in the use of statistics and probability. But even more rudimentary math concepts, like using charts and graphs, are routinely used in the study of history and economics, providing another avenue through which contextual knowledge can provide meaning, particularly for visual learners.

Perhaps more important to our world today is developing students’ capacity to see how mathematical concepts can affect real-world situations when, for example, public opinion is shaped by Facebook algorithms and decision-making by businesses and governments is data

¹⁰ S. G. Grant, John Lee, and Kathy Swan, “The Inquiry Design Model,” C3 Teachers, September 2015, c3teachers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IDM_Assumptions_C3-Brief.pdf.

¹¹ Wexler, *The Knowledge Gap*, p. 35.

driven. Students must know not only how to make calculations but also understand how calculations can be used or even manipulated.

Science. The intersection of science and social studies offers even more opportunities to show how intellectual concepts can have real-life impacts. The expansion of scientific knowledge and the development of technological innovations have created the world in which we live today. Students will have a greater understanding of scientific principles if they can see how those principles were discovered, used, and developed.

For example, the Next Generation Science standards specifically cite cross-cutting concepts that intersect with social studies. Students may learn about energy, for example, its production, use, and storage, as well as its ability to be transmitted to power machinery, etc. But how much more meaningful will learning about energy be when students can see how water transformed into energy was used to power the Industrial Revolution, a technological innovation with profound societal and economic impacts that likely occurred in students' very own communities when you live in a state like New Hampshire.

In addition, the role of science in public-policy making is indisputable, thus providing an intersection between science and civics—one that has major implications for American society. In an age when scientific findings are widely disputed, and often disparaged, students will need not only some scientific literacy but also an understanding of the broader impact of science. Likewise, they will need an understanding of the development of technology, which has brought about so much change in the world. Through social studies, students will learn about the effects of science and technology and our collective responsibility to use them wisely.

Resources: Few educational resources have been developed that fully recognize the importance of the interdisciplinary nature of social studies, but the ones listed below are a start.

At the elementary level, once again the "[Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids](#)" by the New Hampshire Historical Society integrates state social studies with English language arts, with some connections made to national math and science standards. Educators can consult charts that cross-reference "Moose" lesson plans with these different standards and pursue curriculum paths that intersect with these subjects.

Next Generation Science standards include cross-cutting concepts that could be matched to complementary social studies standards.

Common Core Standards offer history/social studies standards for grades 6–12 that support ELA learning expectations. They are entirely skills based and do not provide any guidance regarding content. The history/social studies standards for grades K–5 are integrated into the ELA standards. The conjunction of ELA and social studies standards is significant, and it requires little imagination to see how easily ELA standards could be completed with a social studies curriculum to provide contextual material, as the “Moose on the Loose” does.

[Read to Lead](#) is a free, online program that uses civics as the content to teach reading and literacy skills through games. It is geared for students ages 5–9.

4. Social studies educators are trained professionals prepared to facilitate the learning of complex topics.

Summary: Integrating social studies with other subjects does not obviate the need for well-trained social studies teachers. In fact, just the opposite is true. Administrators should recognize that social studies—both its content and its skills—are unique to this discipline and that those who teach this subject should be acknowledged for their expertise, which means including them on cross-curricular teams and supporting their professional development.

Now more than ever, with the teaching of social studies drawing public attention and the political divisiveness of our culture making education fraught with tension, such a complex and potentially controversial subject needs to be overseen by educators who have been trained specifically to navigate these waters. Unfortunately, that seems to be the opposite of what is actually happening in New Hampshire classrooms. In grades 5–12, social studies is increasingly being taught by educators with no special background or training in this field. At the middle school level in particular, some districts in the state are dropping social studies teachers from their core subject teams and asking ELA, math, and science teachers to work in social studies where they can, although these teachers in other core subject areas have neither the content knowledge nor the skills training to teach social studies.

In addition, social studies teachers are not given the same opportunities for professional growth as are teachers in other core subject areas, particularly in K–8 education. Administrators should support and encourage educators to attend conferences and workshops, collaborate with fellow social studies teachers, and pursue advanced degrees in appropriate content areas, preferably history, political science, or economics, rather than education.

Social studies professional development is not only necessary for secondary educators. In fact, it may be even more critical for elementary educators, many of whom report being discouraged from participating in social studies workshops by administrators who limit their professional development to ELA, math, and science.

By tradition, New Hampshire schools teach local and state history in the elementary grades, even though that tradition has been undermined in recent decades for all the reasons listed in these Guidelines. The decline of social studies in the elementary grades is due in part to a lack of training for elementary teachers. Many elementary educators report that they have not studied state history since they were in 4th grade themselves, and they do not remember

enough to confidently guide their students. A small subset has sought social studies training on their own and has enriched their classroom instruction with it, but there is nothing to encourage other elementary teachers—such as those who do not think of themselves as “social studies people”—to develop their teaching in this area. This lack of professional training would not be tolerated in other core subject areas.

Educators are also not being exposed to new pedagogical methods. Inquiry-based instruction in particular has enormous potential for student learning, but it requires the oversight of well-trained educators if it is to be taught properly. In many states, the DOE would take the lead in providing opportunities for such training, but that has not happened in New Hampshire.

Finally, the teacher preparation programs in New Hampshire have scaled back their social studies methods courses, even for teachers seeking certification in secondary education. For those working toward degrees in elementary education, social studies methods courses have practically disappeared, as elementary education programs focus overwhelmingly on ELA, with less time even for math and science. Nor do elementary education students receive any instruction in the content of state social studies.

There is also ongoing tension between the NH Board of Education (BOE), the Professional Standards Board, and school administrators regarding the certification of social studies teachers. The BOE wants tighter limits on who is considered qualified to teach social studies while school administrators generally want a looser construction of certification requirements so that they have more flexibility in staffing. The Professional Standards Board should re-examine credentialing requirements to require better social studies content and skills training for all K–12 educators.

Resources: There are several options for professional development in social studies education, including opportunities presented by national organizations like the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Archives and Records Administration, and C3Teachers.org (for training in the C3 Framework). The following professional development opportunities are a sampling of those offered by New Hampshire organizations:

The [New Hampshire Historical Society](#) currently offers summer workshops on state social studies and provides teachers with stipends for their participation, along with lesson plans and activities ready for immediate use in the classroom. This training includes tutorials on the

[“Moose on the Loose”](#) website resource. The Society also periodically offers workshops in the C3 Framework. In addition, a variety of lectures, programs, and resources are presented by the New Hampshire Historical Society for adult learning, including a state history magazine and digital offerings like the virtual Timeline of New Hampshire History and online exhibitions.

The [New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies](#) holds an annual conference to provide professional development to social studies teachers. The organization also occasionally hosts speakers at other times of the year and posts a wide variety of teaching resources on its website.

[New Hampshire Civics](#) provides several professional development opportunities for educators throughout the year on a wide variety of civics-related topics. The organization also sponsors lectures and other programs, such as Kid Governor, to develop civic understanding. In addition, the organization’s website includes a curated list of teacher resources to provide educators with guidance in best practices for civics education.

The [New Hampshire Bar Association](#), through its Law-Related Education office, offers teacher training in conjunction with programs like *We the People* and *Project Citizen*. Their programs focus on the judicial system, the law, and civic engagement.

Many museums and cultural organizations in New Hampshire offer professional development programs for educators on a variety of topics. See, for example, the Currier Museum of Art, the Manchester Millyard Museum, the American Independence Museum, Strawberry Banke Museum, the Historical Society of Cheshire County, and the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire.

Educators seeking more background in state history and government can also look to universities, colleges, and community colleges, many of which offer courses in various aspects of the history of New England and New Hampshire, along with a few courses on how state and local governments work.

The [Humanities To Go](#) program, offered through New Hampshire Humanities, provides a full-range of lectures and presentations that explore New Hampshire, U.S., and world history, government, arts, and culture. New Hampshire Humanities periodically sponsors professional development for educators as well.

5. Social studies employs dynamic instructional practices that teach students to form their own conclusions.

Summary: As social studies touches on almost every aspect of our lives, opportunities abound for educators to incorporate vibrant teaching techniques that challenge and engage students while helping them see the relevance of their academic pursuits to the world around them.

Project-Based Learning. With an endless supply of topics, queries, and issues, social studies offers inexhaustible possibilities for instructional innovation. Educators are already well-versed in project-based learning, which is perfectly suited to both social studies and science. Potential projects abound, lending themselves naturally to active, student-centered learning while exploring real-life topics, past and present. As the organization PBLWorks explains, “students [will] gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.”¹² When overseen by well-trained teachers, project-based learning provides unparalleled opportunities for students to integrate content and skills knowledge while exploring topics and issues that are relevant to the world today.

Project-based learning can take many forms. Given the fact that social studies focuses on the world, place-based projects are particularly well-suited for student learning. Few learning experiences are more powerful than being able to connect national or global events and ideas to the world immediately around us. All four subject areas of social studies—history, civics, economics, and geography—are tangible in our own backyards. We can see their effects in almost every aspect of our lives, emphasizing for students the relevance of their academic studies.

Inquiry-based Instruction. Among the most promising forms of project-based learning is the Inquiry Design Model (IDM). Structured around compelling and supporting questions, which are intended to be both relevant and provocative, inquiries draw on multiple subject areas across all disciplines to address complex issues. When facilitated by well-trained teachers, inquiry also has enormous potential to develop content and skills knowledge throughout a student’s academic career, encouraging developmentally appropriate progress at every grade level.

¹² “What Is PBL?,” PBLWorks, www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl.

At its core social studies seeks to understand human behavior in the past and present, leading to tertiary questions in the various disciplines. The social studies are interdisciplinary because issues are not singularly social, psychological, political, economic, historic, or geographic. The questions that students and their teachers examine do not lend themselves to simplistic conclusions, much as the questions that challenge society today are not resolved easily.

Interestingly, the format IDMs follow is very similar to those employed by business schools to foster problem-solving skills. Inquiry-based instruction is student-centered, as students become actively engaged in their learning instead of passive observers. For more about the C3 Framework, which guides inquiry-based instruction, see Part II, No. 1, above.

Co-curriculars. Social studies is also well-suited for co-curricular activities. Numerous such opportunities are available for New Hampshire students in a broad range of subject areas and topics related to history, civics, government, and a host of social and policy issues related to our communities, our state, the country, and the world. Co-curriculars allow students to hone their public speaking skills, try out professions like the law or politics, and expand their understanding of our complex and multi-faceted society.

There are some pitfalls to co-curriculars, however. Many school districts do not financially support them, which either makes it impossible for students to participate or prevents students from disadvantaged backgrounds from becoming involved. Currently, New Hampshire schools are far more likely to provide support for STEM-based co-curriculars than they are co-curriculars related to social studies.

Some of the schools that participate in social studies co-curriculars view them not as enhancements to classroom instruction but substitutes, which was not the intent of those who organized co-curricular programs. These programs tend to focus on a limited, specific area of social studies, providing an in-depth look at one aspect of social studies education. They do not offer students a fundamental grounding in history, civics, economics, or government—that is not their job, and on the whole, they expect students to receive that fundamental grounding during regular instructional time.

Student Engagement and Student Action. Educators should be conscious of the difference between student engagement—the idea that students are interested, active learners in their own education—and student action, whereby students attempt to influence their classrooms, schools, and communities as well as real-life politics, government, or policy.

Student engagement is a critical component of every student’s education, and social studies, more than any other core subject, potentially offers the greatest opportunities for student engagement through a variety of strategies. These include making learning relevant to students’ lives, connecting classroom instruction to students’ interests, emphasizing group work and the sharing of student work, promoting not just student-centered instruction but also student-directed instruction, building instruction around the process of discovery and inquiry, encouraging students to learn how to ask good questions, sparking students’ curiosity, and using mixed media to enrich instruction.¹³ Social studies subjects and topics align perfectly with these instructional strategies. Indeed, the C3 Framework and the inquiry design model specifically incorporate some of these strategies. Student engagement offers the best chance for long-term student learning.

Student action is a powerful instructional tool that requires the direction of trained social studies teachers. The term “action” is sometimes used interchangeably with “activism,” but in truth student action can take any form of authentic assessment with an authentic audience, such as a presentation to or discussion with the public, experts, or elected representatives. It should function as a capstone to classroom instruction, not a substitute for it. The idea of encouraging students to bring about real-life change is an attractive one, but it has also drawn criticism from some sections of the public who worry that teachers are politicizing students and exercising undue influence on them.¹⁴ Even though this criticism is generally without foundation, some educators place too much emphasis on taking action when the focus should be on taking *informed* action. Student action must be grounded in foundational knowledge so that students can apply what they have learned in a structured and deliberative process, or it ends up simply adding to the noise that is already overwhelming American politics and society.

Furthermore, even models that call for student action, such as the C3 Framework, caution educators not to dedicate a disproportionate amount of time to this activity that might be better spent on classroom learning. In fact, the fourth dimension of the C3 Framework is called “Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action,” but the authors emphasize the first

¹³ Jackson Best, “20 Student Engagement Strategies for a Captivating Classroom,” 3P Learning, June 18, 2020, www.3plearning.com/blog/20-student-engagement-strategies-captivating-classroom/.

¹⁴ Stanley Kurtz, “Action Civics’ Replaces Citizenship with Partisanship,” *The American Mind: A Publication of the Claremont Institute*, January 26, 2021, americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/.

part of this charge over the second part, writing, “It is important to note that taking informed action intentionally comes at the end of Dimension 4, as student action should be grounded in and informed by the inquiries initiated and sustained within and among the disciplines. In that way, action is then a purposeful, informed, and reflective experience.”¹⁵

Resources: The resources listed below are just a representative sampling of the opportunities to use innovative instructional methods. This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it intended to discourage educators from seeking out other organizations and opportunities for their students as their circumstances allow.

[C3 Teachers](#) is a website that provides guidance for educators in the inquiry-design model. It includes sample inquiries that can be used in classrooms with students of all ages. This community of educators shares instructional advice, teaching resources (including hundreds of IDMs generated from all over the country), and research findings on the value of inquiry-based instruction. A companion resource, accessed through this same website, is the [New Hampshire C3 Hub](#), which features IDMs created under the auspices of the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies.

Educators interested in learning in more detail about the C3 Framework and its inquiry-design model of instruction should review [College, Career, and Civic Life, The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards](#) (National Council for the Social Studies, NCSS Bulletin 113, 2013), which is available in print and online.

The [Remedial Herstory Project](#) offers a wealth of instructional material, including lessons plans and IDMs. The library of educational resources cover a range of topics, pitched at multiple grade levels, which all focus on women’s history.

Sponsored by the Buck Institute for Education, [PBLWorks](#) is a national organization dedicated to supporting project-based learning by providing teacher training and student resources, including high-quality sample projects and a tool that helps design projects (the tool must be purchased, but many other resources are available on the site for free). The site also contains research data about the efficacy of project-based learning.

¹⁵ *College, Career, and Civic Life, The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (National Council for the Social Studies, NCSS Bulletin 113, 2013), p. 62. Professor John Lee made this comment at a C3 workshop held at the New Hampshire Historical Society in August 2018.

[We the People: Project Citizen](#) is a joint effort of the New Hampshire Bar Association and New Hampshire Civics, although the project extends to multiple states and countries working with other partners. Students work together in a class project to tackle a current issue and suggest policy-oriented solutions; then students present these policies in a mock legislative hearing.

Facilitated by Plymouth State University, [National History Day in New Hampshire](#) is affiliated with the national organization that encourages middle school and high school students to create history projects in one of five forms: website, research paper, performance, exhibition, or documentary film. Students write a process paper and create an annotated bibliography for all projects. The projects themselves are substantial achievements for students, culminating in school, regional, state, and national competitions.

Designed by New Hampshire Civics, the [Kid Governor](#) program offers students an opportunity to learn about state civics and government by participating in a statewide election of a kid governor. Students explore the logistics of state government and delve into social issues that form the basis of each candidate's platform. Lesson plans and activities provide larger context for the election process.

[New Hampshire Civics](#) also offers a free, online curriculum library of lesson plans on a wide variety of topics related to local, state, and national government, law, politics, and citizenship. Lesson plans are available for all grade levels and even include curricular material for students working at home.

The leading national organization in youth voice, [Mikva Challenge](#) offers opportunities for students to engage in participatory democracy, preparing them to be both informed, active citizens and, potentially, public leaders.

The nationally renowned podcast [Civics 101](#) is produced right here in New Hampshire at New Hampshire Public Radio. It explores all the twists and turns of American democracy in a fun and engaging manner, with accompanying educational resources like lesson plans and graphic organizers. The podcasts are relatively short and very accessible, especially for middle and high school for students.

[New Hampshire Youth and Government](#) is a longstanding, national program run by the YMCA. Students have an opportunity to create a mock legislature where they can discuss and debate

legislation, write bills and follow them through the legislative process, and practice the skills that are essential to the functioning of representative democracy.

The New Hampshire Bar Association offers educators a number of resources to support [Mock Trials](#), culminating in a statewide competition. Differentiated resources are offered for each grade level.

The [New Hampshire Debate League](#) is an organization run by private and public school teachers in the state and culminates in a statewide competition.

The New Hampshire Historical Society’s free, online resource “[Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids](#)” will be adding multiple projects and IDMs in the final phase of the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2022. Although geared primarily toward upper elementary students, all materials can be adapted for older students seeking to explore state social studies.

6. Social studies has common themes that produce narrative arcs for K–12 education.

Summary: The use of themes to teach social studies provides intellectual cohesion and a pedagogical framework by which students can approach and master complex material over the course of their educational careers. Themes are a powerful teaching tool, as long as they are employed with respect for intellectual scaffolding, such as chronology.

Educators have long used themes as instructional scaffolding, and districts often use themes to guide curriculum alignment and development. Additionally, themes provide a framework for deliberation and planning at the district and school level about what should occur in a social studies program in grades K–12. Although a theme can be any idea developed over the course of instruction, most themes are fairly general and focus on broad topics, like culture, government, the economy, science and technology, etc. Themes allow students to advance their learning by recognizing relationships and connections across time periods, including their own. Themes, therefore, help connect students' lives today with people's lives long ago.

The New Hampshire Social Studies Frameworks (2006) have been criticized for an over-reliance on themes, which might at first glance seem to contradict the recommendation in these Guidelines to adopt themes in the classroom and at the district level. The flaw in the 2006 frameworks did not come from using themes but rather from the elevation of themes above chronological cohesion. The result were standards that covered topics and ideas willy-nilly, with no respect for contextualization or cause and effect. When themes are developed in conjunction with a narrative arc, they can be highly effective in conveying ideas and linking those ideas to the world around us.

Resources: Many state standards are built around themes developed specifically for the students in that state, and all three state standards mentioned in the first section (Alabama, Massachusetts, and New York) developed their state standards around themes, defined at each grade level or grade span and developed throughout K–12 course work in a vertically aligned, spiraled curriculum. There are also national theme frameworks for social studies.

Developed in the 1990s, the [Ten Themes of Social Studies](#) was created by the National Council for the Social Studies, offering a comprehensive list of themes that span the scope of social studies in grades K–12. (They are formally named the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies but commonly referred to as the Ten Themes.) These themes have been widely used in

schools throughout the country, as they offered direction for social studies education at a time when there were few other options. The themes are closely related to one another, and many provide opportunities for cross-content curriculum and instruction, as well as the possibility of integration with other content areas at some or all grade spans. New Hampshire's 2006 frameworks were heavily dependent on these themes; they remain a pedagogically valid organizing structure for social studies as long as they are used with respect for chronology.

The [Educating for American Democracy Roadmap](#) was released in 2020 in conjunction with a national multi-pronged effort to provide nonpartisan support for better and more social studies education in U.S. schools. The Roadmap presents seven content themes supported by key concepts that are focused on civics and some U.S. history, although economics and geography can be worked into them as well. The Roadmap also presents five design challenges intended to provide guidance for inquiry-based instruction that align with the seven content themes. Each design challenge presents a series of queries or dilemmas that relate to modern civic life. It is vertically spiraled across four grade bands.

7. Social studies incorporates multiple perspectives while simultaneously promoting our shared heritage.

Summary: Authentic social studies instruction requires the consideration of multiple, diverse perspectives that mirror the variety of perspectives found in society. Students should develop their abilities to listen with understanding and learn from people who are different from themselves. Doing so is the only pathway to creating sustainable, equitable solutions for society’s challenges. However, the purpose of education in American society has always been to foster a sense of our collective culture, which is more important than ever before in these divisive times. These two considerations must be carefully balanced in a well-constructed social studies program.

The exploration of multiple perspectives is essential to building empathy—a primary goal of social studies education and a necessary component of living in a civil society. Empathy is the ability to recognize other people’s thoughts, feelings, and experiences from their perspectives. It requires students to understand the different contexts in which people live. The capacity to empathize with others helps us see ourselves as part of a greater, diverse, complex whole, and through empathy, we learn to care about making the world a better place for everyone, not just ourselves.

The need to explore, understand, and empathize with multiple perspectives has never been greater, as explained so eloquently by the National Council for the Social Studies in a report generated back in 2002: “Cultural diversity is a fact in every modern-day society, and few nations or empires in the past were void of such diversity. The challenge of all people is, wherever and whenever possible, to consider the strengths and advantages that this diversity offers to the society in general, and to their own growth as a human being in particular. This consideration is especially important in societies that value human rights, the principles of democracy and equity, and the notion that individuals should act to promote the public good.”¹⁶

Exploring and respecting multiple perspectives in the classroom also prepares students for a lifetime of participating in civil discourse. Engaging with civility and respect with viewpoints that stem from a different ideological context than their own helps students learn to disagree

¹⁶ *National Standards for Social Studies Teachers*, National Council for the Social Studies, 2002.

constructively. Teaching these skills early will build a foundation for lifelong civic engagement, as well as fostering the development of the type of interpersonal skills that will allow students to thrive once they enter the workforce.

Instructional practices that incorporate multiple perspectives also inherently develop students' skills in assessing, evaluating, and interpreting a wide variety of source material—another key component of high-quality social studies education. Students employ the close-looking and close-reading techniques that are essential for ELA skills, particularly textual analysis. However, efforts to examine multiple perspectives should extend beyond the written word as historically many voices did not share their experiences through journals, letters, newspapers, essays, books, and other kinds of literary materials. Looking beyond written language to other forms of expression not only encourages student learning in other subject areas (e.g., speaking and listening, visual arts, music) but also provides opportunities to incorporate neglected perspectives.

in addition, teaching students that historical events have multiple perspectives inherently helps infuse social studies with a sense of urgency and relevance. By examining multiple perspectives, students have a better chance of understanding that the events of the past were not inevitable. They could have unfolded differently for any number of reasons, which may be discussed and envisioned by people whose role in historical events left a record that may challenge, expand, contradict, or confirm more traditional historical narratives. In short, the consideration of multiple perspectives helps us realize that the decisions made in the past—or the decisions we make today—may have tremendous consequences on the world in which we live and on those who come after us.

At the same time, social studies programs should foster an appreciation for the ideas, traditions, and culture that unite all Americans. Given the factionalism that characterizes modern society, developing this sense of shared heritage is more important than ever. Encouraging a spirit of unity also builds empathy among students, as they begin to recognize kinship with other people and an understanding that they are part of a larger society, even though that society is a diverse one. Nevertheless, there are things that we all share with one another, from rights to traditions.

When public education was first introduced in the United States, its primary goal was to cultivate educated, patriotic citizens, and that goal should still be relevant today, even as we recognize that citizenship and patriotism are more complex than the country's framers

acknowledged. They did recognize, though, that democratic government was not innate—the people need to be prepared for the responsibilities that come with self-governance.

It is critically important in our world today to balance the two imperatives of diversity and unity, but it is an old idea. “E pluribus unum”—meaning “out of many, one”—is in essence the national motto, and it appeared on the Great Seal of the United States even before independence had been won.

Resources: Curricular material that incorporates a wide variety of viewpoints, backgrounds, and experiences is easily available today and will include diverse perspectives in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic class, political viewpoint, and ideological position. In addition to more traditional curricular materials, nearly every museum and cultural institution offers educational resources that bring new viewpoints to instruction, from lesson plans to online exhibitions and video presentations. There are many available resources that discuss patriotism and American national identity, although it is important to avoid anything that promotes an unblemished view of our history or heritage. For all of these sources, finding an intellectually honest balance is key.

FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE:

The [Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire](#) is in the process of making dozens of lesson plans focused on Black history available to educators through the organization’s website. Educational material includes both the Black experience in the Granite State and also Black history throughout the United States.

The free website resource “[Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids](#),” created by the New Hampshire Historical Society, offers a range of perspectives, incorporating primary source material documenting the history of many different groups in New Hampshire, including the Abenaki, Black people, women, children, working-class people, recent immigrants, and people who represent a wide range of ethnic, religious, cultural, political, and ideological viewpoints.

Although we have no specific resources to point to regarding New Hampshire’s indigenous population, it is still important to incorporate this perspective into social studies programs. The “Moose on the Loose” includes some Abenaki resources, and there are more resources scattered online. New Hampshire does not have a federally recognized Abenaki tribe, though.

Instead, there are separate Abenaki groups, each one acting independently. Some of these groups have compiled lists of resources that may be useful for New Hampshire schools, although they are not all easily accessible. A good place to start is the [Abenaki Trails Project](#) (the Nulhegan band of Coosuck Abenaki). This group can likely point educators toward appropriate resources, especially as they have already been working with schools in the Merrimack Valley.

FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD:

The enormous number of online resources offered by the [Library of Congress](#) includes hundreds of thousands of primary sources, some of which have been organized into primary source sets. There are also lesson plans, videos, and guidance on teaching close-looking and close-reading techniques.

The website for the [National Archives and Records Administration](#) (NARA), much like that of the Library of Congress, has hundreds of thousands of resources, teaching materials such as lesson plans, and guidance for educators seeking to incorporate primary source material into their instruction.

As the nation's network of museums, the [Smithsonian Institution](#) offers a broad range of perspectives on the American experience, presented through the Smithsonian Learning Lab, the Game Center, and the History Explorer.

The [Remedial Herstory Project](#) offers dozens of resources, including lesson plans and inquiry-design materials, for educators looking to incorporate more women's history. The organization also holds an annual conference here in New Hampshire to promote the teaching of women's perspectives.

The [National Underground Railroad Freedom Center](#) website offers activities, lesson plans, videos, and online exhibits on both slavery in the United States before 1865 and on inherent bias and enslavement throughout the world, even in our own times.

The website for the [U.S. Holocaust Museum](#) provides lesson plans, resources, and guidance for educators on how to teach the Holocaust and tackle other sensitive topics like racism, censorship, and propaganda.

SHARED CULTURE AND PATRIOTISM:

Professor Joel Westheimer published an [article](#) entitled “Should Social Studies be Patriotic?” in the magazine *Social Studies Education* (vol. 73, No. 7, 2009) that canvassed current debates about teaching patriotism, defined the difference between authoritarian patriotism and democratic patriotism, and discussed key elements in high-quality programs of patriotic education.

Once again, the “[Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks](#)” (2018) are an excellent place to start, as the frameworks’ unifying theme centers on America’s founding principles and Americans’ ongoing attempts to live up to those principles.

The [Educating for American Democracy](#) website contains educator resources for balanced, inquiry-based coursework focused on civics with some U.S. history.

In general, curricular material that bills itself as explicitly “patriotic” needs careful review. Instead, educators should look for instructional material that attempts to balance diversity and unity, as does all of the civic resources suggested in these Guidelines as well as the “Moose on the Loose” curriculum.

8. Social studies helps students become fully functioning adults in a modern, self-governing society.

Summary: The discipline of social studies is uniquely equipped to offer students ongoing, academically relevant opportunities to practice the skills that will allow them to navigate complex challenges, exercise self-control, interact with those around them in productive and responsible ways, and learn to overcome personal setbacks.

In the study of how humans interact with one another and their world, social studies offers opportunities to connect academic learning with social emotional competencies, such as those defined by the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL), the originators of the term “social emotional learning.”

All five competencies within the CASEL framework (social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and self-management) are supported and enhanced by social studies instruction. These competencies link directly to academic content in a social studies classroom, help build a sense of agency, and inspire civic participation. Furthermore, by studying social studies through multiple perspectives, students develop empathy for those around them, a key aspect of any functional society (see Part II, No. 7). The goal of SEL—“to create a more caring and just world”—aligns perfectly with high-quality social studies programs, especially civics. The CASEL framework’s argument for “Quality implementation of well-designed, evidence-based, classroom programs and practices” is exactly the type of social studies program being presented in these Guidelines, including SEL’s emphasis on addressing inequities in our schools and our society.¹⁷

Social studies not only teaches the importance of these elements and shows how they have impacted the world around us but also cultivates students’ interpersonal skills. Many instructional practices in social studies are based on students working collectively, either on a project or an initiative that requires them to consider alternative viewpoints, build consensus, forge compromises, and ultimately communicate with and influence others. These soft skills are the very ones that U.S. businesses often cite as being a critical need for successful employees and absolutely essential to American productivity.

¹⁷ “What Is the CASEL Framework?,” Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL), casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/.

Resources: There are several standards and competencies of social emotional learning that cross-cut with the social studies, including the following:

The **Center for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) interactive framework**, known as the [CASEL Wheel](#), is a quick and easy way to link social studies curriculum to SEL competencies. Social studies educators can click through and choose competencies that fit best with the content they are teaching. Explicit discussions of SEL competencies and awareness of their bearing on the social studies in the lesson planning process can enhance both academic and SEL goals.

Social emotional learning is also recognized and supported by the NH DOE, which has partnered with the [ChooSELove](#) program. This SEL program is aligned with the CASEL Framework.

PART III: NEXT STEPS: WHERE SHOULD SCHOOL DISTRICTS GO FROM HERE?

As previously noted, these Guidelines lay out ambitious reforms for the way we teach social studies in New Hampshire. As school districts evaluate their options and decide on the course of action best suited to the needs of their districts, the following steps may help them work through the process.

1. Evaluating the Current Program. Conduct a district-wide audit of your social studies program, taking a hard look at:

- existing vertical alignment and cross-grade coordination of social studies
- resources allocated to social studies education, particularly as compared to the other core subjects
- current commitment to social studies education in grades K–7/8
- balance between classroom instructional time and co-curriculars (i.e., are co-curriculars being used in place of classroom instructional time?)
- support for training and developing professional, dedicated social studies teachers

2. Planning for a Better Program. Pay particular attention to:

- implementing a spiral social studies curriculum, with at least 2 complete passes of U.S. history and multiple opportunities for civic learning
- increased commitment to social studies education for grades K–7/8
- support for social studies teachers, including training in inquiry-based instruction
- allocating resources more equitably between the core subject areas
- deciding which academic standards will shape the curriculum
- respecting the chronological arc of history
- constructing an intellectual scaffolding that will promote long-term learning

3. Locating Additional Support. Identify what additional resources or support the district will need to better support social studies.

Although both organizations' resources are limited, the New Hampshire Historical Society and the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies are committed to supporting high-quality social studies education in this state. Please contact one or both of these organizations if your district has specific needs regarding social studies reform.

New Hampshire Historical Society: education@nhhistory.org

New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies: nhcss.president@gmail.com

Appendix A

N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 306.461

Section Ed 306.461 — Social Studies Program, July 1, 2015

(a) Pursuant to Ed.306.26 and Ed. 306.27, the local school board shall require no later than July 1, 2015, conditioned on legislative approval, that a social studies education program be provided for each k-12 student in each school.

(b) The program shall prepare students both civically and historically literate, by including planned learning strategies and opportunities that:

(1) Provide students with teaching and instructional practices that:

- a. Support a foundation for citizenship by providing students with an understanding of the legacy of our republic and its enduring themes enriched by the study of the full human experience;
- b. Investigate social studies through the development of practices that are integrated with core ideas and crosscutting concepts;
- c. Build grade level appropriate social studies concepts from k-12;
- d. Focus on deeper understanding of social studies content as well as application of that content;
- e. Experience the integration of technologies into social studies;
- f. Prepare students for college or career, and citizenship; and
- g. Connect social studies to mathematics, language arts, science, and other content areas;

(2) Provide students with knowledge, vocabulary, and experience of the following social studies practices, integrated with crosscutting social studies concepts and core disciplinary principles:

- a. Differentiating past, present and future and change over time;
- b. Detecting cause and effect, distinguishing fact from opinion, recognizing biases;

- c. Evaluating and critiquing varied sources of information and the use of appropriate primary and secondary sources and technology to acquire information;
- d. Creating and testing generalizations and theses;
- e. Expressing clearly and concisely personal opinion supported by evidence;
- f. Calculating the material and ethical effects of decisions and decision making; and
- g. Solving individual and group problems;

(3) Provide students with knowledge and experience of the following crosscutting social studies concepts, integrated with social studies practices and core disciplinary principles:

- a. Conflict and cooperation;
- b. Civic ideals, practices, and engagement;
- c. People, places and environment;
- d. Material wants and needs;
- e. Cultural development, interaction, and change;
- f. Global transformation;
- g. Science, technology, and society;
- h. Individualism, equality, and authority;
- i. Patterns of social and political interaction; and
- j. Human expression and communication; and

(4) Provide students with appropriate learning progressions that provide knowledge and experience in the following core disciplinary areas, integrated with social studies practices and crosscutting social studies concepts:

- a. Civics and government in the following areas:
 - 1. Nature and purpose of government;

2. Structure and function of United States and New Hampshire government;

3. The world and the United States' place in it; and

4. Rights and responsibilities;

b. Economics and personal finance in the following areas:

1. Economics and the individual;

2. Basic economic concepts;

3. Cycles in the economy;

4. Financial institutions and the government;

5. International economics and trade; and

6. Managing personal and family finance;

c. Geography in the following areas:

1. World in spatial terms;

2. Places and regions;

3. Physical systems;

4. Human systems; and

5. Environment and society;

d. United States and New Hampshire history in the following areas:

1. Political foundations and development;

2. Contacts, exchanges and international relations;

3. World views and value systems and their intellectual and artistic expressions;

4. Economic systems and technology; and

5. Social and cultural; and

e. World history and contemporary issues in the following areas:

1. Political foundations and development;
2. Contacts, exchanges and international relations;
3. World views and value systems and their intellectual and artistic expressions;
4. Economic systems and technology; and
5. Social and cultural.

(c) Each district shall establish and provide a comprehensive, sequential k-12 social studies education curriculum designed to meet the minimum standards for college and career readiness that ensures for continued growth in all content areas consistent with RSA 193-C:3, III; RSA 186:13; and RSA 189:11.

(d) For social studies education programs in grades K-12, schools shall provide for the ongoing, authentic assessment of student learning outcomes through multiple formative and summative assessment instruments that are aligned with the state and district content and performance standards.

(e) Examples of such assessment shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Teacher observation of student performance;
- (2) Competency-based or performance based assessments;
- (3) Common assessments developed locally; and
- (4) Project evaluation rubrics used to evaluate social studies education proficiencies applied to integrated curriculum assignments, extended learning opportunities and out of school learning environments.

(f) For social studies education programs in grades 9-12, schools shall additionally provide courses comprising offerings in the following elective areas:

- (1) One half-credit of world history;
- (2) One half-credit of geography or global studies; and

(3) One half credit of one of the following:

- a. Sociology;
- b. Anthropology;
- c. Psychology; or
- d. Philosophy;

(g) Competencies in personal finance shall be a mandatory component of the required economics course.

(h) For all social studies programs, schools shall demonstrate how school and student assessment data are used to evaluate, develop, and improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 306.461



FIVE IDEAS EVERY NH KID SHOULD KNOW

1

Granite Staters cherish traditions but embrace change.

The idea that New Hampshire has always been as it is now is a myth. It wasn't until the 1940s and 1950s that Americans began to idealize New England as a land of church steeples and town commons whose people were resistant to new ideas and rejected change. Throughout its history New England has led the nation in embracing reform movements, new industries, and forward-thinking policies. Traditions are important, and they often convey cherished ideas or ways of doing things that we are right to honor, but Granite Staters have never been slow to adapt to the world around them or to push the world in a new direction when there is cause to do so.

2

New Hampshire is a land of immigrants.

The first immigrants arrived in New Hampshire at least 12,000 years ago. Each generation of immigrants that came after them has had to overcome the challenges of adapting to a new culture and face hostility and resistance from those who were here before them. Ultimately immigrants have contributed to New Hampshire's rich, multi-ethnic society. Each era of New Hampshire's history has seen clashes among those claiming New Hampshire for their own and those coming to New Hampshire seeking a better life, whether it was Scots-Irish, French-Canadians, or Latin Americans. All have challenged Granite Staters' traditional views of who belongs here and who can call New Hampshire home.

3

Granite Staters have a symbiotic relationship with the land.

The people of New Hampshire have valued the natural landscape and chosen to protect and preserve it. New Hampshire had early experience with the dangers of overusing natural resources, as the colony was heavily dependent on fish, fur, and timber in its early decades. As the years passed, the state relied on water power to fuel the hundreds of mills that shaped its economy while the glories of the natural landscape sustained a thriving tourist industry—one of the first in the nation. By the turn of the 20th century, the people of New Hampshire had become pioneers in the conservation movement to protect the environment in which they had made their homes.

4

The people of New Hampshire are independent.

This independent spirit can be seen most clearly in our system of governance, from town hall meetings to the citizen legislature to presidential politics. Sometimes viewed as Yankee stubbornness, this New Hampshire trait has bred a belief among Granite Staters that they are beholden to no one but their own consciences. It is a cultural inheritance that delights in surprising presidential frontrunners and the media every four years. But this Yankee stubbornness has also produced a reverence for participatory government that seems less robust in other parts of the country.

5

New Hampshire has had an outsized impact on American history.

Whether pioneering new industries, sparking new trends and cultural movements, or influencing who will become president of the United States, a lot has happened here—more than most people might think—and the Granite State has both led the country and mirrored its history. Learning about New Hampshire provides students with a foundation upon which they will understand American history when they become middle and high school students.

Appendix C

“Moose on the Loose”

Content Standards, Grades 3–5

New Hampshire Historical Society

Topic 1 The Land We Call New Hampshire

Beginnings to 1623

Key Idea 3-5.T1.1

Students will understand that New Hampshire has a diverse geography, with mountains, seacoast, and farming land. They will understand it has been inhabited for thousands of years, and has a variety of resources.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will study the regions of New Hampshire and their resources.
- Students will understand the political divisions of NH’s towns and counties.
- Students will use maps of New Hampshire of varying scales and features.

Key Idea 3-5.T1.2

Students will understand that the Abenaki inhabited the area that became known as New Hampshire for thousands of years before European settlement. They will understand that the Abenaki interacted with the environment and used its resources to meet their needs.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will examine the locations of early Abenaki settlements in relation to geographic features, noting how certain physical features of the area are more likely to support settlement and larger populations.
- Students will investigate how the Abenaki adapted to and modified their environment to provide themselves with food, clothing, and shelter.

Key Idea 3-5.T1.3

Students will understand that the Abenaki had a unique way of life characterized by customs, beliefs, and values.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will identify the patterns of organization and governance among the Abenaki.
- Students will explore Abenaki traditions, work specialization and the roles of men, women, and children in their society, transportation systems, and technology.
- Students will investigate the interactions and relationships between the Abenaki and early settlers, noting the different perspectives toward land ownership and use of resources.
- Students will identify contributions of the Abenaki that are present today in New Hampshire.

Topic 2 Settlement in New Hampshire

1623-1763

Key Idea 3-5.T2.1

Students will understand that European exploration led to the colonization of the region that became New Hampshire. They will understand that, beginning in the early 1600s, colonial New Hampshire was home to people from different areas of the world.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will investigate European exploration and seasonal communities of the region that became New Hampshire.
- Students will investigate various patterns of settlement and colonial life under the English, examining the diverse purposes of the people living in the New Hampshire colony.
- Students will investigate the emerging New Hampshire regions and their contrasting identities.
- Students will examine the effects of increased colonization on the Abenaki, identifying changes in their daily patterns of life, health, and settlement locations.
- Students will explore the relations between and among colonial settlements and the Abenaki.

Topic 3 Revolution and the New Nation

1763-1820s

Key Idea 3-5.T3.1

Students will understand that growing conflicts between England and the 13 colonies over issues of political and economic rights led to the American Revolution. They will understand that people in New Hampshire played a part in both sides of the revolution.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will examine struggles over political and economic rights that led to the American Revolution and how they were reflected in New Hampshire.
- Students will explore different perspectives and experiences of New Hampshire's people during the struggle for independence by analyzing key events.

Key Idea 3-5.T3.2

Students will understand that after the revolution, the United States of America established a federal government; colonies established state governments. They will understand that the New Hampshire State Constitution established the basic structure of government for the state and created laws to protect the people and interests of the state.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of major provisions of the United States and New Hampshire Constitutions.
- Students will trace the political development of New Hampshire governance and identify what makes the system unique to the state.
- Students will identify elements of the New Hampshire state seal and state flag and explain the meaning of those elements.

Topic 4 Expansion and Conflict**1800-1870****Key Idea 3-5.T4.1**

Students will understand that economic activities in New Hampshire were varied and have changed over time with improvements in transportation and technology.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will describe key developments in transportation and communication technology and their effects on the state and its national and global connections.
- Students will identify New Hampshire's main agricultural products during the 1800s and discuss the evolution of farm life.
- Students will investigate the beginnings of Industrialization in New Hampshire and how life began to change for its people.

Key Idea 3-5.T4.2

Students will understand that the United States became divided over several issues in the decades before the Civil War, including slavery, which resulted in rising tensions throughout the nation. They will understand that New Hampshire played a part in these relationships.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will describe slavery and indentured servitude in New Hampshire, and trace the rise of abolitionism.
- Students will learn about Franklin Pierce as a national political figure and the actions he took as President of the United States.
- Students will explore the various problems that led to the Civil War and how they were reflected in New Hampshire.

Key Idea 3-5.T4.3

Students will understand that the Civil War affected the whole nation. They will understand that New Hampshire supported the Union during the war in various ways.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will explore how New Hampshire supported the Union during the Civil War.
- Students will explore the contributions and experiences of New Hampshire soldiers and people on the home front during the Civil War.

Topic 5 The Development of the Industrial United States**1870-1924****Key Idea 3-5.T5.1**

Students will understand that improved technology such as the steam engine and telegraph made transportation and communication faster and easier. They will understand that this led to rapid industrialization in the state and the world and the growth of various industries and manufacturing.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will explore the location and use of natural resources throughout New Hampshire as well as the changing landscape over time.
- Students will investigate major economic activities across different regions of New Hampshire.
- Students will investigate manufacturing and industrial development throughout New Hampshire, particularly the evolution of mills, from differing perspectives.

Key Idea 3-5.T5.2

Students will understand that many people migrated and immigrated to New Hampshire during industrialization, generally for economic reasons, contributing to its development.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will explore the patterns of migration of New Hampshire’s people throughout the state.
- Students will trace the arrival of various immigrant groups to New Hampshire and examine why they came, where they settled and their impact on the state.
- Students will investigate the experiences of immigrants and the local responses to immigration over time in New Hampshire.

Key Idea 3-5.T5.3

Students will understand that industrialization in the 19th century changed patterns of settlement as well as the way people lived in New Hampshire.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will explore how industrialization transformed settlement in New Hampshire.
- Students will explore how the rise of urban living changed daily life for people during Industrialization.
- Students will examine how changes in the economic system have impacted their local communities since industrialization.

Topic 6 Wild and Beautiful New Hampshire**1870 through 1900s****Key Idea 3-5.T6.1**

Students will understand that as transportation developed and all of New Hampshire was more accessible to the public, tourism grew and developed in the state.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will examine the rise of tourism in the White Mountains in New Hampshire.
- Students will investigate summer and winter tourism in New Hampshire, its effects, and how it has changed over time.

Key Idea 3-5.T6.2

Students will understand that by the end of the 19th century, the results of the development of industry had led some to prioritize preserving New Hampshire’s natural landscape.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will study the logging industry in New Hampshire and its effects.
- Students will investigate the development of New Hampshire’s White Mountains National Forest.
- Students will explore how the rise and decline of the logging industry and the establishment of the national forest effected people in New Hampshire.

Topic 7 20th Century New Hampshire**1900 - present****Key Idea 3-5.T7.1**

Students will understand that New Hampshire responded to conflict and change from outside the state in various ways as well as participated in national events.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will investigate how New Hampshire and its people reacted and contributed to World War I and II, both on the front and at home.
- Students will study how New Hampshire and its people coped with the Great Depression.

Key Idea 3-5.T7.2

Students will understand that throughout the 20th century, New Hampshire's economic and political life evolved and modernized. They will understand that communities responded to economic cycles, and new immigration began.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will learn about the establishment of the New Hampshire presidential primary and its effects on New Hampshire and the nation.
- Students will examine the uniqueness of the New Hampshire primary.
- Students will examine how New Hampshire communities have responded to cycles of economic growth and decline.
- Students will explore immigration to New Hampshire in the late 20th and 21st centuries as well as how New Hampshire's culture has evolved.

Topic 8**Modern New Hampshire****Present day****Key Idea 3-5.T8.1**

Students will understand that New Hampshire today is a modern, diverse state with a rich culture and thriving economy.

Deeper Knowledge:

- Students will examine everyday life for New Hampshire's people in the 21st century.
- Students will examine how New Hampshire's people have responded to the changing world around them.
- Students will explore the local and state government of New Hampshire today.
- Students will explore New Hampshire uniqueness today and what it means to be a Granite Stater.
- Students will examine New Hampshire's economy and culture today.

Appendix D

Curated Resources

The following is a list of the curated resources cited in these Guidelines.

STATE STANDARDS

Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies: www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2010-Alabama-Social-Studies-Course-of-Study.pdf

Georgia Social Studies Standards of Excellence: <https://www.georgiastandards.org/georgia-standards/pages/social-studies.aspx>

Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks:
www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf

Michigan K–12 Social Studies Standards:
www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/SS_May_2018_Public_Final_622357_7.pdf

Minnesota Social Studies Standards (3rd draft): <https://education.mn.gov/mde/dse/stds/>

Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids: moose.nhhistory.org

New York K–12 Social Studies Framework: www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/k-12-social-studies-framework

NATIONAL STANDARDS

Advanced Placement (U.S. History): apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-us-history-course-and-exam-description.pdf

National Geography Standards: ncge.org/teacher-resources/national-geography-standards/

Educating for American Democracy Roadmap, State Standards Guidance:

<https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/EAD-State-Standards-Guidance.pdf>

National Standards for Civics Education: www.civiced.org/standards

U.S. History National Content Standards: phi.history.ucla.edu/nchs/united-states-history-content-standards/

Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics: www.councilforeconed.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/voluntary-national-content-standards-2010.pdf

C3 FRAMEWORK

College, Career, and Civic Life, The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards:

www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf

C3 Teachers: www.C3teachers.org

New Hampshire C3 Hub: c3teachers.org/new-hampshire-hub/

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES, AND CO-CURRICULARS

Abenaki Trails Project: abenakitribe.org/abenaki-trails-project

Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire: blackheritagetrailnh.org/

Civics 101: www.civics101podcast.org/lessonplans

Kid Governor: nh.kidgovernor.org/

Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/about-this-program/

Mikva Challenge: mikvachallenge.org/

Mock Trials: www.nhbar.org/civics-education/mock-trial/

Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids: moose.nhhistory.org

National Archives and Records Administration: www.archives.gov/education

National History Day in New Hampshire: nhdnh.weebly.com/

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center: freedomcenter.org/learn/online-learning-resources/

New Hampshire Civics: <https://www.nhcivics.org/curriculum-library/>

New Hampshire Debate League: www.nhdebate.org/

New Hampshire Youth and Government: nneymcas.org/nh-youth-and-government/

PBLWorks: www.pblworks.org/

Read to Lead: readtolead.org/

Remedial Herstory Project: www.remedialherstory.com/

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu/educators/resources

U.S. Holocaust Museum: www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials

We the People: www.civiced.org/we-the-people/curriculum

We the People: Project Citizen: www.nhbar.org/civics-education/project-citizen/

NEW HAMPSHIRE ORGANIZATIONS

New Hampshire Bar Association: www.nhbar.org/law-related-education/

New Hampshire Civics: www.nhcivics.org/

New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies: www.nhscc.org

New Hampshire Historical Society: nhhistory.org

New Hampshire Humanities and Humanities To Go: www.nhhumanities.org/

TEACHING WITH THEMES

Educating for American Democracy Roadmap: www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/the-roadmap/

Ten Themes of Social Studies: www.socialstudies.org/standards/national-curriculum-standards-social-studies-introduction

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Center for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) interactive framework, known as the CASEL Wheel: casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/

ChooSELove: www.education.nh.gov/partners/chooselove