

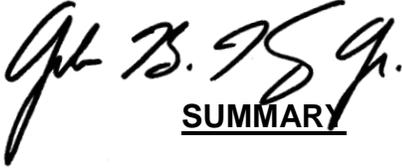


**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Ken Wagner 

**SUBJECT:** Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework

**DATE:** March 6, 2014

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
SUMMARY

**Issue for Discussion:**

Department staff will review the development of the final draft of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework.

**Proposed Handling:**

The item will come before a meeting of the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at its March 2014 meeting.

**Procedural History and Background Information**

In July 2010, the Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Since that time, the Department has articulated the shifts in instructional practice that are required to implement these rigorous standards successfully. These shifts help ensure that students who graduate from high school have received instruction that develops the knowledge and skills required to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century college and careers.

At the May 2011 joint discussion of the Board's P-12 Education Committee and College and Career Readiness Working Group, Department staff was directed to create a Social Studies Content Advisory Panel, consisting of a wide range of experts from the field. One of the charges of this panel was to advise on the suggested revision of the *New York State Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* to ensure alignment to *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*. Following the September 2012 Board of Regents Meeting, the Content Advisory Panel was asked to advise the Department on the possibility of splitting of Global History and Geography into two distinct units of study that could be required for graduation purposes.

## Overview of Review and Development Process

The Content Advisory Panel has met seven times since fall 2011 and advised the Department on three drafts versions of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework. Although the Framework has been aligned to the *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*, it maintains the standards statements from the existing *New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies (1996)* and the order of courses and some of the key topics from the *Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum (1998)*. The Framework includes Key Ideas, Conceptual Understandings, and Concept Specifications for each grade level.

The K-8 Draft Framework was posted for review and comment from September 2012 through early October 11, 2012, and the 9-12 Draft Framework was posted for public review and comment from February 2013 through early March 2013. Following each of these first public reviews, the Content Advisory Panel met, considered all comments, and advised the Department on necessary changes. In each of these public review periods, comments ranged from requests for less content in order to provide opportunities for greater depth to requests for greater content specificity to provide better guidance for teachers. Department staff incorporated revisions suggested by the Content Advisory Panel in response to the first surveys. As this work entailed the balance between the incorporation of more specific content and opportunities for greater depth, the resulting Draft K-12 Framework document was substantially different from the first public drafts.

In September 2013, the National Council for the Social Studies released the final version of the *College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*. This document provides guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history education. It provides a suggested methodology – the “Inquiry Arc” – that is now incorporated in our New York Framework. The Inquiry Arc provides an approach to increased rigor through questions and planned inquiries that apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources, and use evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action.

The Content Advisory Panel convened in November 2013 to review these revisions and make further recommendations. Following additional revisions suggested by the Panel and others<sup>1</sup>, the revised Draft Framework was posted for its final public comment period from December 17, 2013 through January 20, 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> The following national experts provided feedback on the Framework: Eric Foner, Columbia University; Eileen Gerrish, Law, New York State Bar Association; Alice Kessler-Harris, Columbia University; John W. Langdon, Le Moyne College; Jacqueline Waite, National Council for Geographic Education; and Doug Young, National Center for Economic and Financial Education.

## Global History and Geography Split

In September 2012, the Board discussed a staff proposal to amend Commissioner's Regulations to require the completion of two units of study in Global History and Geography. The proposal recommended that the first unit of study culminate in an end-of-course exam (this end-of-course exam could be an additional Regents exam, pending the direction of the Board and the availability of funding). The second unit of study would culminate in the Regents Exam currently required for graduation and that provides the appropriate rigor for college and career readiness.

At its October 19, 2012 meeting, the Content Advisory Panel recommended, consistent with the Board's discussion in September, that the Global History and Geography course of study be divided into two separate and distinct units of study to be required for graduation. As directed by the Board at its November 2012 meeting, a survey of stakeholders was conducted in December 2012 regarding options for dividing the course of study into two units of study. Overall, survey respondents supported a chronological approach to this course of study, as opposed to a thematic approach.

As a result of the Framework review and revision process described above, Global History and Geography I (Grade 9) begins with the Paleolithic Era and continues to a period of Global Interactions from approximately 1400 to 1750. Global History and Geography II (Grade 10) begins with a snapshot of the world at 1750, incorporates the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution, and continues to the present. This two-unit sequence provides students with a comprehensive and rigorous course of study in Global History and Geography, consistent with the Common Core Learning Standards.

## Final Draft Framework Revisions

The Content Advisory Panel (CAP) met on January 24 and 25, 2014 to review the results of the most recent public comment period. The survey generated over 900 responses with over 3,000 comments. Findings included:

- In general, teachers want professional development and clear expectations of what will be assessed.
- Some elementary-level teachers indicated that the K-2 program was too rigorous, while others indicated it was not rigorous enough. For grades 4, 5 and 6, there was general consensus that the Framework included too much content. Teachers want the social studies practices articulated separately for grades 5-8, as they are for grades K-4. Teachers want to be able to teach about local Native Americans and other topics of interest locally.
- Middle school teachers felt that it was unrealistic to expect 7<sup>th</sup> grade students to complete both the Civil War and Reconstruction. There was concern there was too much content included in the Framework.
- Global History and Geography teachers continued to articulate the tension between breadth vs. depth. Although respondents suggested additional topics

for inclusion, topics to be removed were not identified to maintain the opportunity for depth of study.

- United States History and Government teachers expressed concern that the foundations of civics and government had been diminished in the course and should be incorporated. Again, concern were expressed that there was too many or too few topics included.
- Participation in Government teachers recommended that the course provide an opportunity for discussion of current problems. In addition, it was recommended that students become critical consumers of information and be versed in media literacy.
- While some Economics teachers recommended that the course include more personal financial literacy, others recommended a greater emphasis on economic theory. Many comments recommended a full-year course in Economics, in order to adequately prepare students in financial literacy, macroeconomics, and microeconomics.

SED staff and the Content Advisory Panel incorporated the following changes to address these concerns:

- Vertical articulation for grades 5-8 and the incorporation of economic practices
- Reorganization of grade 4 and incorporation of flexibility for local content, including Native American groups
- Reduction of content in grades 5, 6 and 7 including eliminating some content from grade 6 and moving the unit on Reconstruction from grade 7 to grade 8
- Inclusion of additional topics in Global History and Geography
- Inclusion of more constitutional principles and references to cases in United States History and Government, to strengthen the civics/citizenship elements of the course
- Inclusion of a deeper exploration of our political system and specific examples of civic actions in Participation in Government
- Reorganization of Economics, with more economic theory clearly articulated, while maintaining the personal finance unit.

The final draft of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework incorporates the five learning standards for social studies: (1) History of the United States and New York, (2) World History, (3) Geography, (4) Economics, and (5) Civics, Citizenship and Government. The Framework's key ideas, conceptual understandings, and content specification provide guidance as to the "what" to teach, while the Inquiry Arc and the document's overall Common Core alignment identify discipline-related skills for the social studies. Further guidance in local curriculum development will be provided by the Field Guide described below.

## **Social Studies Field Guide**

During the process of Framework development, the Content Advisory Panel considered the instructional resources that could be used by schools and districts when implementing this Framework in local communities. The Department will provide a Field Guide that incorporates these panel recommendations and other implementation strategies. The Field Guide will begin with an overview of the purpose of the social studies and will introduce the shifts in social studies instruction. The first section of the Guide will provide guidance and examples for leveraging key ideas, conceptual understandings, and case studies/examples to teach patterns and concepts. This section will address how to formulate the essential questions that drive inquiry in the classroom and align to the C3 Framework. The second section will address how to create performance tasks that integrate the key concepts articulated in the Framework with the Common Core skills and social studies practices to promote evidence-based argumentation. The third section will provide guidance in how to create meaningful lesson sequences to implement the integration of content and skills.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents consider the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework for approval at its April meeting.