Duxbury Public Schools

Report of the Social Studies Subcommittee K-12

Social Studies Curriculum Review

June 2016
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teri Anderson</td>
<td>Alden</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Mike Armandi</td>
<td>DMS</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Heidi Aufiero</td>
<td>Chandler</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Chris Aukerman</td>
<td>DHS</td>
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<td>Ritamarie Benoit</td>
<td>Alden</td>
<td>Curriculum Supervisor 3-5</td>
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<td>Suzanne Coyle</td>
<td>Chandler</td>
<td>Curriculum Supervisor K-2</td>
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<td>Leah Grip</td>
<td>DMS</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Bridget Henderson</td>
<td>Chandler</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Jack Kennedy</td>
<td>DHS</td>
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<td>Sarah McGuire</td>
<td>DMS/DHS</td>
<td>Subject Supervisor 6-12</td>
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<td>Sue Riser</td>
<td>Alden</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose Ruback</td>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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Overview

In the fall of 2013, the Duxbury Public Schools formalized its curriculum review processes. The process is a five step cycle, each step being one year in length: Review, Develop, Implement, Analyze, Evaluate. For the 2015-2016 school year, a subcommittee of Social Studies educators and leadership met to examine curriculum and instruction internally. Consultants from the Connecticut Council for the Social Studies conducted an external review and provided a report to the district. The subcommittee aggregated its internal findings and the recommendations of the outside review to develop an action plan.

Curriculum Standards

Status of Massachusetts Frameworks

The 2003 Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks outline the most current state standards. Per information received after the review was underway, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will form a working group of educators to review the standards in the fall of 2016. A state mandated assessment is also under discussion. The DESE expects the revision process to take approximately two years with the development of an assessment to follow.

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History

The 2013 C3 Frameworks is a publication of the National Council for Social Studies. This national document is a collective effort of 15 organizations focused on better preparing students through an emphasis on inquiry skills. An integrated approach also includes connections to English Language Arts as outlined by the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects. The C3 is structured around 4 dimensions:

- Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries
- Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts (civics, economics, geography, history)
- Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence
- Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action

Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Framework

In February of 2015, Connecticut adopted updated standards collaboratively written by educators utilizing the C3 Framework as a guiding document. The standards emphasize inquiry, civic engagement, local history and a thematic approach with a focus on what students are able to do rather than what they know. Specific decisions as to sequence and structure of required courses and elective are left to local districts. An outline of grade level themes is as follows:

- Kindergarten: Me and My Community
Summary

The MA frameworks includes an extensive list of facts with a focus on breath over depth. In reviewing the C3 Frameworks, the outline is much more thematic and based on benchmark concepts that develop more depth and breadth from grade to grade. C3 also emphasizes perspectives, writing, arguments, and economics theories as well. Connecticut seemed to bridge this gap by embracing the repetition of themes, while including additional more specific content pieces.

Duxbury’s Current Social Studies Curriculum

Duxbury’s most recent update to the elementary occurred in 2005 when the state last discussed the potential of a mandated high stakes assessment. Since that time, the standards listed on the grade level report cards is the sole source of alignment. There are threads of commonality such as holidays, national symbols, Duxbury history and early United States history by the close of grade 5. Common materials are not consistent among grade levels or classrooms leaving teachers to find and create individual resources.

The secondary curriculum underwent updates over the past several years when a social studies supervisor position was instated in 2013. This allowed for creation of curriculum maps and common assessments across all courses. The current curriculum maps are aligned with the Massachusetts 2003 frameworks. The social studies department worked collaboratively with the English department from 2013-2015 in order to create common language and expectations in writing instruction.

The Subcommittee conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the current status of the social studies curriculum. This list of outcomes differentiates between elementary and secondary levels.
**Strengths**

**Elementary**
- some maps at some grade levels
- teachers are teaching to the framework
- grade 3 has a newer text
- 3-5: teachers swap classes which allows them to deepen their own knowledge
- standards based report card offers the structure for our scope and sequence
- lots of local history to tap into in Duxbury / well maintained historical sites
- access to technology and sources for research

**Secondary**
- Diversity of experience, age, strength of teachers, breadth of experience, and their craft
- perspectives/ experiences
- passionate educators, love history
- people willing to change assignments, learn whole new disciplines
- more electives than any other department- popular, flexible, lots of experiences

**Weaknesses**

**Elementary**
- lack of resources/texts that are up to date
- no common assessment
- inconsistent use of the outdated materials
- time
- lack of professional development
- MA standards are outdated

**Secondary**
- direction from the state
- lack of high stakes can mean it doesn't get support
- fragmented department in high school, physical locations for prep rooms/ classrooms/ movement between classrooms
- Are other states assessing SS? Regents in NY
- Frameworks= huge list of facts, AP = thematic
- Thematic curriculum? C3 frameworks?
- materials digital- sometimes too much online, are the resources better?
- old readers for each course?
- 10th grade textbook need attention- American Nation lacks details
- AP Psych textbook is "best ever"
- Stratelogica implementation
Opportunities

Elementary
- discussion about assessment
- embedding SS in the literacy block - flexibility because of not having resources in most grades - resources and connections
- PBL opportunities and research experiences using multiple sources
- look at team teaching at primary level?
- additional planning time?
- collaboration with the community and local area via historical sites, etc.
- get more resources / online subscriptions

Secondary
- textbook or not?
- What materials are good materials
- Primarysource.org Partnership
- Guilderlearmen
- DBQProject

Threats

Elementary
- Time with Math and ELA minutes
- burn out with new changes
- planning time
- MA frameworks
- Money and resources
- a possible new program which would demand more time and further the isolation of the subject

Secondary
- moving parts- political, AP population
- Cutting programs in State
- framework changes?

Review of Student Work

The committee reviewed student works samples across K-12 including the following:

Elementary
- Holidays Around the World
- Wants and Needs
Middle School
- Examples of student work on the conflict between Israel & Palestine - take on role of Israeli student & Palestinian student
- Primary Source Analysis - Was Hammurabi's Code Just?

High School
- Letter from the War Front
- Response to Paris Attacks
- U.S. History Essays

Research Summary

The committee reviewed research in social studies education in order to best inform its conclusions. A list of sources is included:


Data Analysis

A discussion of data in social studies reveals limited large scale data collection. At the elementary level, common assessments are not yet in place. Benchmark assessments are in place at the secondary level based upon individual courses.
The district’s only true focus on aggregate social studies data has been through an online writing tool, Assessments21. The software platform allows for blind scoring of a written response to text. In its first two years of implementation, the tool was used broadly where students either responded to an English or Social Studies text without alignment to the curriculum. For 2015-2016, test administration was revised to provide students a social studies related text to be scored blindly by their own classroom teachers. 2016 results are found below. The discussion of content writing continues as the district looks to expand student proficiency in responding to non-fiction and through different genres.

Grade 6

![Grade 6 Writing Results](image)

Grade 7

![Grade 7 Writing Results](image)
Grade 10

Grade 11
Current Materials and Programs

K-5

A grade 3 textbook is the most recent comprehensive addition to social studies instruction in the elementary schools. Of great need are nonfiction texts appropriate to the reading levels of elementary students. Organization of resources identified by individual teachers would be highly beneficial.

6-12

Materials in the secondary schools are teacher selected and from a variety of sources. Textbooks have been replaced at various timeframes. The subcommittee reports a need for continual and further review of primary source resources and current materials.

Outside Social Studies Consultant Review

The district invited two members of the Connecticut Council for Social studies. The two classroom teachers were integral in the revisions made to Connecticut’s frameworks in 2014. Through on site visits, interviews with teachers and document review, a written report provided the district input and direction. This report is posted at: http://www.duxbury.k12.ma.us/cms/lib2/MA01001583/Centricity/Domain/32/Duxbury%20Final%20Social%20Studies%20Report.pdf

Local Review of Strengths and Needs

The subcommittee conducted an internal review to identify strengths and needs. They are found below:

Strengths:
- Commitment to excellence in teaching SS
- Commitment to collaboration w/colleagues
- Willingness to explore outside resources
- Willingness to stay current in content
- Strong connections to local history
- Integration of technology

Needs
- Time to collaborate
- Time to teach
- Professional development
- Integration of curriculum across content
- Inquiry based learning experiences
• High order thinking/3Cs integration
• Vertical articulation of expectations
• Creation of essential questions and curriculum maps, horizontal and vertical that are based on content, as well as skills of inquiry
• PD on skills of inquiry, primary sources, evaluating primary sources and creating argument, etc. as well as content and the C3 standards
• Articulation across grade levels and schools
• Collaboration that allows teachers to work together to increase their collective understanding of the skills of inquiry, etc
• Integration of English with social studies and science using existing tools like Comprehension Toolkit and Empowering Writers
• Increase of rigor
• Alignment of leveling expectations (i.e. college prep, honors, AP)

Recommendations of the K-12 Social Studies Subcommittee

The K-12 Social Studies Subcommittee determined action steps for the coming school year and beyond. The committee first drafted recommendations and then specific action steps.

Recommendations

• Incorporate inquiry into social studies which will carry over into other disciplines
• Seek and provide professional development in inquiry based learning and primary source use
• Clarify/provide the time for collaboration across and within schools and grade levels, being sure to encourage the perspective of different levels of experience
• Define, evaluate, and articulate rigor, including text complexity, as we incorporate resources and changes vertically and horizontally across K-12
• Develop a repository of resources, websites, articles, for K-12 teachers and curriculum development teams to use
• Develop action steps for these goals once time and money questions are decided, and at the elementary level, the literacy direction is established
**Goal** | **Action Step** | **Timeline** | **Who**
--- | --- | --- | ---
prioritize current standards/identify possible new content within and across grade levels | Identify civics topics that appear outside of the traditional Social Studies block | TBD | Focus group/committee
identify overlaps/redundancies vertically | vertical conversations across grade level outline current content K-5 | 2016-2017 | at least 2 per grade level with SPED and reading Specialists, ELL?
identify where content can integrate w/ reading v. stand alone | embedded in reading review/draft map of new content K-5 | TBD | Focus group/committee
identify preferred current resources for developing curriculum | Gather readily available resources that will fit w/goals | 2016-2017 | Focus group/committee
summarize/distill key features of current thinking in high quality SS instruction for sharing to all teachers | develop focus group during school year to study relevant documents & develop communication venues | Fall/Winter 2016 | at least 2 per grade level with SPED and reading Specialists, ELL?
Secondary

Overarching Action Plan

- Incorporate inquiry
- Seek and provide PD in inquiry and primary source integration
- Facilitate collaboration across courses and grades
- Define, evaluate, articulate rigor, incorporate more rigor
- Develop repositories of shared resources, strategies

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<th>Review</th>
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<td>PD for teachers on inquiry model in action</td>
<td>Determine where overlaps in curriculum occur, gaps, etc</td>
<td>Share and implement alternative assessments</td>
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<td>Create and implement multi-paragraph writing assessment for each term</td>
<td>Integrate Primary Source resources and PD, identify skill set for DBQs, leverage Academic Merit DDMs</td>
<td>Create a vertically aligned DBQ skill plan</td>
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<td>Implement successful inquiry based activities in classes</td>
<td>Pilot civics focused lessons</td>
<td>Explore inquiry model</td>
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<td>Pilot an intro to town meeting as an optional project in a grade or two</td>
<td>Connect with Science-archaeology, dig sites, ship building homes, etc</td>
<td>Pilot inquiry model in some classes based on teacher contact</td>
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<td>Develop repository of materials, lessons, questions, etc on LMS</td>
<td>Contact Alden House or Historical Society for experiences</td>
<td>Establishing contact and create experiences with local history sources</td>
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<td>Keep up to date with progress at state level rewriting curriculum frameworks</td>
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<td>Review maps and frameworks to identify areas for civics emphasis</td>
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<td>Evaluate sequencing of courses</td>
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<td>Pilot development of alternative assessments</td>
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<td>Explore community opportunities re: civics, seniors</td>
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<td>Explore hands on experiences for students regarding local history</td>
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Year 1: Pilot, PD

Explore:
- Civics
- Inquiry Model, PD
- Local History
- Local Community

Pilot:
- Alternative Assessments
- Civics
- Local Opportunities
- Inquiry Model

Create:
- Repository of materials
- Primary Source emphasis
- Connection with local history sources
- Vertically aligned DBQ skill plan

Implement:
- Alternative Assessments
- Civics
- Local Opportunities
- Inquiry Model

Evaluate:
- Successes, challenges
- More opportunities: local, community, interdisciplinary

Create and implement multi-paragraph writing assessment for each term

Keep up to date with progress at state level rewriting curriculum frameworks