



6th - 8th Grade
Parent and Family Guide
for Social Studies



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Overview

Purpose

The Parent and Family Guide for Social Studies is meant to help parents and families become familiar with the purpose of academic standards, provide information about the key ideas and skills teachers will introduce in social studies, and help you support your child at home in their own learning. It is also intended to help parents and families understand how they can work with schools and teachers to support the learning of their child. We know when teachers and families work together, students are more likely to be successful in the school setting and be set up for success throughout their school experience. A partnership that respects cultures, traditions, languages, values, and beliefs helps foster a barrier-free school community where every student experiences a sense of belonging.

Each guide includes the following at each grade level:

- Examples of what your child may be doing at school.
- How to help your child at home.
- Questions you can ask your child.
- Questions you can ask your child's teacher.

Why Are Academic Standards Important?

Academic standards outline what students should know and be able to do in a given content area. They are critical for the success of all students and help ensure that all students, no matter where they live or what school they attend, have the necessary academic skills for success in college, career, and civic life. They provide consistent expectations for students across the state. However, state standards are not curriculum. Curricular decisions are made at the local level by local school districts or charter schools and teachers.

About the Social Studies Standards

The social studies standards include six strands: (1) civics; (2) economics/personal financial literacy; (3) geography; (4) history; (5) ethnic, cultural, and identity studies; and (6) inquiry. The strands are organized by anchor standard. Anchor standards are the core ideas, at the heart of a discipline, to be implemented across a K–12 social studies program. Anchor standards remain the same through all grades and courses. Each set of grade-level standards begins with a set of inquiry standards. The inquiry standards define key skills within social studies. These standards are meant to be used in concert with the content standards throughout the grade level/course.

Both the inquiry and ethnic, cultural, and identity strands are new to the social studies standards, however, they are both core components of quality social studies instruction. Social studies is the study of people and society. The inclusion of ECI supports a richer study of the impact of individuals and groups and why their contributions matter, whereas the addition of an inquiry strand represents the key social studies skills students need in order to effectively learn and process the rich content within the discipline.

K-12 Anchor Standards

Civics	Economics/ Personal Financial Literacy	Geography	History	Ethnic, Cultural, and Identity Studies	Inquiry
Anchor 1 Civic and Political Institutions	Anchor Standard 5 Economic Decision Making	Anchor Standard 11 Geographic Representations and Reasoning	Anchor Standard 15 Historical Change, Continuity, Context, and Reconciliation	Anchor Standard 20 Diversity and Identity	Anchor Standard 23 Construct Compelling and Supporting Questions
Anchor 2 Processes, Rules, and Laws	Anchor Standard 6 Incentives and Choices	Anchor Standard 12 Location, Place, and Region	Anchor Standard 16 Cause and Consequence	Anchor Standard 21 Identity in History	Anchor Standard 24 Gather and Evaluate Sources
Anchor 3 Civic Dispositions and Democratic Principles	Anchor Standard 7 Economic Systems and Models	Anchor Standard 13 Movement, Population, and Systems	Anchor Standard 17 Historical Thinking	Anchor Standard 22 Community Equity Building	Anchor Standard 25 Develop Claims
	Anchor Standard 8 Money and Markets		Anchor Standard 18 Critical Consciousness and Perspectives		Anchor Standard 26 Communicate and Critique Conclusions
Anchor 4 Roles and Responsibilities in a Civic Life	Anchor Standard 9 Global Economy	Anchor Standard 14 Human- Environmental Interactions and Sustainability	Anchor Standard 19 Power Dynamics, Leadership, and Agency		Anchor Standard 27 Take Informed Action

What the NMPED Is Doing to Support the Standards

Implementation of new standards is a process. The NMPED is providing a suite of tools and resources in order to support teachers in using the standards. First, several professional development modules will be available to support teachers throughout the next few years. These range from modules about the key instructional shifts of the standards to understanding culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. This includes professional learning to help prepare teachers to engage students in discourse about critical issues in the past and present. These skills are important to help prepare students to participate in our pluralistic democracy.

The NMPED Literacy and Humanities Bureau is creating these guides in conjunction with the Community Engagement Bureau in order to ensure the standards are accessible to families in New Mexico so all students can learn at high levels.

Additional Resources

- [New Mexico Social Studies Standards](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [New Mexico Parent Guide](#)
- [Community Engagement Website](#)
- Book Lists
 - ◆ [Responsive Reads](#)
 - ◆ [Social Justice Books](#)
 - ◆ [We are Kid Lit Collective](#)
 - ◆ [Diverse Book Finder](#)

6th Grade

Examples of What Your Child May Be Doing at School:

- Learning to distinguish between a primary (material from the time period being studied) and secondary (information summarized from multiple sources) source and using those sources to analyze conflicting and diverse points of view on a topic.
- Creating and using maps, globes, and graphs to gather, analyze, and report geographic information.
- Analyzing the economic impact that surpluses of food and goods had on the growth of civilizations.
- Evaluating the lasting impact of philosophy, art, sciences, and technology of Classical Greece, Rome, India, and China.
- Analyzing how external factors might influence spending decisions for different individuals and households.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Ask your child what (primary and/or secondary) they are reading and analyzing at school. Primary sources are those original sources from the time period being studied while secondary sources are a summary of multiple sources.
- Read with your child or encourage them to read every day. Help them choose social studies-related books (both fiction and non-fiction) about topics they might be learning about this year such as the growth of civilizations, the “Black Death,” feudalism, and the Agricultural Revolution. See book suggestions under the Additional Resources section.
- Discuss current events and how external factors (gas or food prices, wars, COVID, etc.) might impact spending decisions for individuals or families.
- Ask your child to discuss what they’ve learned about the growth of civilizations in ancient world history.

Questions You Can Ask Your Child:

- What have you learned by looking at primary and secondary sources about the topic you are learning? Do you like analyzing sources?
- Why do you think civilizations started to grow once there was extra food and goods?
- Where do you see examples of the influence of classical civilizations (Greece, Rome, India, China) in the United States? Examples might include the current U.S. system of government, architecture of many government buildings, etc.

Questions You Can Ask Your Child’s Teacher:

- What resources can I use to help my child learn more about the content they are learning?
- What books can we read to support my child’s learning?
- Is my child curious about what they are learning?

7th Grade

Examples of What Your Child May Be Doing at School:

- Examining the relationships between stereotypes, bias, and group identity.
- Learning about and engaging in positive civic behaviors to make decisions and take action in classrooms, schools, and communities.
- Explaining the role of political decision-making processes at the tribal, state, and local levels of government.
- Examining the physical and human characteristics of New Mexico using the five themes of geography. The five themes of geography are location, place, region, movement, and human-environment interaction.
- Discussing the patterns of migration of early people in New Mexico and the Southwest region.
- Connecting cultural adaptations of the Ancestral Pueblo, Apache, and Diné people to today.
- Exploring the interactions between the Spaniards and Indigenous people.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Talk about the dangers of stereotyping and bias in society today.
- Read with your child or encourage them to read every day. Help them choose social studies-related books (both fiction and non-fiction) about topics they might be learning about this year such as tribal, state, and local decision-making processes, the Age of Exploration, Indigenous communities in New Mexico, addressing identity and stereotyping, etc. See book suggestions under the Additional Resources section.
- Discuss how life in New Mexico is different today than in the past.

Questions You Can Ask Your Child:

- Why is it important to confront stereotypes and biases we see in society? Why is it important to value all people even if they have different beliefs than you?
- How do you think life in New Mexico was different 50 years ago? 100 years ago? 500 years ago? Why?
- How did interaction between the Spaniards and Indigenous people in the past impact New Mexico today?

Questions You Can Ask Your Child's Teacher:

- What resources can I use to help my child learn about New Mexico history and other topics they are learning?
- What books do you suggest to help support my child in what they are learning?
- Is my child asking good questions about what they are learning?

8th Grade

Examples of What Your Child May be Doing at School:

- Making connections between current events, historical materials, and personal experience.
- Engaging in discussion, debate, or academic conversation analyzing multiple viewpoints on public issues.
- Describing the role of community members in ensuring the long-term survival of their community.
- Examining the impact of colonization. Colonization is the process of establishing foreign control over target locations or peoples for the purposes of taking that place over and settling there.
- Describing the impact of slavery on African populations in Africa and the Americas.
- Analyzing the impact of the American Revolution and the foundation of the republic.
- Analyzing the causes and consequences of the Civil War.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Ask about current events and how they might connect to what students are learning.
- Encourage your child to read every day. Help them choose social studies-related books (both fiction and non-fiction) about topics they might be learning about this year such as the American Revolution, slavery, the impact of colonization, and the Civil War. See book suggestions under the Additional Resources section.
- Visit local museums, libraries, and cultural institutions to explore New Mexico's role in United States history.
- Discuss the causes and effects of the American Revolution or Civil War and treatment of all people impacted by those events.

Questions You Can Ask Your Child:

- What is the connection between current events and what you are learning in school?
- What is the long-term impact of colonization, the American Revolution, the Civil War, etc. on the United States?
- Where do you see examples of the U.S. Constitution in action?

Questions You Can Ask Your Child's Teacher:

- What resources can I use to support my child in what they are learning?
- What books can my child read to support their learning?
- Is my child curious about what they are learning?