

Guiding Principle 1

An effective history and social science education teaches students about the legacy of democratic government.

Study of history and social science prepares students to understand their rights and responsibilities as informed residents and citizens of a democratic society and to appreciate the shared values of this country. To become informed citizens, students need to acquire knowledge and experience of

- the principles and philosophy of government in the founding documents of the United States;
- the structure and purposes of democratic government in the United States at the national, state, and local level;
- the structure and purposes of types of government other than democracy;
- how the concepts of liberty, equality, justice, and human and civil rights shape the United States; the achievements of democratic government and the challenges to maintaining it;
- ways to act as a citizen to influence government within the democratic system; and
- the importance of respectful public discourse and dissent in a democracy.

Guiding Principle 10

An effective history and social science education develops social and emotional skills.

Social and emotional learning has been demonstrated to increase academic achievement and communication skills, improve attitudes and behaviors, and develop empathy.¹ These skills are also practical civic skills that students need to engage effectively with others in the public problem-solving of civic and democratic life. Teachers support the development of these skills by:

- helping students understand how their own unique experiences and ideas influence their perceptions of and feelings about history and current situations (self-awareness);
- encouraging students' own power to take thoughtful action (self-management);
- increasing students' understanding of others' fundamental needs and human and civil rights (social awareness);
- increasing students' capacity to participate in dialogue across differences and to take on the perspectives of others whose experience and position in the world differs from their own (dialogue and perspective-taking);
- encouraging students to collaborate respectfully with diverse peers (relationship skills);
- providing opportunities for students to define and make informed choices when participating in democratic practices (responsible decision making); and

creating opportunities for students to work together on projects that aim to promote a public good beyond the classroom, in the school, or in the larger community (civic action).

Standards for History and Social Science Practice

1. **Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.²**
 - **Civic knowledge** includes the core knowledge in the Content Standards relating to civics and government, economics, geography, and history.
 - **Civic intellectual skills** encompass knowing how to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze and explain matters of concern in civic life.
 - **Civic participatory skills** encompass knowing how to make and support arguments, use the political process to communicate with elected officials and representatives of government, and plan strategically for civic change.
 - **Civic dispositions** encompass values, virtues, and behaviors, such as respect for others, commitment to equality, capacity for listening, and capacity for communicating in ways accessible to others.
2. **Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.**
3. **Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.**
4. **Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.**
5. **Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.**
6. **Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.**
7. **Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.**

² This definition of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions is taken from the definition of college and career readiness and civic preparation adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2013 and amended in 2016.

Example topics with a civics connection ranging from Pre-K - 5

Pre-K: What are fair rules and why do we need them?

Kindergarten: What does it mean to be responsible?

Grade 1: What does it mean to belong to or lead a group?

Grade 2: (context of geography) Why are continents divided into countries?

Grade 3: How can people get involved in government? What is the purpose of government?

Grade 4: (southeast region) What is the role of Washington D.C. as the national capital, and give examples of its national culture and civic resources?

Grade 5: How did the Constitution attempt to balance competing interests, the question of power, and ideas about slavery?

SEL Domains At A Glance

Self Awareness	Self Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making
<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Competencies</i>
Identifying Emotions	Impulse Control	Perspective Taking	Communication	Identifying Problems
Accurately Perceiving Emotions	Stress Management	Empathy	Social Engagement	Recognizing Obstacles
Recognizing Strengths	Self-Discipline	Appreciating Diversity	Relationship Building	Identifying Possible Solutions
Self-Confidence	Self-Motivation	Respect for Others	Cooperation	Evaluating Outcomes
Self-Efficacy	Goal Setting	Recognizing the Needs of Others	Conflict Resolution	Acting Based on Ethics
	Organization Skills			