

Social Studies Framework for LESA Lutheran Elementary Schools

Pre K – Grade 8

Mission Statement:

What Is Social Studies and Why Is It Important?

The National Council for the Social Studies, the largest professional association for social studies educators in the world, defines social studies as:

... the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world (1992, NCSS).

The recently published curriculum standards of the National Council for the Social Studies states:

The purpose of social studies is the promotion of civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life. Although civic competence is not the only responsibility of social studies nor is it exclusive to the field, it is more central to social studies than any other subject area in schools. By making civic competence a central aim, NCSS long has recognized the importance of educating students who are committed to the ideas and values of democracy. Civic competence rests on

this commitment to democratic values, and requires the ability to use knowledge about one's community, nation, and world, apply inquiry processes, and employ skills of data collection and analysis, collaboration, decision-making, and problem-solving. Young people who are knowledgeable, skillful, and committed to democracy are necessary to sustaining and improving our democratic way of life, and participating as members of a global community. (2010, NCSS, draft of revised standards, Executive Summary)

Goals of Social Studies in Lutheran Schools, Pre K-8, include:

1. To develop knowledgeable citizens committed to supporting democratic and ethical ideals and values
2. To build knowledge and abilities in history, the social sciences, and other important areas in social studies
3. To develop an understanding of how God influences ethical and caring individual, group, institutional, community, and national life in a diverse and interdependent world

Curriculum Strands and Standards: To achieve these goals the curriculum includes six curriculum strands, Pre K-8:

1. Civics/Government
2. History
3. Geography
4. Economics
5. Social, Cultural, and Global Connections
6. Literacy, Inquiry, and Technology Applications

While all of the strands are present in every grade level, some strands are appropriately more emphasized at specific grade levels than at others. For example, grade five is typically focused on United States history. Thus, the history strand is heavily emphasized in that grade.

While these six strands are presented as separate within the framework and each strand has a presence in each grade's curriculum, in actual social studies teaching, knowledge and skills are usually drawn from several strands. For example, a lesson on the United States Civil War is clearly centered in the history strand, but is likely to be focused in a specific geographic location, possibly involving the testing of cultural beliefs and values, and maybe illustrating striking economic differences. Thus, the lesson would be drawing from many strands of the framework and the assignments that develop from the lesson would focus on literacy, involve inquiring into an issue, and possibly require the use of technology for research and presentation of findings. Active social studies instruction draws on several strands and this framework should help to make clear how important each grade level is in developing important concepts and skills in developmentally appropriate social studies instruction.

Each strand is defined by standards. The standards that are the same in each group set the overarching purpose for the strand. Strands are supported by components that further refine the meaning of the strand. Illinois and Missouri Social Studies Standards and grade level expectations (e.g., IL. 16. E 3c or MO 1.7, a Missouri Goal or MO SS 7, a Missouri Social Studies Standard).

Each grade plays a role in developing the knowledge and skills associated with each standard at developmentally appropriate levels. Suggested activities and resources are provided for each standard.

Pre K-8 Scope and Sequence:

The scope and sequence that follows represents the major topic(s) that serve to focus each grade level.

Prekindergarten-	Self and Others
Kindergarten-	Self, Others, and Communities
Grade 1-	Families and Communities Near and Far
Grade 2-	People and Places Near and Far
Grade 3-	Communities Past and Present
Grade 4-	Regions of the United States, Illinois and Missouri History
Grade 5-	United States History
Grade 6-	World History
Grade 7-	World Geography and Economics
Grade 8-	United States History and United States Constitution

Overview of the Document and Process of Development:

In June, 2010, a committee consisting of twenty, Pre K-8 teachers, representing Lutheran Schools in Missouri and Illinois met with Deborah Schmich (Director, EAD/SS Lutheran Elementary School Association) and Dr. Mary McFarland (National Social Studies Curriculum Consultant), to design the social studies curriculum framework. The framework provides knowledge, skill, suggested activities, and suggested resources in six curriculum strands to support teachers in their development of curriculum and classroom instruction in social studies. The committee has also included examples of assessments to represent both ongoing assessment (feedback to students to support the improvement of work even as the work is in progress) and culminating assessment (assessment designed to measure how well students are meeting curricular goals).

Members of the committee met in groups by grade level and in cross-grade groups to ensure articulation of the social studies program Pre K-8. In developing this curriculum framework for Lutheran Schools, Pre K-8, the committee consulted national curriculum standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies and documented the inclusion of Missouri and Illinois standards for social studies.

Members of the committee included:

Dr. Mary McFarland- Curriculum Coordinator
Deb Schmich- LESA
Mark Behling- Lutheran High School South
Amanda Densmore- Zion, Bethalto
Celeste Erb- Trinity, Edwardsville
Bethany Greatens- Immanuel, Olivette
Carol Haukap- Bethel
Warren Hunt- Hope, St. Louis
Lynda Johnson- Abiding Savior
Laurie Jones- Word of Life
Jerry Kurka- Hope, St. Ann
Sherry Langford- Our Savior
Darlene Letcher- St. John's, Red Bud
Katie Luepke- Word of Life
Brandon Marolf- Immanuel, Olivette
Keith Marsh- St. Mark's
Pam Miller- St. John's, Arnold
Amy Rudsinski- St. Paul's
Norma Schroll- Christ Community
Kathy Schulz- Our Savior
Trella Stark- Zion, Bethalto
Cindy Steele- St. John's, Red Bud

Conclusion:

It is the hope of the Curriculum Framework Committee that the document will be useful to Lutheran educators in professional discussions and curriculum development, Pre K-8 as they support active, engaging, and memorable social studies education for LESA Lutheran students of Missouri and Illinois.