



United States Government Curriculum Essentials Document



*Boulder Valley School District
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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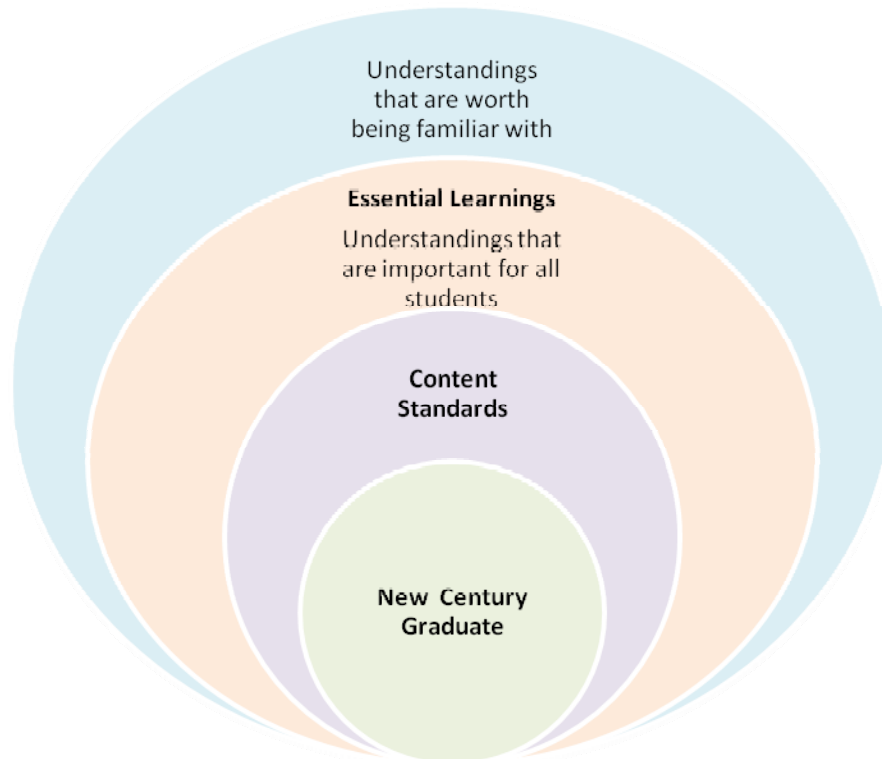
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General Introduction

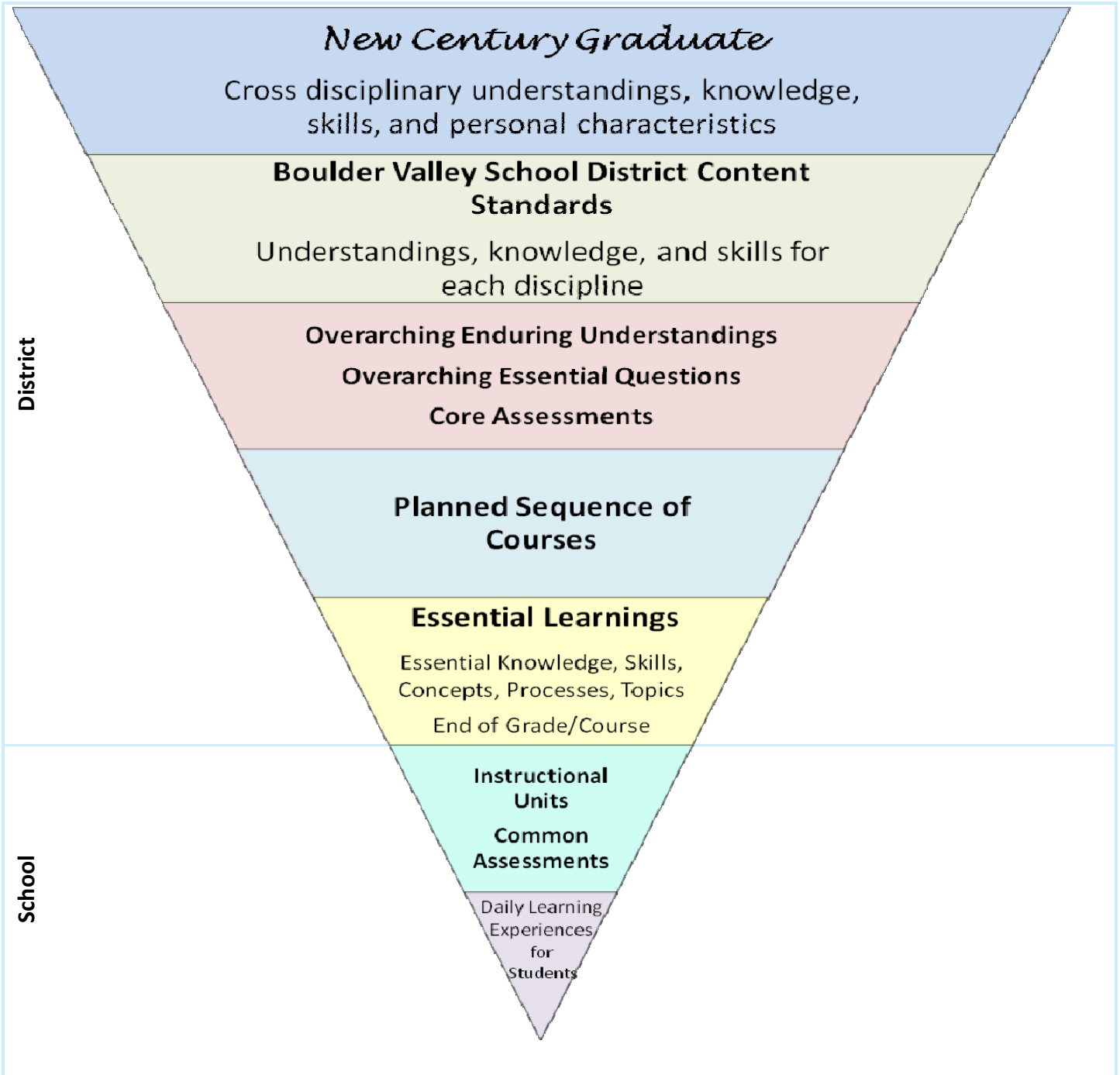
What is a Curriculum Essentials Document? How Does it Relate to a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum?



Because we are faced with more content than we can reasonably address, we are obligated to make choices and frame priorities. A useful framework for establishing priorities is graphically depicted using 4 nested ovals. The innermost oval, *New Century Graduate*, represents the goals of schooling that have been identified by the Boulder Valley School District community. Moving to the next oval, *Content Standards*, levels of performance for each program of study are clearly articulated. The third oval, *Essential Learnings*, represents the **viable curriculum**. A curriculum is viable when the number of learnings can be accomplished in the time provided (usually a semester, trimester, or year). Thus, an Essentials Document identifies the priorities for learning that are necessary for successful learning at a particular grade level or course and beyond. It also identifies the essential knowledge, skills, concepts, topics, and processes that support the attainment of the essential learning. Finally, the largest oval represents the field of all possible content that might be examined during a grade level or course. This includes extended learning opportunities for students who have achieved the essential learnings or attending to background knowledge and skills that students may need to review or learn to ensure achievement of grade level or course essential learnings.

Curriculum Framework: Macro and Micro Levels

The New Century Graduate identifies the knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that our community has identified as the goals of schooling. Programs of study and curricular content are identified and addressed as a means for students' to attain this broader understanding and overall purpose of learning.



Adapted from Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2007). *Schooling by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 64.

New Century Graduate Knowledge and Skills

Life Competencies

Leads a balanced life: exhibits physical fitness, knows good nutrition rules, stays safe and drug free, knows how to have fun and relax, manages anger and stress, exhibits self-sufficiency and self confidence, and finishes tasks.

Understands money management, budgeting, balancing a checkbook, debt management, and record keeping.

Demonstrates time management skills and a broad base of knowledge in practical skills such as cooking, sewing, driving, and map reading.

Knows how to search for a job and knows where to go to find answers.

Communication: Speaking and Writing

Writes and speaks thoughtfully and articulately to inform, to express one's thinking and creativity, and to communicate to diverse audiences.

Uses correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics; organizes for effectiveness

Uses technology for effective communication

Multicultural/Global Perspective

Understands global customs, economics, literature, history, politics, religions, geography, and demographics.

Understands the contributions of different cultures to our society

Demonstrates proficiency in a language other than English.

Literacy: Reading

Reads critically, fluently, and with comprehension.

Reads for information research, pleasure and knowledge of literature.

Mathematics

Demonstrates basic math computational skills and understand higher-level mathematical concepts and reasoning.

Understands conservation and resource management.

History

Possesses knowledge of American and World Histories and their influence upon the present and the future.

Employs literature as a tool for learning about history across cultures.

Science

Demonstrates basic sciences knowledge and understands high-level scientific systems including environmental systems.

Knows how to apply the scientific method to real situations.

Arts

Experiences and appreciates music, visual arts, dance and theater.

New Century Graduate Personal Characteristics



Respect for Others (Values Others)

Understands and values differences including: cultural, religious, ethnic, gender, age, and ability.

Initiative and Courage

Exhibits self-motivation, self-discipline, persistence, independence, confidence, curiosity, and willingness to take risks, without being afraid to fail.

Citizenship

Understands his or her role and responsibilities and contributes to the community, nation, and world.

Responsibility

Takes responsibility for own thoughts and actions, accepting the consequences.

Ethical Behavior

Exhibits personal integrity through honesty, fairness, sincerity, and a sense of justice.

Flexibility and Open Mindedness

Demonstrates flexibility, open-mindedness, adaptability, resiliency, and openness to change.

Self-respect

Possesses self-respect and confidence, while recognizing one's own limitations.

What are Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions?

Enduring understandings are the big ideas central to a content area that have lasting value beyond the classroom and are transferable to new situations. Enduring understandings describe what, specifically, students should understand about the topic. Such understandings are generally abstract in nature and are often not obvious, thus requiring uncovering of a topic through sustained inquiry.

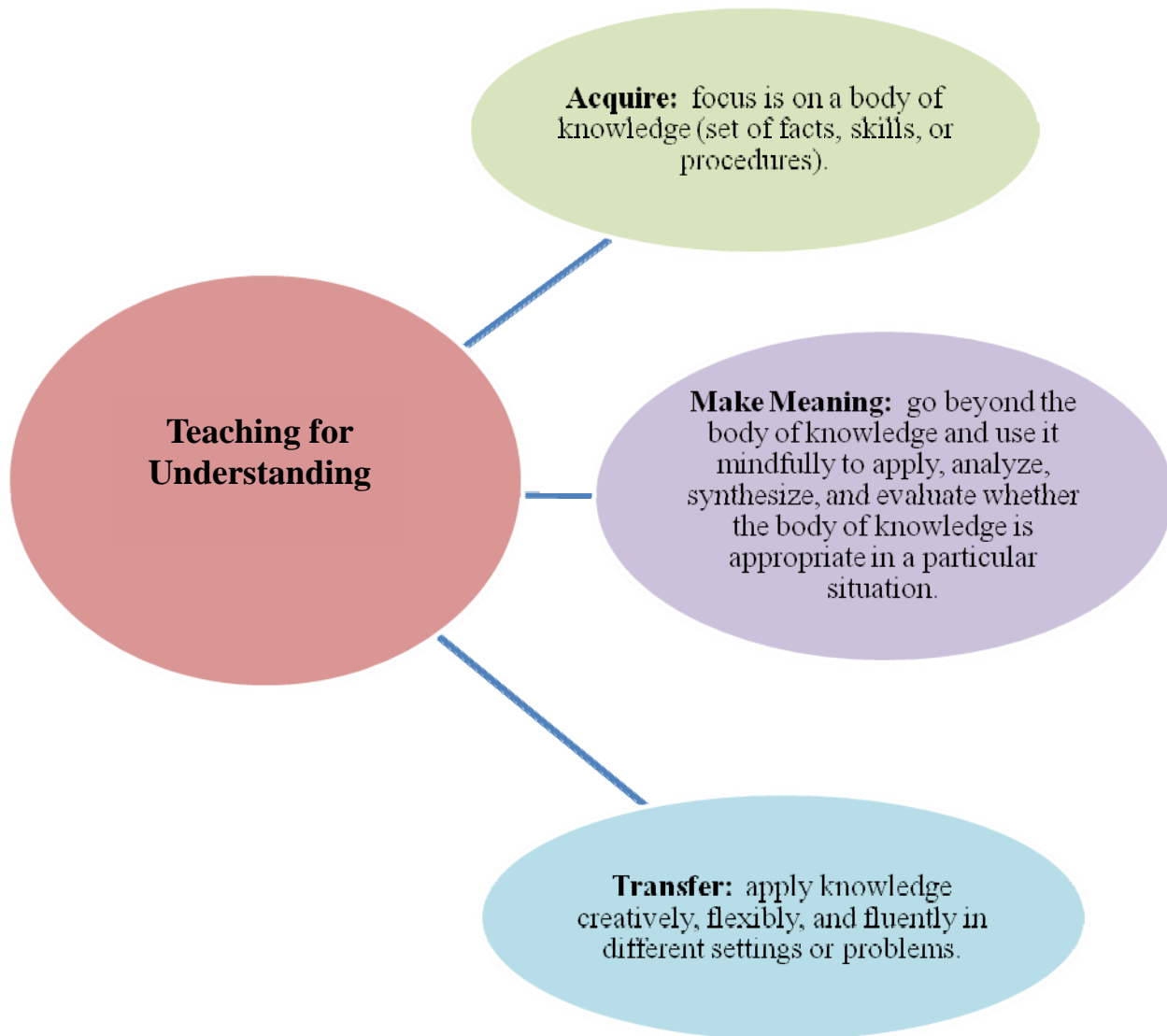
An understanding can be overarching or topical. Overarching understandings are broad (as the name implies) and offer a possible bridge to other units and courses. Overarching understandings are identified at the district-level. Topical understandings are unit specific, identified by teachers about the understandings the unit will cultivate about specific topics.

Essential questions provoke deep thought, lively discussion, sustained inquiry, and new understandings culminating in meaningful performances. They require students to consider alternatives, weigh evidence, support their ideas, and justify answers. Essential questions do not yield a single straightforward answer, but produce different plausible responses, about which thoughtful and knowledgeable people may disagree. Essential questions spark meaningful connections with prior learnings and personal experiences and create opportunities for transfer to other situations and subjects.

An essential question can be either overarching or topical in scope. Overarching essential questions are general in nature, causing genuine and relevant inquiry into the big ideas and core content. They cut across units and/or courses. Topical essential questions focus on a specific topic and are meant to be answered—if only provisionally—by unit's end.

Teaching for Understanding

If learning is to endure in a flexible, adaptable way for future use, then teachers must design units that in provide opportunity for students to 1) acquire knowledge; 2) to deepen the meaning of that knowledge by using it mindfully, and 3) to transfer their learning to new situations or problems.



What Does it Mean to Understand?

Knowledge

- observation and recall of information
- knowledge of dates, events, places, major ideas
- *Question Cues:* list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where

Comprehension

- grasp meaning and predict consequences
- order, group, classify, compare/contrast
- *Question Cues:* summarize, describe, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, report

Explanation

- knowledgeable and justified account of events, action, and ideas
- see patterns, trends, and relationships between parts
- *Question Cues:* support, confirm, justify, verify, prove, illustrate, use, design, describe, model, predict, show, synthesize, exhibit,

Interpretation

- making sense of others' work or data using analogy, metaphors, and artistry
- infer meaning and relevance
- *Question cues:* relate, infer, interpret, compose, rewrite, rearrange, evaluate, conclude, make sense of, read between the lines, represent, translate

Adapted from Wiggins, Grant and McTighe, Jay. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006.

What Does it Mean to Understand? (continued)

Application

- use information, methods, concepts, theories in new situations and diverse, realistic contexts
- *Question Cues:* apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, show, solve, change, create, translate, employ, interpret, illustrate, adapt, debug, invent, perform, solve, test

Perspective

- critical and insightful points of view making assumptions and implications explicit
- create new theories, stories, or applications
- *Question Cues:* analyze, argue, compare, contrast, criticize, infer

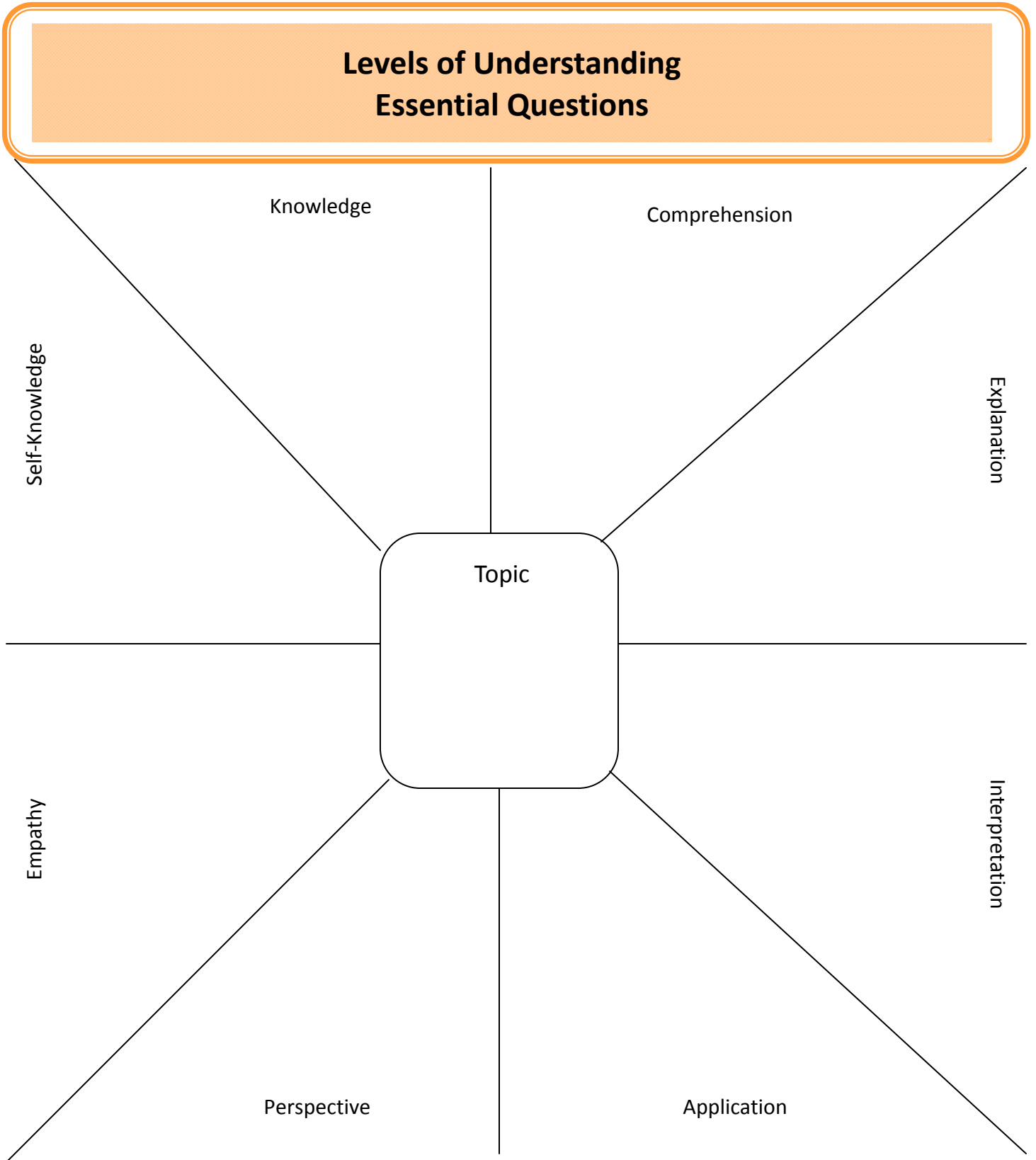
Empathy

- view a situation from another's point of view or feelings
- find meaning in the experiences or ideas of others
- *Question Cues:* assume the role of, believe, be like, consider, be open to, imagine, relate, role-play

Self-Knowledge

- self-consciously question our ways of seeing the world beyond ourselves
- look beyond simplistic categories to see unexpected differences, idiosyncrasies, or surprises in people and ideas
- *Question Cues:* be aware of, realize, recognize, reflect, self-assess

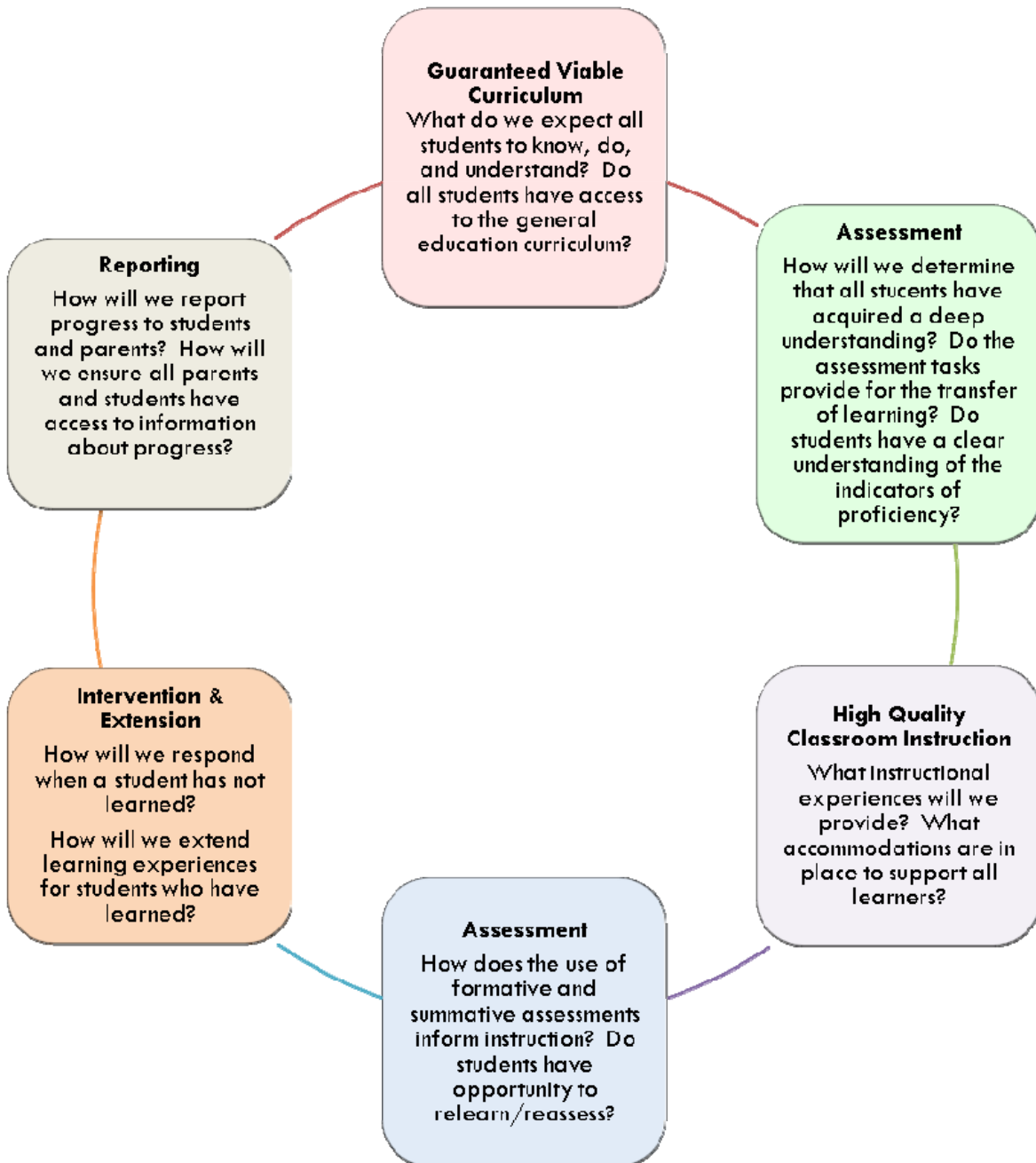
Adapted from Wiggins, Grant and McTighe, Jay. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006.



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Instructional Framework Making the Connections

A rigorous and challenging standards-based instructional program ensures maximum academic achievement for all students. The Boulder Valley School District Instructional Framework is a graphic representation that demonstrates how all of the components of an instructional program fit together. Teachers should use this framework and its questions to guide instructional planning and decision-making.



Characteristics of a Boulder Valley School District Standards-based Classroom

Curriculum

All Students Have Access to the General Education Curriculum

- Standards/essential learnings are clearly visible—in writing—in age appropriate student-friendly language
- Continual correlation of curriculum is made to the standards/essential learnings
- Models of high quality products (teacher generated, student generated or both) are provided by the district
- Students and parents are informed of expectations (course syllabus course, standards/essential learnings, grading policy, homework policy, and final culminating activity)
- All students are guaranteed access to the standards/essential learnings
- Lessons and units are developed using a backwards design process
- Suggested timelines are followed

Instruction

Quality Instruction Demands Student-Teacher Collaboration in the Learning Process

Instruction focuses on standards/essential learnings/curriculum

- Clear and high expectation for all students
- Instruction driven by standards/curriculum, not materials or a published program
- Frequent, timely, meaningful feedback of student accomplishment

Instruction supports equity with multiple opportunities to learn through grouping, scaffolding, differentiation, and extension

- Teachers use multiple forms of representation are used (e.g., pictures, words, symbols, diagrams, tables, graphs, word walls)

Students actively engage in learning

- Participate in classroom talk (listening, elaborating, clarifying, expanding)
- Apply rigorous, strategic thinking (application, explanation, perspective, interpretation, perspective, empathy, self-knowledge)

Characteristics of a Boulder Valley School District Standards-based Classroom

Assessment

Assessments are Tightly Aligned to the Standards

- Students and parents are provided with clear descriptions of proficiency
- Classroom grading practices clearly show how students are progressing toward essential learnings/standards
- Grading is based on attainment of the standards
- Student understanding is assessed through multiple types of formative and summative assessments
- Student assessment results are used to make instructional decisions about what direction to take
- Feedback explicitly guides continuous progress toward mastery of the standard and is provided to students in a timely manner
- Opportunities to relearn, reassess, and extend learning are embedded in every classroom
- Teachers collaborate in the design and analysis of common assessments that are aligned to standards
- Students create authentic products and performances for critical audiences

Learning Environment

A Healthy Community of Learners Thrives on Collaborative Processes That Value the Input of All Members

- Positive respectful relationships are evident within the classroom
- Students monitor and manage the quality of their own learning
- Student enrollment shows gender and racial/ethnic diversity
- Verbal and nonverbal cues indicate student engagement
- Teachers plan so that time is used purposefully and efficiently
- Students use time provided purposefully and efficiently
- Students and teachers negotiate and share decisions that positively impact the learning environment
- Teachers help students make connections between community, nation, world, and self
- Teachers show a connectedness with all students, respectful of student diversity and individual differences
- Students believe they are capable of success, take risks to engage in new experiences, and extend skills and habits of mind

High School Social Studies Essential Learnings

United States Government

- 🌐 Traces the origins of American democracy to classical civilizations, Enlightenment philosophy, and British political traditions
- 🌐 Explains the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens
- 🌐 Describes the unique characteristics of United States government
- 🌐 Explains the content, structure, and underlying principles of the federal constitution
- 🌐 Analyzes the powers and functions of the executive branch
- 🌐 Analyzes the powers and functions of the judicial branch
- 🌐 Analyzes the powers and functions of the legislative branch
- 🌐 Evaluates the roles of voters, association, lobbyists, and groups in local, state, and national parties
- 🌐 Connects current issues to long standing debates in American politics (e.g., federalism, individual rights v. public rights, privacy, service)
- 🌐 Explains why states have their own constitutions and the relationship of state constitutions to the federal constitution
- 🌐 Discusses the importance of community engagement in fostering responsible citizens
- 🌐 Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply civic concepts to new situations

High School Social Studies Essential Learnings

World Geography

- 🌐 Demonstrates the importance of understanding culture to solve problems
- 🌐 Discusses the meaning of changes in political boundaries
- 🌐 Selects appropriate geographic tools in order to analyze changes in population and demographics to predict future challenges
- 🌐 Analyzes the impact of movement of goods, ideas, and people over time
- 🌐 Analyzes the complexity of urban geography
- 🌐 Describes the various layers (local to international) of influence on the rate of economic development
- 🌐 Participates in a case study of the local community to analyze the interaction of human systems
- 🌐 Applies geographic skills, questions, and problem solving to understand emerging and ongoing world events
- 🌐 Analyzes the complex interactions between humans and their physical geography
- 🌐 Gathers information from a variety of data sets in order to draw conclusions about the characteristics of place
- 🌐 Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply geography concepts to new situations

Economics

- 🌐 Explains how economic choices are influenced by complex interactions of market conditions and individual priorities
- 🌐 Analyzes how governments organize to influence the distribution and control of capital, goods, and services
- 🌐 Identifies how the system of trade has local, national, and international influences
- 🌐 Explains the roles, rights, processes, and responsibilities of individuals in interacting with the system of trade and exchange
- 🌐 Analyzes the impact of scientific and technological development on individuals and society (i.e., computers, fiber optics, and the internet)
- 🌐 Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply economic concepts to new situations

High School Social Studies Essential Learnings

World History

- 🌐 Evaluates the major sources of social tension, conflict, and economic disparity in the contemporary world
- 🌐 Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply history concepts to new situations
- 🌐 Describes the encounters between peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Americas in the late 15th and early 16th centuries
- 🌐 Describes the origins and consequences of the slave trade in Africa and the Americas
- 🌐 Analyzes the causes and effects of European, American and Japanese imperial expansion
- 🌐 Gives examples of the varying responses of African peoples to world economic developments and European Imperialism
- 🌐 Describes major shifts in world geopolitics from 1900 to the present in international affairs and explains the changing role of world powers in international affairs
- 🌐 Analyzes how population, economic, and technological change accelerated from 1450 to 1770
- 🌐 Explains the causes and consequences of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, 1700-1850
- 🌐 Evaluates the impact of new social movements and cultural, intellectual, and educational trends
- 🌐 Recognizes how modern nationalism affected European politics and society
- 🌐 Identifies the successes and failures in the search for peace and stability in the post world wars
- 🌐 Identifies the economic, social, and political transformations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as a result of war and independence
- 🌐 Analyzes the extent and limits of Chinese regional power under the Ming Dynasty
- 🌐 Compares how Asian societies were transformed in the era of increased global contacts
- 🌐 Identifies major cultural trends in Asia between the 16th and 18th centuries
- 🌐 Describes how the French Revolution contributed to transformations in Europe and the world
- 🌐 Compares and contrasts the process and impact of independence for Latin American countries in the early 19th century
- 🌐 Assesses the impact of global trade on Eurasian societies 1750-1870
- 🌐 Creates a theory of the causes and global consequences of international conflict in the 20th century
- 🌐 Examines social trends in Europe within the framework of the Renaissance and Reformation
- 🌐 Describes the significance of the Renaissance, Reformation, and Catholic Reformation
- 🌐 Describes the effects of the rising military and economic power of European states between the 16th and 18th centuries
- 🌐 Evaluates how the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment contributed to transformations in European society

High School Social Studies Essential Learnings

American History II: 1890 to Present

- 🌐 Assesses the role of industrialization on the establishment of the United States as a world commercial power
- 🌐 Analyzes the causes and consequences of imperialism, including expansion and intervention in Asia, the Pacific, and Western Hemisphere
- 🌐 Analyzes how the beliefs of the Progressive Era are reflected in debates about current events
- 🌐 Evaluates the causes and consequences of the Great Depression on citizens, businesses, and the government
- 🌐 Compares and contrasts the causes and consequences of World War I and World War II on the United States
- 🌐 Analyzes the establishment of the United States as a global superpower
- 🌐 Debates the effectiveness of conservatives and liberals in affecting change in the late 20th century
- 🌐 Traces the challenges of the 21st century to previous actions, ideas, and beliefs
- 🌐 Critically examines history through different perspectives and then draws conclusions based on interpretation of facts
- 🌐 Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply historical concepts to new situations
- 🌐 Traces the patterns of thought and roots of conflict to previous events in United States history

Design Templates

Unit Design Template

Desired Results	
BVSD Standard(s)/Essential Learnings	
Unit Enduring Understandings	Unit Essential Questions
Students will know.....	Students will be able to.....
Assessment Evidence	
Performance/Transfer Tasks	Other Evidence
Rubric	Student Self-Assessment and Reflection

Unit Design Template (continued)

Learning Plans

Learning Activities

Materials

Accommodations

Technology Integration

Unit Design Template

Essential Learning:

Assessment:

Teaching for Understanding

	Acquire Knowledge	Make Meaning	Transfer
Essential Questions			
Learning Activities			
Materials			
Accommodations			

Curriculum Map

Month	Standards/Essential Learnings	Assessment	Knowledge Skills	Learning Activities	Accommodations	Materials

Curriculum Map

	August	September	October	November	December
Standards/ Essential Learnings					
Assessment					
Knowledge					
Skills					
Learning Activities					
Accommodations					
Materials					

Curriculum Map

	January	February	March	April	May
Standards/ Essential Learnings					
Assessment					
Knowledge					
Skills					
Learning Activities					
Accommodations					
Materials					

Curriculum Map

Month

Theme:

Unit Guiding Question(s):

Standards	Assessment	Knowledge and Skills	Learning Activities	Accommodations	Materials
Science					
Math					
Reading					
Writing					
Speaking					
Listening					
Social Studies					
Health					

Curriculum Map

Year At A Glance

	Reading	Writing	Math	Science	Social Studies	Health	Speaking/ Listening
August							
September							
October							
November							
December							
January							
February							
March							
April							
May							

Curriculum Map

Unit:

Timing:

Essential Questions

Standards/Essential Learnings

Notes	Assessments	Knowledge and Skills	Learning Activities	Accommodations	Materials

Curriculum Map

Unit:

Timing:

Standards/Essential Learnings	
Enduring Understandings	Assessment
	Knowledge and Skills
Essential Questions	Learning Activities
	Accommodations
	Materials

Curriculum Glossary of Terms

Anchor	An anchor is a sample of work or performance used to set the specific performance standard for each level of proficiency. Anchors contribute to scoring reliability and support students by providing tangible models of quality work.
Assessment	Assessment refers to the act of determining a value or degree.
Authentic assessment	An authentic assessment is one composed of tasks and activities design to simulate or replicate important, real-world challenges. It asks a student to use knowledge in real-world ways, with genuine purposes, audiences, and situational variables. Authentic assessments are meant to do more than “test;” they should teach students what the “doing” of a subject looks like and what kinds of performance challenges are actually considered most important in a field or profession.
Backward Design	An approach to designing a curriculum or unit that begins with the end in mind and designs toward that end. This term is used by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in <i>Understanding by Design</i> .
Benchmark	Clearly demarcated progress points that serve as concrete indicators for a standard.
Big Idea	In <i>Understanding by Design</i> (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005), the core concepts, principles, theories, and processes that should serve as the focal point of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Big ideas are enduring and important and transferable beyond the scope of a particular unit.
Concept	A concept is a mental construct or category represented by a word or phrase. Concepts include both tangible objects (chair, telephone) and abstract ideas (bravery, anarchy).
Content Standard	A content standard answers the question, “What <i>a student should know, do or understand?</i> ”
Curriculum	The curriculum represents what should be taught. It is an explicit and comprehensive plan that is based on content and process standards.
Curriculum Implementation	Curriculum implementation is putting the curriculum into place.
Curriculum Mapping	Curriculum mapping and webbing are approaches that require teachers to align the curriculum, standards, and learning activities across grade levels, within a grade level to ensure a continuum of learning that makes sense for all students.
Enduring Understanding	Enduring understandings are specific inferences, based on big ideas that have lasting value beyond the classroom. They are full-sentence statements that describe specifically what students will understand about the topic.

Curriculum Glossary of Terms

Essential Learnings	Essential Learnings are the backbone of a guaranteed viable curriculum. Essential Learnings are aligned with standards and articulate the skills, content, and concepts determined to be non-negotiable areas of proficiency attainment by all students so that they are prepared for the next year/level of education. The Essential Learnings are the mandated curriculum of the Boulder Valley School District and form the basis upon which summative assessments are created.
Essential Question	An Essential Question lies at the heart of a subject or a curriculum (as opposed to being either trivial or leading) and promotes inquiry and uncoverage of a subject. Essential questions do not yield a single answer, but produce different plausible responses, about which thoughtful and knowledgeable people may disagree. An essential question can be overarching, grade level specific, or unit specific in scope.
Essential Topics, Skills, Processes, Concepts	The topics, skills, processes, and concepts clarify the Essential Learnings, describe indicators of achievement, and inform the selection of formative and summative assessments.
Formative assessment	An assessment is considered formative when the feedback from learning activities is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet the learner's needs.
Guaranteed Viable Curriculum	In researching what works in schools, Robert Marzano (2003), found five school-level factors that promote student achievement. Using the process of statistical effect size analysis, Marzano concluded that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is the most powerful school-level factor in determining overall student achievement. Marzano defines a guaranteed and viable curriculum as a combination of opportunity to learn (guaranteed) and time to learn (viable). According to Marzano, students have the opportunity to learn when they study a curriculum that clearly articulates required standards to be addressed at specific grade levels and in specific courses. A curriculum is viable when the number of required standards is manageable for a student to learn to a level of mastery in the time provided (usually a semester, trimester, or year).
Learning Activities	These represent the experiences and instruction that will enable students to achieve the desired results such as materials, projects, lectures, videos, homework, assignments, presentations, accommodations, and vocabulary.
Performance Task	A performance task uses one's knowledge to effectively act or bring to fruition a complex product that reveals one's knowledge and expertise.
Prerequisite knowledge and skill	The knowledge and skill required to successfully perform a culminating tasks or achieve an understanding. These typically identify discrete knowledge and know-how required to put everything together in a meaningful, final performance.

Curriculum Glossary of Terms

Processes	Processes include all the strategies, decisions, and sub-skills a student uses in meeting the content standard.
Product	The tangible and stable result of a performance and the processes that led to it. The product is valid for assessing the student's knowledge to the extent that success or failure in producing the product reflects the knowledge taught and being assessed.
Rubric	A scoring tool that rates performance according to clearly stated levels of criteria and enables students to self-assess. A rubric answers the question, <i>What does understanding or proficiency for an identified result look like?</i> The scales can be numeric or descriptive.
Scope and Sequence	Scope refers to the breadth and depth of content to be covered in a curriculum at any one time (e.g. week, term, year, over a student's school life). Sequence refers to the order in which content is presented to learners over time. The order in which you do it. Together a scope and sequence of learning bring order to the delivery of content, supporting the maximizing of student learning and offering sustained opportunities for learning. Without a considered scope and sequence there is the risk of ad hoc content delivery and the missing of significant learning.
Strategies	Strategies are procedures, methods, or techniques to accomplish an essential learning.
Summative assessment	An assessment is considered summative when the feedback is used as a summary of the learning up to a given point in time.

United States Government Curriculum Essentials



Boulder Valley School District Social Studies Background

The Social Studies curriculum council began meeting in the Fall of 2007. This curriculum is a result of their focused attention and ability to examine and incorporate research about best practices in education. The work that follows incorporates the ideas of many researchers-including Robert Marzano, Joseph Kahne, Virginia Gay, Christine Sleeter, and Randall Lindsey. Each of whom addressed one or more of our goals:

- Viability
- Culturally Proficiency
- Currency
- Incorporates New Century Graduate Characteristics
- Addresses the Democracy Divide

Viability

In order to create a curriculum that can be taught using the teaching learning cycle, each content area was trimmed, in order to emphasize depth in our instruction. Creating a viable curriculum will help us in our efforts to close the achievement gap.

Cultural Proficiency

Just as the goals of BVSD embrace increasing the cultural proficiency of the district, this curriculum is designed to do so for the learner. Lindsey identifies 5 strategies for moving toward cultural proficiency: Know your differences, value difference, manage conflict, adapt to diversity and teach about culture. These skills are built into every grade level curricula. By introducing cultures not previously emphasized in our curriculum, allowing for cultural relevancy by bringing the students' culture into the classroom, and by incorporating a variety of perspectives on essential issues, this curriculum will be a step in moving our system forward in embracing difference, and narrowing our achievement gap.

Currency

What does a current curriculum look like? Our current

students will face a world very unlike our own.

We addressed five issues to bring currency into the curriculum:

1. **Change-** In the fast paced world our students encounter there is one theme that they will need the skills to address in their lives: Change. The theme of change: observing change, predicting change, adapting to change and creating change are imbedded ideas at every level.
2. **Regional Focus-** Additionally, the content focus has shifted to increase attention on Asia.
3. **Current Events-** Each grade level will be responsible for bringing in grade appropriate discussion of current events.
4. **Technology-** An up-to-date social studies curriculum will embrace the technological tools that not only enhance the social studies but make new learning possible. The US department of Labor states that careers involving the use of Geospatial technologies are one of the top 14 careers of the future. These careers will be as diverse as remote sensing, data collection, environment and urban planning, and digital cartography. The opening of Geospatial technologies to students as young as kindergarten will open new avenues to understanding and analyzing our world.
5. **Economics-** As a final update, we have increased the amount and frequency of economic content at every level. As our students enter a world of complex economics, we responded to the needs shown in our society.

New Century Graduate

The New Century Graduate characteristics that involve the social studies incorporate 10 of the categories designated in this document.

Boulder Valley School District Social Studies Background

These include *Life Competency*: Money Management, *Communication* with diverse audiences, *Multicultural Perspectives*, *Literacy*, *Mathematics* and Spatial understanding, *Thinking and Reasoning*, applied *Technology*, *Interpersonal Competency*, *Government and Civics*, and *History*. The essential understandings of each grade level are a reflection of these goals.

Democracy Divide

Finally, the curriculum focuses on what Joseph Kahne has labeled the Democracy Divide. The Democracy Divide is created after high school, but is reflected in the achievement gap and the types of activities that are encountered as part of a civics education. This research shows that the patterns created in school create a divide in the participation of adults in democratic institutions. Our curriculum incorporated the notion that our students should be involved in simulating and participating in government from the earliest ages.

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Boulder Valley School District Social Studies Content Standards**History Standard 1**

Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.

History Standard 2

Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

History Standard 3

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.

History Standard 5

Students understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time.

History Standard 4

Students understand the impact of economic activity and scientific and technological developments on individuals and societies.

History Standard 6

Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.



Boulder Valley School District Social Studies Content Standards

Geography Standard 1

Students know how to use and construct maps, globes, and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments.

Geography Standard 2

Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and interpret their patterns of change.

Geography Standard 3

Students understand how physical processes shape Earth's surface patterns and systems.

Geography Standard 4

Students understand how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape diverse patterns of human populations, movement, and interdependence, cooperation, and conflict.

Geography Standard 5

Students understand the effects of interactions between human and physical systems and the changes in meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

Geography Standard 6

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand and interpret the past and present and to plan for the future.

Civics Standard 1

Students understand the purposes of government and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Civics Standard 2

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Boulder Valley School District Social Studies Content Standards

Civics Standard 3

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Civics Standard 4

Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels—local, state and national.

Economics Standard 1

Students understand that because of the condition of scarcity, decisions must be made about the use of scarce resources.

Economics Standard 2

Students understand how different economic systems impact decisions about the use of resources and the production and distribution of goods and services.

Economics Standard 3

Students understand the results of trade, exchange, and interdependence among individuals, households, businesses, governments, and societies.

United States Government Overarching Enduring Understanding and Essential Questions**Overarching Enduring Understandings**

- The United States government is a complex system of checks and balances that protect individuals from government tyranny.
- Citizen involvement at the local, state and national level is essential.
- The policies of the United States toward other nations changes over time.
- Civic participation and individuals exercising their rights has been the catalyst for change over time.

Overarching Essential Questions

- What is the purpose and origin of the United States government?
- What is the structure of our government and how are citizens involved?
- How do current events in the world influence the foreign and domestic policies of the United States?
- What are the effects of an individual's participation in government?

Boulder Valley School District Social Studies

Content Standards and United States Government Essential Learnings

Civics Standard 1: *Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.*

In order to meet this standard, a United States Government student:

- √ Traces the origins of American democracy to classical civilizations, enlightenment philosophy, and British political traditions
- √ Explains the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens
- √ Describes the unique characteristics of United States government

Civics Standard 2: *Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.*

In order to meet this standard, a United States Government student:

- √ Explains the content and structure and underlying principles of the federal constitution
- √ Analyzes the powers and functions of the executive branch
- √ Analyzes the powers and functions of the judicial branch
- √ Analyzes the powers and functions of the legislative branch
- √ Evaluates the roles of voters, associations, lobbyists, and groups in local, state, and national parties

Civics Standard 3: *Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.*

In order to meet this standard, a United States Government student:

- √ Connects current issues to long standing debates in American politics (e.g. federalism, individual rights v. public rights, privacy, service).

Civics Standard 4: *Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels local, state, and international.*

In order to meet this standard, a United States Government student:

- √ Explains why states have their own constitutions and the relationship of state constitutions to the federal constitution
- √ Discusses the importance of community engagement in fostering responsible citizens
- √ Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply civic concepts to new situations

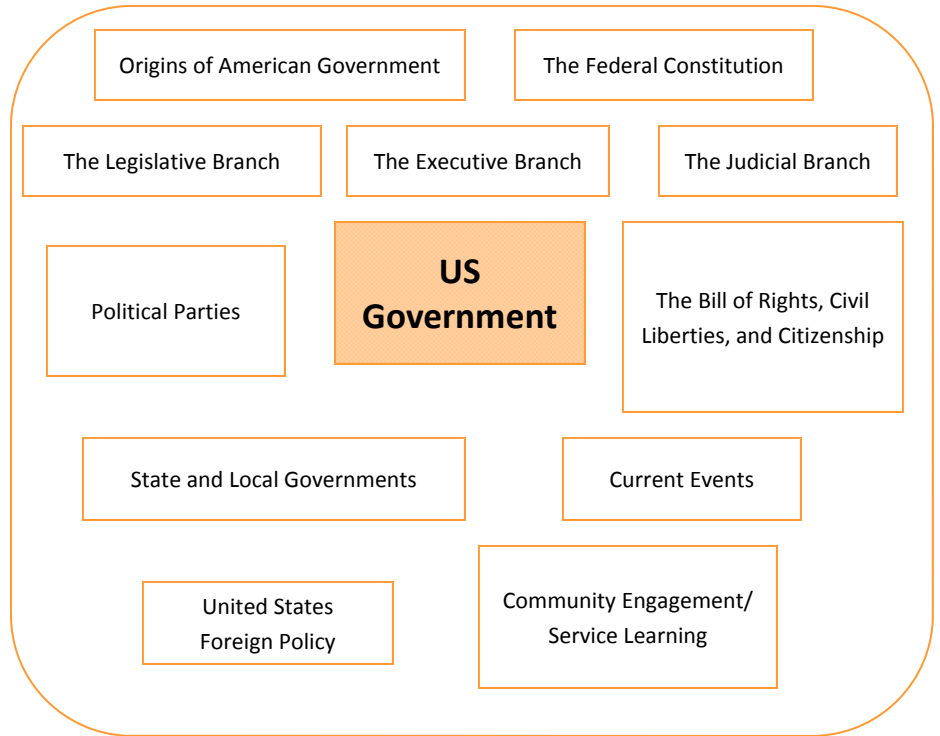
BVSD United States Government Overview

Course Description

This course reviews the basic concepts of United States Government from pre-revolutionary days to the present time, the functions of national, state, and local governments and their relationships to the citizens of the United States. The responsibilities and obligations of both the citizen and the government to each other are an integral part of this course. The course will combine the historical foundations with analysis of current events. Students will be encouraged to simulate, observe and participate in local government.

Effective Components of a US Government Program

- Uses broad themes and imbed the details
- Provides opportunities for simulation
- Utilizes collaborative strategies
- Supports inquiry
- Invites problem solving
- Addresses critical issues and current realities
- Teaches from many perspectives
- Uses direct instruction with visuals and graphic organizers
- Encourages involvement in the community and civic action



Assessment

- √ Comparing the Articles and the Constitution
- √ The 4th Amendment
- √ The 26th Amendment
- √ Checks and Balances
- √ US Partisan Politics
- √ Teacher-designed assessments
- √ Student-designed assessments

Essential Questions

- What is the purpose and origin of the United States government?
- What is the structure of our government and how are citizens involved?
- How do current events in the world influence the foreign and domestic policies of the United States?
- What are the effects of an individual's participation on government?

Technology Integration & Information Literacy

- ① Generates meaningful questions
- ① Develops a search strategy
- ① Finds relevant information from a variety of resources
- ① Interprets, analyzes and applies information to respond to questions
- ① Analyzes the ethical and legal issues around technology use
- ① Critiques the role of the media in government

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 1

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Enduring Understanding

The United States government is a complex system of checks and balances that protect individuals from government tyranny.

Essential Question

What is the purpose and origin of the United States government?

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC1	Traces the origins of American democracy to classical civilizations, enlightenment philosophy, and British political traditions
		a Traces the origins of democracy to classical civilizations
		b Describes the British political traditions of limited government and representative government
		c Identifies British political traditions in the structure of local governments and the cause of conflict in the American Colonies
		d Connects the concepts of enlightenment philosophy to the Declaration of Independence and other founding documents
		e Observes and analyzes modern interpretations of democratic ideas (e.g. , liberty, freedom, patriotism, justice, equality)
	SSC2	Explains the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens
		a Interprets the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment and the reason for their inclusion in the Constitution
		b Connects the concept of limited government to the exercising and protection of civil liberties
		c Describes the manner and means by which citizens can protect their individual rights and civil liberties
	d Identifies how citizens can participate in public life to solve civic and political problems	
	e Traces how civil liberties have expanded over time and continue to be debated	

Continued on next page

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 1 (continued)

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC3	Describes the unique characteristics of the United States Government
	a	Describes how republican forms of government differ in their procedures and structures (e.g., England, South Africa)
	b	Analyzes how governments influence economic systems (Cuba, China)
	c	Describes different types of government: limited, unlimited and absence of government (e.g., anarchy monarchy, theocracy, oligarchy, constitutional republic, tribal federations, democratic and totalitarian)

Key Academic Vocabulary: constitution, democracy, justice, liberty, limited government, nation, natural rights, power, republicanism, social contract, sovereign

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 2

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Enduring Understanding

Citizen involvement at the local, state and national level is essential.

Essential Question

What is the structure of the United States government and how are citizens involved?

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC4	Explains the content, structure, and underlying principles of the federal constitution
		a Describes and evaluates the Article of Confederation
		b Analyzes both sides of the ratification debate and eventual compromise
	SSC5	Analyzes the powers and functions of the executive branch
		a Evaluates the positive and negative aspects of the electoral college and proposed replacements
		b Analyzes the executive’s role in the formation and execution of foreign and domestic policy
		c Explains the relationship of power between the executive, legislative and judicial branches including the use of the veto
		d Explains the process of executive appointments and the role of the cabinet and the executive bureaucracy

Continued on next page

Essential Learnings
Essential Knowledge, Skills, topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 2 (continued)

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC6	Analyzes the powers and functions of the judicial branch
		a Compares federal and state/local laws and the jurisdictions thereof
		b Simulates and analyzes recent or upcoming court decisions
		c Analyzes landmark cases to understand the judicial branch and the rule of law
		d Follows and describes the process of an appointment to the judiciary
		e Considers the implications of an appointed judiciary vs. an elected one and the philosophical differences between judicial activism and judicial restraint
	SSC7	Analyzes the powers and functions of the legislative branch
		a Explains the legislative process (bill to a law)
		b Describes and evaluates the benefits of the electoral process for both houses of Congress (proportional vs. equal representation)
		c Describes and evaluates apportionment and the districting process for the House of Representatives
		d Identifies the process involved to override a veto
		e Discusses the role of lobbyists and special interest groups on the legislative process
		f Analyzes policy the legislative branch’s role in the formation and execution of foreign policy
	g Connects concepts to present day through study of current events	
	h Explains how Congressional majorities/minorities work to utilize and maintain power	

Key Academic Vocabulary: civic virtue, common goods, federalism, justice, liberty, political party, rule of law, partisan, democrat, republicans, libertarians, third party candidates, appropriation

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 2 (continued)

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC8	Evaluates the roles of voters, associations, lobbyists, and groups in local, state, and national parties
		a Describes the platforms and views of the major political parties in the United States
		b Considers why disagreement over fundamental principles of American government and constitutionalism may make compromise over public policy disputes difficult
		c Evaluates the increased use of mass media and internet technology by parties to exert influence
		d Describes the importance of “third parties” in bringing issues and ideas to the mainstream

Key Academic Vocabulary: civic values, civil disobedience, foreign policy, justice, liberty

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 3

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Enduring Understanding

The policies of the United States toward other nations changes over time.

Essential Question

How do current events in the world influence the foreign and domestic policies of the United States?

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC9	Connects current issues to long standing debates in American politics (e.g. federalism, individual rights vs. public rights, privacy, service)
	a	Demonstrates awareness of contemporary foreign policy issues and is able to defend a position on those issues
	b	Discuss foreign and domestic policy issues in a civil manner that respects the views of those who disagree
	c	Evaluates current international issues in which the foreign policy of the United States has played a significant role over time
	d	Evaluates the impact of significant historical international developments on the United States and other nations
	e	Reads how United States foreign policy actions are perceived by those outside of the United States
	f	Recognizes how United States foreign and domestic policies interact

Key Academic Vocabulary: foreign policy, domestic policy

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 4

Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels local, state, and international.

Enduring Understanding

Civic participation and individuals exercising their rights has been the catalyst for change over time.

Essential Question

What are the effects of an individual’s participation in government?

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC10	Explains why states have their own constitutions and the relationship of state constitutions to the federal constitution
		a Writes about the concept of federalism
		b Describes major provisions of the Colorado Constitution. (e.g., initiative,
		c Connects concepts of government to present day through study of current events
	SSC11	Discusses the importance of community engagement in fostering responsible citizens
		a Connects service learning to principles of American representative government and constitutionalism
	b Participates in or observes a local government decision making process that exposes students to the people, processes, and institutions that allow government to make decisions and take action. (e.g. town meeting, city council, school board, school improvement team, hearing, trial, zoning commission, etc)	
	c Analyzes the differences of citizen actions in the effort to persuade government officials (petitioning, protest, Political Action Committees, letter writing campaigns)	

Key Academic Vocabulary: individual rights, justice, liberty

Essential Learnings

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts

Civics Standard 4 (continued)

Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels local, state, and international.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Topics, Processes, and Concepts	SSC12	Applies reading and writing skills to inquire, think critically, and apply civic concepts to new situations
		a Clarifies, supports, and defends arguments orally and in written form in logical reasoned and effective methods
		b Contributes independent ideas based on synthesized information to class and group discussions

Key Academic Vocabulary: individual rights, justice, liberty

Suggested Timelines

Topic	Suggested Timeframe
Origins of American Government	2 weeks
The Federal Constitution	6 weeks
The Legislative Branch	
The Executive Branch	
The Judicial Branch	
The Bil of Rights, Civil Liberties and Citizenship	
Political Parties	6 weeks
State and Local Governments	
Current Events	
US Foreign Policy	
Community Engagement/Service Learning	2 weeks

Social Studies Scope & Sequence K-5

	K	1	2	3	4	5
History	Cultural Identity	Families	Community Community Holidays	Native Peoples Explorers and Encounters State Holidays	Colonization Revolution Sovereignty	Civil War Immigration
Civics	My School and Classroom	Neighborhood	Community Government	Colorado Government	Democratic Ideas	Federal Government Bill of Rights Constitution
Economics	Needs and Wants	Producers and Consumers	Goods and Services	Scarcity	Entrepreneurship Mercantilism Free market economy Barter system Monetary system Currency	International Trade Industrialization
Geography	Maps and Globes Map Features	Continents, Communities Mexico Japan	Culture India Alaska China Natural Resources Population Thematic Maps Satellite imagery	Colorado Map Topography Indigenous Lands Exploration Routes Natural Resource maps	Map the Colonial Americans South, East and Western Colonies 13 Colonies Interdependence Region	Resource Distribution Expansion Human Population Movement Regional Development

Social Studies Scope & Sequence Middle Level

	6 Western Hemisphere	7 Eastern Hemisphere	8 United States History
History	Aztec, Inca, Maya	Ancient Greece and Rome Origin of World Religions	U.S. History to 1890
Geography	Map Skills Physical Processes Regions and Change Cooperation and Conflict Resource Distributions Geographic Problem Solving	Regions and Change Cooperation and Conflict Resource Distributions Geographic Problem Solving	Regional Development of the United States
Economics	Interdependence Resource Distribution		Development of Market Economy
Civics	US Foreign Policy Issues analysis and decision making	Origin of Democratic Ideas Issues analysis and decision making	US Constitution Changes to the Constitution

Social Studies Scope & Sequence High School

Topic	9	10	11	12
History		World History 1450 to the Present	US History 1890 to the Present	
Geography	Human Systems Geographic Tools Human- Environmental Interaction Current Events			
Economics (elective)				Macro Economic Concepts Financial Literacy Current Economic Events
Civics	Civic Engagement Origin of US Government Structure and Function of Government Parties, Interest Groups and Lobbyists State and Local Government Current Events			

United States Government Glossary of Terms

CIVICS

bicameral legislature	A legislature which has two legislative chambers.
checks and balances	Constitutional mechanisms that authorize each branch of government to share powers with the other branches and thereby check their activities. For example, the president may veto legislation passed by Congress, the Senate must confirm major executive appointments, and the courts may declare acts of Congress unconstitutional.
civic life	Public life of the citizen concerned with the affairs of the community and nation as contrasted with private or personal life, which is devoted to the pursuit of private and personal interests.
civic values	Individual rights including life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness; the common or public good; self government; justice; equality; openness and free inquiry; truth; and patriotism.
civic virtue	Dedication of citizens to the common welfare, even at the cost of their individual interests.
common good	Benefit or interest of a politically organized society as a whole.
constitution	A written or unwritten plan for government.
democracy	Form of government in which political control is exercised by all the people, either directly or through their elected representatives.
democratic republic	A term used to reflect that the United States form of government combines the best principles of both a democracy and a republic to limit the power of the government and to protect the inalienable rights of all individual citizens.
executive branch	Branch of government that carries out the laws made by the legislative branch; and in the national government, makes treaties with foreign governments and conducts wars.
federalism	The division of power between the state and federal government. The federal government's powers to make laws are listed in the Constitution and the remaining powers are reserved for the states.
individual rights	Rights possessed by individuals rather than those rights claimed by groups.
judicial branch	Branch of government that interprets and applies the constitution and laws through a system of courts.
justice	Fair distribution of benefits and burdens, fair correction of wrongs and injuries, or use of fair procedures in gathering information and making decisions.
legislative branch	Branch of government that makes the laws; in the federal government, this is Congress; in the Colorado state government, this is the General Assembly.

United States Government Glossary of Terms (continued)

liberty	Freedom from unjust or undue governmental control.
majority rule	Rule by more than half of those participating in a decision.
mediation	Act of resolving or settling differences by using an intermediary agent between two or more conflicting parties.
nation	Political organization that claims sovereignty over a defined territory and jurisdiction over the people in that territory.
natural rights	Belief that individuals are naturally endowed with basic human rights; those rights that are so much a part of human nature that they cannot be taken away or given up, as opposed to rights conferred by law. The Declaration of Independence states that these natural rights include the rights of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."
negotiation	Process of arranging or settling by conferring or discussing.
patriotism	Loyalty to one's country and its values and principles.
power	Ability or official capacity to exercise control; authority.
principles	Basic rules that guide or influence thought or action.
representation	The right or privilege of being represented by delegates having a voice in a legislative body.
republic/republicanism	A form of government in which power is held by the people. The government is administered by officers elected by the people to serve their interests.
rule of law	Principle that every member of a society, even a ruler, must follow the law.
separation of powers	Division of governmental power among several institutions that must cooperate in decision making.

Colorado State Statutes Specific to Social Studies Instruction Education Statutes 2009

- 22-1-104. Teaching of history, culture, and civil government.** (1) The history and civil government of the state of Colorado shall be taught in all the public schools of this state. (2) In addition, the history and civil government of the United States, which includes the history, culture, and contributions of minorities, including, but not limited to, the American Indians, the Hispanic Americans, and the African Americans, shall be taught in all the public schools of the state.
- 22-1-106. Information as to honor and use of flag.** The commissioner of education shall provide the necessary instruction and information so that all teachers in the grade and high schools in the state of Colorado may teach the pupils therein the proper respect of the flag of the United States, to honor and properly salute the flag when passing in parade, and to properly use the flag in decorating and displaying.
- 22-1-108. Federal constitution to be taught.** In all public and private schools located within the state of Colorado, there shall be given regular courses of instruction in the Constitution of the United States.
- 22-1-109. Taught at what stages.** Such instruction in the constitution of the United States shall begin not later than the opening of the junior high schools or seventh grade and shall continue in the high school course and in courses in state colleges, universities, and the educational department of state and municipal institutions to an extent to be determined by the commissioner of education.
- 22-32-135. Financial literacy curriculum.** Each school district board of education is strongly encouraged to adopt as part of its district curriculum courses pertaining to financial literacy to be taught in grade-appropriate courses at the elementary, middle, junior high, and high school grade levels. When selecting mathematics and economics textbooks, each school district is strongly encouraged to select those texts that include substantive provisions on personal finance, including personal budgeting, credit, debt management, and similar personal finance topics. (4) Each school district board of education is further encouraged to adopt successful completion of a course in financial literacy as a graduation requirement.
- 22-7-406. Adoption of state model content standards, state assessments, and timelines - resource bank.**
...(c) In the process of revising and adopting the state content standards pursuant to section 22-7-1005, the board shall adopt standards for financial literacy that address, at a minimum, the financial literacy topics specified in section 22-2-127 (1). Following adoption of the financial literacy standards, the board shall identify the financial literacy standards that are appropriately assessed within a mathematics assessment and shall ensure that the identified standards are assessed within the mathematics assessments administered as part of the system of assessments adopted pursuant to section 22-7-1006. Inclusion of one or more financial literacy standards within a mathematics assessment shall not prevent the board from assessing the remaining financial literacy standards within one or more other assessments. May 14, 2008