

Zionsville Community Schools

Board of School Trustees Meeting “Item for Consideration”

New Business 6a • Date: June 9, 2025

Middle School Social Studies Instructional Material

Category:

_____ Human Resources, Personnel/Staffing	<u> X </u> Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	
_____ Finance, Budgeting, Accounting	_____ Student Services	_____ Board Policy
_____ Facilities, Transportation, Nutrition	_____ Community Relations	_____ Other

Type of Board of Trustees Consideration Sought:

Action	<u> X </u>
Discussion	_____
Report	_____

Facts of this Matter:

Public Law 73-2011 altered state and local textbook adoption procedures. Under this law, Indiana no longer follows a strict six-year cycle for materials adoption. Other than the requirement to adopt an approved literacy program in grades K-8, adoption of new materials is optional, and districts have discretion to continue to use current materials beyond the six-year cycle without needing a waiver from the state. Local school districts determine their own materials’ review process, purchasing cycles, and criteria for selection of new materials (both print and digital).

One of the content areas ZCS evaluated recently was middle school social studies.

Overview of Recommendation:

Teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators reviewed our current materials, Indiana Academic Standards and updated course outlines. **It was determined that the core social studies instructional material will remain the same.** After careful consideration, we are recommending *The DBQ Project* as a supplemental instructional material to help support literacy skills.

DBQ stands for Document-Based Question that assesses a student’s ability to analyze historical sources and make arguments. Students write multi-paragraph, evidence-based essays using their documents and outlines to support and explain their reasoning. Students learn to read different kinds of text in each unit. Documents include cartoons, maps, letters, drawings, first-person narratives, charts and graphs, historians’ accounts, photographs and more.

The DBQ Project promotes strong writing and thinking about history. The DBQs require students to evaluate primary and secondary sources, to analyze and evaluate their importance and to take a position and defend a point of view of their own. As part of the process, students learn vocabulary and gain strong content knowledge about history as they collaborate with peers, explore ideas verbally, and ultimately analyze and write an evidence-based analytical essay. Many students will come across

DBQs later in their educational journey since many AP history assessments include document-based questions.

Objective POSITIVES related to this item or approach:

Classroom teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators were a part of this process.

Objective NEGATIVES related to this item or approach:

None known or anticipated at this time.

Opinion/Recommendation:

Kris Devereaux, Assistant Superintendent, is asking the ZCS Board of Trustees

1. To adopt the material reviewed and selected by teachers and administrators for use with the instruction of middle school social studies,
2. To authorize the Superintendent and/or her designee to sign all contracts and/or agreements to authorize the purchase of the listed adoption materials.

Financial Implications, if any:

Due to new legislation, Zionsville Community Schools will incur all costs associated with the recommended instructional materials with potential reimbursement from the state.

Suggested Wording for a Motion, if any:

I move to approve the adoption of instructional materials as presented and to authorize the Superintendent and/or her designee to sign all contracts and/or agreements to authorize the purchase of the listed adoption materials.