

BACKGROUND OF PROGRAMMING IN BHM SCHOOLS

Buffalo Community Middle School

The required social studies courses at BCMS are:

- Grade 6: Minnesota History
- Grade 7: US History
- Grade 8: Geography

These courses include instruction and assessment on Minnesota State Standards in Social Studies. Instruction is focused on conceptual ideas, application of learning, and higher level thinking.

Buffalo High School

Students are required to earn 3.5 credits of social studies for graduation. Each trimester course is worth either .5 or 1 full credit. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, students will begin social studies instruction at Buffalo High school with Human Geography. Following their first year, students move on to one credit of US history, one credit of World Studies, and then a half credit of Government + Citizenship and a half credit of Economics. BHS strives to provide students with a self-directed learning path that is relevant to their growth. There are also a variety of elective courses that students may choose to take in Social Studies. These include a variety of opportunities for students to connect, collaborate, and communicate, as well as a chance to earn college credit in CIS (College in the Schools) courses.

BHS Elective Social Studies Courses:

Current Events
Minnesota History
World Religions
History through Film
CIS Intro to Psychology
Psychology
Social Issues & Diversity
CIS Intro to Sociology
Law & Order

The last curriculum adoption for the Social Studies department was in May of 2013. The middle school team adopted earlier versions of TCI and Prentice Hall, while the high school adopted earlier versions of TCI and McGraw Hill. Since then, there have been updates to state standards and adjustments to scope and sequence of course progression.

Due to these changes and adjustments, updates to curricular materials is necessary to support student growth and achievement.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

From the MDE Website:

Social studies is the interdisciplinary study of citizenship and government, economics, geography, history, and other disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. Social Studies empowers learners to become inquisitive, informed, and engaged members of society who can use critical thinking, inquiry, and literacy to prepare for college, careers, and civic life.

State statute requires that all public school students in Minnesota satisfactorily complete all Social Studies standards and their corresponding benchmarks in order to graduate.

Students are also required to satisfactorily complete three and one half (3.5) credits of social studies, encompassing at least U.S. history, world history, geography, government and citizenship, and economics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in social studies.

Grade-specific benchmarks in grades K - 8 are mandated by law. Thus, they must be addressed in the specific grade where they are assigned. The Social Studies standards contain grade-specific standards for each of the four main disciplines.

The high school Social Studies standards are banded and must be taught within the grade span of 9 - 12. At any grade level, the benchmarks from multiple disciplines can be combined to facilitate integrated or interdisciplinary, learning experiences. The standards represent the minimum requirements; schools may offer courses in additional disciplines, including psychology, sociology, archaeology, and anthropology.

The 2021 K - 12 Academic Standards in Social Studies were adopted in 2024, and are scheduled for full implementation in the 2026-2027 school year. The Commissioner Approved draft can be viewed at [this link](#).

Social studies faculty have taken the new standards and shifts in scope + sequence into consideration while determining the programming to recommend for approval through the pilot process.

PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

During the Research phase of the Continuous Improvement Process, the middle and high school teams met to discuss and generate an updated program vision statement for each site. The teams worked through the long term goals of the the department and decided upon the following:

BCMS Vision Statement:

The social studies content area empowers learners to become inquisitive, informed, and engaged members of society who use critical thinking, inquiry, and literacy to prepare for civic life, college and careers.

BHS Vision Statement:

Teaching students about the world so that they can navigate the world.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

The district's Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) requires a comprehensive review of needs, educational research, and potential materials prior to making a recommendation in the Curriculum Adoption Proposal. During the CIP phases of RESEARCH and PILOT over the past two years, the Social Studies Team engaged in the following activities:

7th Grade

The team reviewed various resources and textbooks as foundational resources. The two final resources were Savvas and TCI: History Alive! PreHistory - Industrialism + Industrialism through Modern Times.

The Savvas resources did not as cohesively include the new Minnesota State Standards in Social Studies. Thus, the team landed on the TCI: History Alive volumes to exclusively pilot. The pilot was extremely successful due to the structure, online resources, and overall layout which benefitted student growth and achievement. As stated, the new Minnesota State Standards in US History are covered more completely in the TCI resource.

Additionally, digital subscriptions for students to access materials online at all times is extremely important. During the pilot process, packets were created to supplement the text while using resources from past years. Moving forward, utilizing the digital platform of TCI to supplement the text material will assist in allowing more fluidity in content.

The team is formally recommending the TCI: History Alive! PreHistory - Industrialism + Industrialism through Modern Times textbooks and digital seats as core resources.

8th Grade

The team chose to pilot materials from Savvas, Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt, and TCI (Geography Alive). These pilots included deep dives into the resources to see how the new Minnesota State Standards aligned with the resource. Also taking into account the digital and non-digital materials and teacher

resources, the team found that the Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt texts (Eastern + Western World Geography) best met student needs. This resource includes history, economics, and geography benchmarks.

Additionally, the team piloted Geography Alive's mapping labs in our course. This tool was positive and went well; however, working with physical maps showed better outcomes for students. The TCI text and pilot was very similar to that which is already implemented with the previous Minnesota State Standards.

At this time, because BCMS is not a 1 to 1 technology to student school, many of the digital resources were not of use – so the focus was on finding a core resource that best supported student learning.

The current TCI resource is from 2005, and a lot has changed since then. Aside from the updated state standards, there are now topics in history and economics to be covered in the 8th grade curriculum.

US History + World Studies + Economics

Piloted resources for the United States History course were Savvas (US History / World History Interactive) and TCI: History Alive! Pursuing American Ideals + TCI: History Alive! World Connections. Digital and technology resources were an important component of the resource selection.

Economics piloted the new edition of TCI's EconAlive! and were able to identify updates that supported the new Minnesota state standards and updates to the resources that support diverse learners.

Prior to this adoption, the teams utilized TCI and McGraw Hill texts and resources. The TCI digital resources are familiar to students and the layout is both teacher and student friendly. This led to the review and recommendation of the updated TCI texts.

A benefit of purchasing new materials is that the new textbook/resources include additional components, such as: ELL resources, Spanish translation, direct access to primary documents, reading checks, annotation tools, text to speech, and direct links to Google Classroom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6th Grade Minnesota History

There is no recommendation to purchase an updated resource at this time. Northern Lights published by the Minnesota Historical Society is the only comprehensive resource as a core curriculum product to meet the 6th grade social studies standards. The Northern Lights materials are not scheduled for an update and republication for 2 years. The district is planning to delay any curriculum adoption for Grade 6 until this resource is updated.

7th Grade US History

The seventh grade team is moving forward with the recommendation of TCI: HistoryAlive! Pre-History

through Industrialism and Industrialism - Modern Times. The updated textbook with modern references, updated unit structure, and interactive resources will support student growth and engagement.

With any new resource, curriculum writing time to create supports to the foundational curriculum will be necessary.

8th Grade Geography

The eighth grade team is moving forward with the recommendation of Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt's Eastern + Western World Geography textbook and digital resources. Due to the changing standards in Social Studies, the Human Geography course at Buffalo High School, and needs for updates, this resource will engage and prepare students.

US History

The US History team decided upon utilizing the updated version of TCI's History Alive! Pursuing American Ideals text. The team formally recommends moving forward with the updated version that includes digital supplemental resources to support student engagement and growth. Further supplemental resources will need to be implemented for Indigenous Histories benchmarks and standards.

World Studies

The World Studies team decided upon utilizing the updated version of TCI's History Alive! World Connections text. The team formally recommends moving forward with the updated version that includes digital supplemental resources to support student engagement and growth. Further supplemental resources will need to be implemented for Indigenous Histories benchmarks and standards.

Economics TCI Econ Alive

The World Studies team decided upon utilizing the EconAlive! The Power to Choose text. The team formally recommends moving forward with the updated version that includes digital supplemental resources to support student engagement and growth.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Grade 7	TCI	\$52,950
Grade 8HMH		\$25,845
U.S. History, World Studies, Economics	TCI	\$135,160

[Social Studies: CAP Resource Spreadsheet 2024](#)

Upcoming Resource Adoptions:

Geography - Grade 9 TBD Fall 2024

Social Studies Electives	TBD	2024-2025
Grade 6	MN Historical Society	2027-2028

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the curriculum adoption will be monitored in several ways. Some of the anticipated desired outcomes include:

- Increased common lesson plans, units, and expectations as measured by each site level among core course social studies staff.
- Common assessments and pacing based on PLC teams
- More common language and common experiences over the coming years as evaluated by teaching staff
- End of the year evaluation by social studies teachers on use by students and self-ranking of how the curriculum supports their mission and vision.

NEXT STEPS

Once approved, the resources will be purchased and teachers will begin preparing for implementation. Planning and preparation will take place in August and the implementation of resources will be supported through the district's Continuous Improvement Process.

- Timeline for purchase
 - After July 1, 2024.
- Professional Development needs or Preparation for Use
 - Summer Curriculum Writing Planning Time
 - Spring / Fall Professional Development
 - Implementation CIP days