



BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM ADOPTION PROPOSAL (CAP) REPORT

History of Social Studies Programming at BHS

There are 3.5 required credits of Social Studies for students at Buffalo High School. The required courses are *American Experience* (9th grade Civics/Government), *American History* (10th grade), *World Studies* (11th grade), and *Economics* (11th or 12th grade). In addition to required courses, students may take elective offerings including Minnesota History, Current Events, Social Problems, Diversity Studies, World Religions, and Psychology. There are advanced courses offered in Economics, Psychology and American History where students can earn college credit.

Students in BHS Social Studies classes learn skills beyond the content of each course. For example, students in every course analyze sources, recognize bias, develop research and writing skills, learn to utilize different types of technology, work with classmates of all abilities and viewpoints, and study current issues. Our goal is to teach and prepare BHS students to be 21st Century global citizens.

It has been 15 years since BHS Social Studies has had an opportunity to purchase new instructional resources. Students currently share a classroom set of textbooks and student access to technology is limited. Over the past 15 years, class sizes have increased at Buffalo High School, so most social studies courses do not have enough textbooks for the number of students in each class. New textbooks and access to technology will better prepare students with the knowledge and skills necessary for our ever-changing world.

State Standards Revision 2011 and Impact

The new high school standards have not altered the required courses offered at BHS, however there has been a shift from a European-centered approach to history instruction to a more global emphasis. Rather than implementing a separate Geography course requirement, the geography benchmarks in the State Standards are integrated into all required courses at BHS. The new textbooks with the addition of technology will allow teachers to meet the requirements of the revised standards.

Process for Review of Instructional Resources and Recommendation

Within the district continuous improvement process, a program goal is developed by teachers.

The purpose of this goal is to guide decisions and action plans within the improvement process. Each step of the process, the goal is used to determine if the next step is aligned with the intent of the desired goal. The secondary social studies program goal is listed below.

***Secondary Social Studies Improvement Process Goal:
Provide students with access to authentic learning experiences
beyond the four walls, both virtually and physically.***

When looking into new materials, we considered three options;

- Updating textbook resources
- Creating and writing our own curriculum resources
- Updating textbooks and integrating student-centered technology

The decision was made to allow teachers to choose the best option for each required course. American Experience, American History, and World Studies decided to update textbooks and purchase iPad Minis and Chromebooks. For those courses, there are excellent textbook resources available that meet the state standards. iPad Minis were chosen based on their capability to both be used for research and student created projects. Chromebooks allow students to quickly research, write, and collaborate through the use of Google Applications that are already available to students. Both iPad Minis and Chromebooks are cost-effective, portable, and user-friendly. The Economics teachers decided to write their own curriculum based on the specific standards of their course while utilizing iPad Minis for the same reasons previously mentioned. All elective courses are taught by teachers who also teach a required course. Elective courses will also be able to access the technology resources provided for the required courses.

Financial Implications

The curriculum and technology needs for BHS social studies adoption include sets of Chromebooks and iPad minis, 40 new textbooks per teacher for classroom use (plus additional textbooks available for special education teachers), and new teacher resource materials. Economics teachers will also need curriculum writing time to develop and create their new curriculum based on the revised state standards. The total cost for this curriculum adoption proposal is approximately \$123,000 for BHS.

Evaluation

Having updated textbooks and consistent access to technology will allow BHS Social Studies teachers to collaborate and create lessons together. Utilizing technology will allow teachers to more easily adapt to the ever-changing state standards and stay connected to the world. With updated resources, teachers will work to create and evaluate common assessments across course areas. We will continue to adjust curriculum as we move through the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP).

Next Steps

Teachers will have some days to work together as a course area team over the summer to become familiar with the curriculum and resources and plan additional lessons and assessments to ensure that the state standards are being met. One additional day per quarter during the first year of implementation will be used to evaluate and enhance the curriculum as needed. Teachers will also participate in training to best utilize the curriculum and online resources that are available. The implementation costs associated with curriculum planning and development, as well as training costs, are all budgeted within the Teaching & Learning Department's professional development dollars separately from the curriculum adoption proposal.