

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

704 KAR 3:303, Kentucky Core Academic Standards (First Reading)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.070, 156.160

History/Background:

Existing Policy.

Social Studies

The proposed Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies were developed by Kentucky educators for Kentucky students and educators. Senate Bill 1 (2009) requires that Kentucky revise all required content standards to reflect the necessary knowledge and skills needed to ensure all students are college- and career-ready. SB 1 suggests that all standards should be rigorous, world class, and internationally benchmarked, while also allowing for deeper engagement around fewer concepts/topics. Despite the fact that the Kentucky Core Academic Standards for English/language arts includes a section for Literacy in History/Social Studies, there is still a need for a set of social studies standards that fully addresses the needs of Kentucky's 21st century learners.

In February 2013, an exemplary team of elementary, middle, high school, higher education, and key social studies advocacy group representatives was established to begin setting a vision for and drafting new social studies standards for the Commonwealth. This team established desired characteristics/elements for a new set of Kentucky social studies standards written by Kentucky teachers for Kentucky students.

As shared at the August Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) meeting, several relevant resources were selected to inform the development of the new Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. They include:

- The *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Inquiry in Social Studies State Standards*, developed by the National Council on Social Studies (NCSS)—led by University of Kentucky's Kathy Swan (who also is on the team mentioned above) -- focuses on the disciplinary and multidisciplinary concepts and practices that make up the process of investigation, analysis, and explanation.
- The *Global Competence Matrix* outlines key knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students need to act creatively and innovatively on issues of global

significance. The Matrix was developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Asia Society through the EdSteps Initiative.

- *How Students Learn: History in the Classroom*, released in 2005 from the National Research Council, outlines the latest cognitive research that can be applied to teaching and learning in the area of history.
- *P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning* presents a holistic view of 21st century teaching and learning that combines a discrete focus on 21st century student outcomes (a blending of specific skills, content knowledge, expertise and literacies) with innovative support systems to help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required of them in the 21st century and beyond.

The initial standards revision and advisory team brought this massive task to the point where development needed to be continued in smaller teams. In keeping with the desire to ensure the new standards were truly written *by* KY teachers, a call for writers was issued, requesting K-12 teachers to apply to be on a writing team. More than 140 teachers applied and 40 were selected to represent each level and region across the state. (See attachment A for information regarding both teams' membership.)

The writing team spent the summer of 2014 studying the resources mentioned above and turning the vision and the suggested characteristics into the proposed *Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies*.

The proposed *Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies* (Attachment B) have met the criteria set forth in SB 1 (2009) guiding the revision to the content standards, which include the following:

- A focus on critical knowledge and skills;
- Fewer, but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning;
- Communication of expectations more clearly and concisely with the basis being evidence-based research;
- Consideration of international benchmarks;
- Alignment of the standards from elementary to postsecondary so that students can be successful at each education level;
- Participation of practicing elementary and secondary teachers, postsecondary education content faculty, and others;
- Consideration of national standards where available.

Work is currently underway to get feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders. Feedback has been or is in the process of being gathered from:

- Teacher Leaders representing each participating district in our system of Leadership Networks;
- School and district leaders participating in Leadership Networks;
- Higher Education Social Studies group convened by the Council on Postsecondary Education;
- Teachers attending the 2014 Kentucky Council for the Social Studies Conference;

- Teacher leaders representing the Hope Street Fellows, Center for Teaching Quality Fellows;
- Representatives from Kentucky education groups, including the Kentucky Association for School Administrators, Kentucky Association for School Councils, Kentucky Education Association, Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Kentucky PTA, and several others.

A schedule for focus groups that will provide feedback on the social studies standards is attachment C.

Arts

The current *Kentucky Core Academic Standards for the Arts* (KCAS) were written prior to the passing of Senate Bill 1 (2009), when Kentucky had mandated statewide testing in the arts at grades 5, 8, and 11. Those standards were intentionally designed to be measurable in the pencil and paper testing format that Kentucky used at that time. Although the standards were built around Big Ideas and larger concepts, the focus remained primarily on preparing students to demonstrate knowledge and some degree of application of knowledge on the state assessment.

In SB 1, a seventh goal was added to the six preexisting goals that specifically establishes a direction for arts education in Kentucky. Under “158.6451, Legislative declaration on goals for Commonwealth's schools,” this was added:

“7. Express their creative talents and interests in visual arts, music, dance, and dramatic arts.”

This statement designates that arts education in Kentucky should focus on creative expression (i.e., making or “doing” the arts). With the passing SB 1, arts standards, along with all other content area standards, were to be revised.

The original *National Standards for Arts Education* were published in 1994. Much has changed in arts education since that time. A national coalition of arts education stakeholders came together in 2011 to reconsider the 1994 standards. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards formed as an organization to promote the development of new national arts standards which reflect current research, pedagogy, and learning in the arts.

Work began in September 2011 toward the development of the National Core Arts Standards. Five writing teams were recruited from more than 450 applicants to write standards for dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts. It was determined that the new standards would be more focused on process with less emphasis on content. This aligns with the 7th goal in SB 1 in that these standards are designed to engage students in the processes used to create and understand artistic expression.

Writing was continually supported by research as the College Board conducted a number of studies to specifically inform the work as writers were drafting the standards. This enabled writers to respond to research as the standards were being developed, and incorporate research findings into the drafts.

It also was determined that Model Cornerstone Assessments would be developed to accompany the standards. Developing those assessments involved the standards writers to insure that the assessments truly provide a way of measuring student progress toward meeting the standards. The assessments, as with the standards, are voluntary; classroom-based, and engage students in authentic performance tasks.

During the writing process a conceptual framework was developed to define artistic literacy and the role of quality arts education in the development of artistically literate citizens. The standards are built on philosophical foundations and lifelong goals in the arts for all citizens.

As the standards were being drafted, four public reviews were conducted to gather input to inform the writers. These reviews resulted in thousands of comments and suggestions which were synthesized by researchers and brought forward to the writers to consider as they made edits and modifications to the standards. The reviews were conducted to provide transparency and to insure that the standards meet the needs of the field. Kentucky was well-represented among those providing feedback. Attachment D illustrates Kentucky's involvement in the process.

The National Core Arts Standards, released to the public on June 4, 2014 via a website, have met all the criteria set forth in SB 1 (2009) guiding the revision of content standards, which include the following:

- A focus on artistic expression;
- Fewer, but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning;
- Standards supported by research;
- Consideration of international benchmarks;
- Alignment from Pre-K through postsecondary;
- Participation of practicing elementary, secondary, and postsecondary teachers in writing the standards;
- Consideration of national standards;
- Wide dissemination of the proposed standards for feedback.

The proposed *Kentucky Academic Standards for the Arts* are provided as Attachment E.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Adoption of the social studies and arts standards adheres to the expectations outlined in SB 1 (2009), which established the state's college and career readiness agenda for students in Kentucky schools. The standards compliment the Kentucky Academic Standards in English/language arts and mathematics.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Halliday". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roy" being more prominent.

Commissioner of Education

Date:

October 2014