

Minnesota Academic Standards

History and Social Studies

You are accessing word files of the drafts that include public comments. All public comments will appear in red, following the notation, public comment: Specific comments to a particular standard will be added directly under that standard. General comments to a grade level or strand area will be added just under the first grade level strand area reference. Comments of a general nature, (for example, comments on the process or the timeline) will be added at the very end of the draft documents and will not be grouped by type or category. MDE staff are working diligently to add your comments to the annotated versions and intend to update these files every week. Please note, due to time and staff limits, public comments will be copied and pasted directly from the survey. Spelling, grammatical and/or other errors will appear as submitted.

Public comments on the Science or Social Studies Standards First Drafts are being collected online from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Web site, www.education.state.mn.us or can be faxed, 651-582-8728 or mailed, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113, attn: N. Prouty. The public is also encouraged to attend one of the public hearings throughout our state and submit their comments directly.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
KINDER GARTEN	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Famous Americans	The student will recognize people who contributed to U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know people associated with national holidays and figures from various cultural backgrounds, including, but not limited to, Christopher Columbus, Martin Luther King Jr., Abraham Lincoln, Pilgrims, Squanto, and George Washington. ▪ Students will know how diverse native and immigrant peoples have contributed to American history.
Public Comments:				
"Use 'Students will be introduced to' instead of 'Students will know.' "				
"Remove 2 nd benchmark. It is not age appropriate."				
KINDER GARTEN	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Famous American Events	The student will understand important events in U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know certain events that are tied to national holidays including but not limited to Independence Day and Thanksgiving Day.
Public Comment:				
"Use 'Students will be introduced to' instead of 'Students will know.' "				
KINDER GARTEN	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Famous People in World History	The student will recognize the individual or groups that have shaped the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will compare and contrast how people lived in earlier times and today. ▪ Students will become aware that people have moved and explored throughout the world.
Public Comment:				
"Use 'Students will become aware' instead of 'Students will compare and contrast.' "				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
KINDER GARTEN	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Famous Events in World History	The student will understand important events that have and continue to shape our world's history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand that countries around the world have holidays and celebrations.
KINDER GARTEN	III. CONCEPTS OF TIME	(none listed)	The student will be able to place events in chronological order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and order the days of the week, months of the year and seasons. ▪ Students will use the terms for concepts of time including past, present and future. ▪ Students will recognize that current events continue to shape history.
Public Comments:				
<p>"Use 'Students will <i>begin to identify</i>' instead of 'Students will identify.' "</p> <p>"Replace 'past, present and future' with 'yesterday, today and tomorrow.' "</p>				
KINDER GARTEN	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will understand the character traits of being a good citizen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize, from literature and real life examples, good citizen traits of honesty, courage, patriotism and individual responsibility. ▪ Students will give examples and exhibit good citizen behaviors such as respect, kindness, self-control, cooperation, and good manners.
Public Comment:				
<p>"Combine the two benchmarks. "</p>				
KINDER GARTEN	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the reasons why we have rules, consequences and privileges. ▪ Students will give examples of responsible behavior towards others, property, the environment, and themselves.
KINDER GARTEN	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will recognize symbols of our nation and state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize the symbols and songs that identify our nation including, but not limited to, the U.S. flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, national anthem and Independence Day. ▪ Students will recognize and name the President of the United States.
Public Comments:				
<p>"Use 'Students will <i>begin to recognize</i>' instead of 'Students will recognize.' "</p> <p>"Remove Independence Day in first benchmark."</p> <p>"Remove 2nd benchmark – Students will recognize and name the President of the United States."</p>				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
KINDER GARTEN	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Concepts of Location	The student will use directional and positional words to describe locations of people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will describe the relative location of people, places, and things by using positional words, with emphasis on near/far, above/below, left/right, and behind/in front.
Public Comment:				
"Use 'Students will begin to describe' instead of 'Students will describe.'"				
KINDER GARTEN	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use and create maps and globes to locate people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will use maps and globes to describe places referenced in stories and real-life situations. Students will be able to locate their town on a simple state map
Public Comments:				
"Use 'Students will begin to use maps' instead of 'Students will use maps.'"				
"Use 'Students will begin to locate' instead of 'Students will locate.'"				
KINDER GARTEN	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Systems	The student will understand physical and human-made features of locations and places on the earth's surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will locate land and water features. Students will locate important places in their school and community.
Public Comment:				
"Not sure about this one (benchmark above). K-kids are still learning to find the office at school."				
KINDER GARTEN	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand the relationship between consumers and producers in regards to goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will distinguish between producers and consumers and between goods and services. Students will recognize various workers and their roles in the community. Students will identify different denominations of currency and coin.
Public Comments:				
"Remove first benchmark above – Not appropriate."				
"Use 'Students will begin to identify' instead of 'Students will identify.'"				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
KINDER GARTEN	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand economic choices are based on needs and wants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the difference between basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) and wants (things people would like to have). ▪ Students will identify that money can be used to buy goods and services.
GRADE 1	HISTORY			
GRADE 1	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Famous Americans	The student will recognize people who contributed to U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know groups and individuals associated with the colonization and early settlement in the United States, including, but not limited to, William Bradford and Pocahontas. ▪ Students will know other historical figures and their contributions to our country, including, but not limited to, Benjamin Franklin and Harriet Tubman.
<p>Public Comments:</p> <p>"First benchmark above is too hard."</p> <p>"For 2nd benchmark, some names are ok. "</p>				
GRADE 1	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Famous American Events	The student will understand important events in U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know how migration and colonization influenced American history. ▪ Students will know how interaction among American Indians and settlers influenced events in American history. ▪ Students will know how inventions and discoveries have affected American history. ▪ Students will know the significance of national holidays.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (In reference to bullet one) Too complex for these kids.
<p>Public Comments:</p> <p>"First benchmark above is way too hard and not age appropriate."</p> <p>"For 2nd and 3rd benchmark, use 'will be introduced to' instead of 'will know.' "</p>				
GRADE 1	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Famous People in World History	The student will recognize the individual or groups that have shaped the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will give examples of civilizations of the ancient world and highlights of their culture, such as Egypt and Greece. ▪ Students will give examples of people that have moved and explored throughout the world.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (In reference to bullet one) Too biased. There are other places in the world.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comments:				
<p>"First benchmark above is way too hard and not age appropriate."</p> <p>"For 2nd benchmark, use 'will be introduced to' instead of 'will give.'"</p> <p>"Regarding first benchmark: As a teacher, I believe this is too hard for my students. "</p>				
GRADE 1	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Famous Events in World History	Students will understand important events that have shaped our world's history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain reasons why people explore. ▪ Students will be able to give examples of events that have influenced world history.
Public Comment:				
<p>"Benchmarks above are way too hard and not age appropriate."</p>				
GRADE 1	III. CONCEPTS OF TIME	(none listed)	The student will be able to place events in chronological order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will create a timeline. ▪ Students will recognize that current events continue to shape history. ▪ Students will describe how things change over time, such as forms of transportation and communication. ▪ Students will be able to distinguish among units of time such as weeks, months and years. ▪ Students will be able to connect a story with its time in history. (Past, present and future).
Public Comments:				
<p>"First grade students cannot demonstrate and do not know past, present and future."</p> <p>"Re: 1st benchmark above, Too hard. "</p> <p>"Re: 2nd–4th benchmarks above, use 'will be introduced to recognize' instead of 'will recognize.'"</p> <p>"Understanding time concepts is also a developmental issue."</p>				
GRADE 1	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 1	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will understand the character traits of being a good citizen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define what it means to be a citizen in terms of loyalty, membership and self-government. ▪ Students will be able to give examples of honesty, courage, patriotism and individual responsibility from literature and real life examples.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comment:				
"Re: 1 st benchmark above, use 'Students will be introduced to.'"				
GRADE 1	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain what constitutes a right, privilege, and responsibility within their classroom and the nation (such as voting, protection by the law, obeying rules and laws). ▪ Students will be able to recognize that the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution are the founding documents of our government and that they outline the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen.
Public Comment:				
"Re: both benchmarks above, use 'Students will be introduced to.'"				
GRADE 1	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will recognize symbols of our nation and state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe how Americans show respect for national symbols such as the flag and national anthem. ▪ Students will identify state symbols such as the state flag, the state flower, and the state bird. ▪ Students will recognize the significance of our national symbols, including the American flag, bald eagle, Statue of Liberty, the White House and patriotic songs. ▪ Students will recognize and name the Governor of Minnesota.
Public Comment:				
"Remove 4 th benchmark above. Students may recognize the President, but not the Governor."				
GRADE 1	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Concepts of Location	The student will use directional and positional words to describe locations of people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students can explain that an address locates a specific place. ▪ Students can name and use relative directional words to describe locations of places in the school and community.
GRADE 1	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use and create maps and globes to locate people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to locate and name the continents and oceans on a map of the world and on a globe. ▪ Students will understand that maps are drawings of locations and places as viewed from above. ▪ Students will be able to recognize the outline shape of the state of Minnesota and locate Minnesota on a globe.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comments:				
<p>"Students need to do a map of their bedroom or the classroom."</p> <p>"Label a map using a map? 1st grade?!! "</p> <p>"If these are guidelines for curriculum selection and instruction, they're not bad – a bit too specific in spots. If all the 'will be able to(s)' are to be tested, it's way too much!"</p> <p>"Re: 1st benchmark above – not age appropriate. Use 'introduced to' instead of 'will be able to.'"</p>				
GRADE 1	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Systems	The student will understand physical and human-made features of locations and places on the earth's surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will compare and contrast various landforms. ▪ Students will give examples of human-made features of the earth (such as: city, farm, bridge, roads). ▪ Students will give examples of physical features of the earth (such as: mountain/plain, woodland/prairie, ocean/lake). ▪ Students will develop an awareness of climate in terms of wet/dry, hot/cold, and seasonal changes.
Public Comment:				
<p>"Please don't get too abstract here."</p>				
GRADE 1	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will understand that people are connected to each other and the environment and these interconnections influence how and where people live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain how human activities have changed the earth (for example dams, canals, roads). ▪ Students will describe how transportation and communication connect people around the world (for example highways, telephones and computers). ▪ Students will give examples of the ways an individual's actions will benefit or harm the environment (for example recycling and littering). ▪ Students will describe how interconnections among peoples have been affected by physical features (for example oceans, rivers and mountain ranges).
Public Comments:				
<p>"Re: 1st benchmark above, use 'Students will be able to recognize' instead of 'Students will be able to explain.'"</p> <p>"Re: 4th benchmark above, use 'Students will be introduced to' instead of 'Students will describe how.'"</p>				
GRADE 1	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand the relationship between consumers and producers in regards to goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify that people whose wants are satisfied by using goods and services are called consumers. ▪ Students will identify that people who make goods and provide services are called producers. ▪ Students will understand that trading goods and services for other goods and services is called barter.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comment:				
"Re: all benchmarks above, use 'Students will be introduced to.' "				
GRADE 1	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand economic choices are based on needs and wants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will define scarcity as the condition of not being able to have all of the goods and services that you want. ▪ Students will recognize that because of scarcity they need to make choices.
Public Comment:				
"Re: both benchmarks above, use 'Students will be introduced to.' "				
GRADE 2	HISTORY			
GRADE 2	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Famous Americans	The student will recognize people who contributed to U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know individuals and groups associated with exploration and expansion within the United States, including, but not limited to, Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Lewis and Clark, and Sacajawea. ▪ Students will know groups and individuals who have contributed to Minnesota history, for example, the Dakota, early settlers, Father Louis Hennepin, the Ojibway, and Josiah Snelling.
Public Comment:				
"Re: bullet 2, At 2 nd grade, children are still trying to grasp whether MN is our city, state or country. Also, MN Hist. Soc. School materials are geared at about 5 th grade. 2 nd is too early."				
GRADE 2	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Famous American Events	The student will understand important events in U.S. history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain how explorations and expansion have shaped U.S. history. ▪ Students will explain how explorations and expansion brought about cooperation, compromise, and conflict among diverse groups. ▪ Students will know key events that shaped Minnesota and local history.
Public Comment:				
"Re: bullet 3, See previous comment."				
GRADE 2	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Famous People in World History	The student will recognize the individual or groups that have shaped the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will become familiar with people who have made cultural contributions to world history. ▪ Students will give examples of contributions of past civilizations such as, Persia, India, China, and Japan.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comments:				
"Re: bullet 2, 2 nd grade? Seems early."				
"Regarding 2 nd bullet: As a teacher, I am certain my students cannot learn this. "				
GRADE 2	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Famous Events in World History	The student will understand important events that have shaped and continue to shape our world's history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to link an event happening today with its roots in the past. ▪ Students will be able to explain how past events shaped the world today. ▪ Students will recognize ways that current events continue to shape history.
GRADE 2	III. CONCEPTS OF TIME	(none listed)	The student will be able to place events in chronological order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will create a timeline. ▪ Students will describe how things change over time such as forms of transportation and communication.
GRADE 2	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 2	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will understand the character traits of being a good citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes, including George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr. have made a difference in others' lives. ▪ Students will identify basic human rights.
GRADE 2	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of being a citizen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand that the Declaration of Independence is the founding document that sets forth the guiding principles for our nation. ▪ Students will understand that the Constitution establishes how our nation is governed according to principles of the Declaration of Independence. ▪ Students will be able to name the three branches of government as described in the Constitution. ▪ Students will recognize that the Declaration of Independence declares that individuals have rights including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
Public Comment:				
"Re: bullets 2-4, I teach a little unit on the Constitution. I consider it introductory. They really don't get it."				
GRADE 2	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will recognize symbols of our nation and state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize the national symbols of Mount Rushmore, the Liberty Bell and Washington Monument. ▪ Students will be able to explain the significance of national symbols, such as the Statue of Liberty. ▪ Students will become familiar with patriotic events and holidays in America, such as Memorial Day, Flag Day, Veterans' Day, and Presidents' Day.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 2	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Concepts of Location	Student will use directional and positional words to describe locations of people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will use the cardinal directions of east, west, north and south to describe locations relative to one another. ▪ Students will be able to give examples of absolute locations (such as: home address). ▪ Students will use the equator and poles as reference points to describe locations. ▪ Students will compare distances between two or more places shown on a map by simple terms such as farther or closer.
GRADE 2	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use and create maps and globes to locate people, places and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain that the equator is an imaginary line that divides the earth into northern/southern hemispheres, and that the Prime Meridian divides the earth into eastern/western hemispheres. ▪ Students will create and interpret simple maps using the map elements of title, cardinal directions, and symbols in a map key or legend. ▪ Students will create and explain a simple map of a familiar area or route (such as home to school, a room at home). ▪ Students will develop an understanding that boundaries of states and countries on political maps were created by people, and that these boundaries have changed over time. ▪ Students will recognize the outline shape of the contiguous U.S. and point out borders touch other countries or water.
Public Comment:				
<p>"Re: bullet 1, Many get the equator, but this might confuse the issue."</p>				
GRADE 2	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	The student will understand physical and human-made features of locations and places on the earth's surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will name and locate physical features of the U.S. (such as: Mississippi River, Rocky Mountains, Lake Superior). ▪ Students will name and locate some major cities within the U.S. and Minnesota, including Washington DC, St. Paul and their hometown. ▪ Students will be able to explain, in simple terms, how locations and altitude affect climates (such as: closer to the poles is colder). ▪ Students will examine and be able to describe places they read and study about in terms of both physical and human features.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 2	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will understand that people are connected to each other and the environment and these interconnections influence how and where people live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will give examples of how and why people have moved or migrated to different places around the world. ▪ Students will be able to describe how physical environments influence human activities. ▪ Students will give examples of how human activities impact the environment. ▪ Students will give examples of cultural exchanges that happen due to migration, transportation and communication and technology. ▪ Students will begin to develop an idea of how places and locations around the world are the same and different in terms of climate, land forms, human activity, environment and current issues. ▪ Students will begin to develop an idea of how a region or place such as their community has changed over time.

Public Comment:

"Re: bullet 5, I love the words 'begin to develop.' Let's use them more!"

GRADE 2	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand the relationship between consumers and producers in regards to goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that productive resources are all natural resources, human resources, and human-made resources (capital) used in the production of goods and services. ▪ Students will be able to give examples of how individuals can be both a consumer and a producer. ▪ Students will give examples of consumers and producers within their community and state. ▪ Students will give examples of goods and services within their community and state.
GRADE 2	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand economic choices are based on needs and wants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define opportunity cost. ▪ Students will give examples of opportunity costs in every day life. ▪ Students will understand that as producers they can earn money that can be spent or saved as they choose.

Public Comment:

"Re: bullet 1, First their teacher must!"

GRADE 3	HISTORY			
GRADE 3	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 1: Pre-Colonial America, prehistory through 1607	The student will demonstrate knowledge of early cultures in North America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate where the American Indians settled, with emphasis on Arctic (Inuit), Northwest (Kwakiutl), Plains, including especially the Minnesota region (Dakota and Ojibwe), Southwest (Pueblo), and Eastern woodland (Iroquois). ▪ Students will know and understand how various American Indian tribes used their environment to obtain food, clothing and shelter.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (referring to bullet one above) Grade inappropriate. Kids at this age must learn about their communities.
GRADE 3	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 1: Pre-Colonial America, prehistory through 1607	The student will demonstrate knowledge of European exploration of the North American continent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the motivations, obstacles, and accomplishments of the Spanish, French, Portuguese, and English explorations. ▪ Students will know and understand cultural interactions among Europeans and American Indians that led to cooperation, compromise and conflict.
GRADE 3	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 2: Colonization and Conflict, 1607-1763	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the colonies and the factors that shaped colonial America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand political, religious, social economic events and conditions that led to the colonization of America. ▪ Students will compare and contrast life in the New England, Mid Atlantic, and Southern colonies, with emphasis on how people interacted with their environment. ▪ Students will know and understand colonial life in America from the perspectives of large landowners, farmers, artisans, women, indentured servants, and slaves. ▪ Students will identify the growing political, economic and social tensions between the colonies and England.
GRADE 3	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 1: Early Civilizations, prehistory to 1000 B.C.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient civilizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will compare and contrast characteristics of ancient cultures such as Persia, Egypt, China, India with Greece. ▪ Students will describe importance of large-scale irrigation, and its effect on the development of cities. ▪ Students will describe archeological evidence of early cities.
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"1st bullet: Comparing India, Greece, etc. – developmentally inappropriate."</p> <p>"(referring to bullet 1: This is too hard for 3rd graders."</p>				
GRADE 3	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Rome in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and explain the following: Roman Republic, Roman Empire, Julius Caesar, the Forum, the Coliseum, and Pompeii. ▪ Students will describe daily life in the Roman Empire. ▪ Students will correctly place several people and events of Roman history on a time line.
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"These are too hard for my students. I do not want my students to be forced to learn this. It will make Columbine appear simple."</p> <p>(referring to bullet/benchmark #1 above) "Biases and Eurocentric!"</p>				
GRADE 3	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the rise of major world religions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate on map site of origin for Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Judaism, and Hinduism. ▪ Students will identify key figures associated with major world religions.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Comment: What about Islam?
GRADE 3	III. ESSENTIAL SKILLS	(none listed)	The student will acquire skills of chronological thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will develop a chronological sequence of persons, events and concepts in each historical era studied this grade.
GRADE 3	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 3	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of trustworthiness and honesty. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of courtesy and respect for the rights of others. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of responsibility, accountability, and pursuing self-reliance. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of respect for the law.
GRADE 3	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will know the basic concepts of American democracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that "inalienable rights" are derived from fundamental worth and dignity of the individual. ▪ Students will recognize the equality of all citizens under the law. ▪ Students will recognize the majority rule and minority rights. ▪ Students will recognize the necessity of compromise. ▪ Students will understand the freedom of the individual, in the context of individual rights and responsibilities, to respect the rights of others.
GRADE 3	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the different levels of government: local, county, state, and national.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the functions of legislative, executive, and judicial branches. ▪ Students will identify the structure and powers of the student's local governments: county, city and town.
GRADE 3	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand elements of thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the importance of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Obeying the law and paying taxes; b. Serving as a juror; c. Performing public service; d. Keeping informed about current issues; e. Respecting differing opinions in a diverse society.
GRADE 3	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will identify and describe the symbols, icons, songs and traditions of the United States that illustrate American ideals and provide a sense of community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the meaning and significance of American symbols, landmarks and traditions, including the flags of the United States and Minnesota, the bald eagle, and the Statue of Liberty. ▪ Students will memorize the Pledge of Allegiance, and songs that express American ideals, including the National Anthem and <i>America the Beautiful</i>. ▪ Students will know the origin of the Pledge of Allegiance, its history and why Americans recite it. ▪ Students will know the United States Flag ethic. ▪ Students will know the significance of the national holidays and the heroism and achievements of the people associated with them, including: Thanksgiving, Presidents' Day, The Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	Create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will develop and understand that boundaries of states and countries on political maps were created by people, and that these boundaries have changed over time.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	The student will demonstrate working knowledge of the cardinal directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will identify cardinal and intermediate directions.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and globes to demonstrate specific geographical knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will find directions on a map: east, west, north, and south. Students will locate places on a map: continent, country, state, and city. Students will locate Canada, the U.S., Mexico, the Great Lakes, Minnesota, Midwest states bordering Minnesota. Students will understand and explain the terms: latitude, longitude, the Prime Meridian and the Equator, hemispheres, north/south and west/east and the poles, north/south. Students will locate and name the seven continents: Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Antarctica, Australia. Students will match symbol from a key or legend to item on a map. Students will identify major oceans: Atlantic, Arctic, Pacific, Indian. Students will locate the Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, North Pole, South Pole. Students will use an atlas to find geographic information.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will locate and identify U.S. regions by their geographic features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will locate and identify U.S. regions by their geographic features (regions should include: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, West Coast, Southwest, and Arctic). Students will be able to use a compass rose to identify directions.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will identify the 13 Colonies and classify them by region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will locate the 13 colonies on a map and identify the New England, Middle Atlantic, and Southern regions.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	The student will identify specific landforms and waterways on a map using geographical terms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will use geographical terms such as boundary, channel, delta, isthmus, plateau, reservoir, and strait to identify landforms and waterways in maps and atlases. Students will be able to explain and use terms such as: source, mouth, tributary, and drainage basin. Students will locate major rivers systems on continents studied.
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	The student will identify the physical and cultural features of ancient civilizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will identify major physical features such as seas, rivers, and mountains. Students will identify major cities such as Rome, Thebes and Athens. Students will identify cultural features such as pyramids and the Great Wall.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 3	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will understand the relationships between geography and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will identify regional climatic patterns and their influence on people and places (for example, how the differences in weather patterns and ecological environments shaped the difference in the North American colonies). Students will describe how humans influence the environment including the use of technology and are influenced by it (such as, irrigated cultures in Mesopotamia and Roman roads, viaducts and bridge construction). Students will describe how technology affects one's ability to modify the environment (for example, inventions that contributed to the success of the Greek culture). Students will be able to identify the climate of Minnesota and how its influence on human activities as well as how humans and technology have influenced the environment.
GRADE 3	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand the different resources used to produce goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be able to give examples of natural resources. Students will be able to give examples of human resources. Students will be able to give examples of capital resources.
GRADE 3	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	Student will understand the concept of interdependence in relation to producers and consumers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will recognize that producers supply goods and services. Students will recognize that consumers demand goods and services. Students will recognize the interdependent relationship between producers and consumers.
GRADE 3	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand basic principles of economic decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will develop money management skills of saving, spending, and borrowing. Students will apply a decision making process to make informed choices.
GRADE 4	HISTORY			
GRADE 4	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Unrest and the American Revolution 1763-mid-1791	The student will demonstrate understanding of the causes and course of the American Revolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will know and understand issues and events that led to the American Revolution, including, but not limited to, the Proclamation of 1763, the Stamp Act, the Boston Tea Party, and the Intolerable Acts. Students will know and understand how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement in America and led to the Declaration of Independence, with emphasis on the ideas of John Locke. Students will know and understand the roles of key individuals in the American Revolution, including, but not limited to: Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and George Washington. Students will know and understand key factors and events contributing to the colonials' defeat of the British, including an account of the Battle of Trenton.
				<p>Public comment: (referring to bullet/benchmark #2 above: "This is not developmentally appropriate."</p>

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comments:				
"This is too hard for my 4 th graders (Boston Tea Party, etc.)."				
"Regarding 2 nd bullet, too hard for grade 4."				
GRADE 4	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth in the Early Republic	The student will demonstrate knowledge of how the principles of the American Revolution became the foundation of a new nation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the government established by the Articles of Confederation, and debates leading to the ratification of the Constitution. ▪ Students will know and understand basic principles of the new government established by the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the U.S. and the Bill of Rights. ▪ Students will know and understand the conflicts that resulted in the emergence of two political parties represented by Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. ▪ Students will know and understand accomplishments of the first five presidents of the U.S.
Public Comments:				
"We want U.S. History and Geography in grade 4. Please don't have World History in grade 4. We can only spend 30 minutes a day on Social Studies."				
"1 st bullet – Too hard."				
GRADE 4	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	Student will demonstrate knowledge of medieval Europe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will show map locations of Viking origins, conquests, and exploration to Greenland and Canada. ▪ Students will describe consequences of Barbarian invasions on Europe, including: feudalism, castles, monasteries, and walled towns.
GRADE 4	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	Student will demonstrate knowledge of the Byzantine Empire from about 300 A.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify Constantinople, now Istanbul, on map. ▪ Students will describe the importance of Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire) in transmission of classical culture to Western Europe following the Dark Ages.
GRADE 4	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	Student will demonstrate knowledge of the rise of Islam.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate sites of the origin and expansion of Islam. ▪ Students will identify key figures associated with the rise of Islam.
GRADE 4	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	Student will demonstrate knowledge of Early African Kingdoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the importance of camel caravans and the city of Timbuktu as a center of trade and learning. ▪ Students will locate and identify major cultures, such as Axum, Kush, Mali, and Songhai.
Public Comment:				
"Re: 2 nd bullet, I don't know these cultures and I don't think my 4 th graders should know this."				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 4	III. ESSENTIAL SKILLS	(none listed)	The student will acquire skills of chronological thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will develop a chronological sequence of persons, events and concepts in each historical era studied this grade.
GRADE 4	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of trustworthiness and honesty. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of courtesy and respect for the rights of others. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of responsibility, accountability, and pursuing self-reliance. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of respect for the law.
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand the structure and function of different levels of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the relationship between the three branches in a system of checks and balances. ▪ Students will explain the relationship among federal, state and local governments.
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political process at the local, state, and national level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the organization, role, and constituencies of political parties. ▪ Students will describe the nomination and election process.
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will demonstrate knowledge of how public policy is made at the local, state, and national levels of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the lawmaking process. ▪ Students will describe the executive, legislative and judicial branches.
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will demonstrate knowledge of important United States documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the significance and meaning of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights and other amendments.
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand elements of thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the importance of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Performing public service; b. Keeping informed about current issues; c. Respecting differing opinions in a diverse society.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 4	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will identify and describe the symbols, icons, songs, and traditions of the United States that illustrate American ideals and provide a sense of community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the great seal of the United States, the White House, the Capitol building, and symbols in American money design. ▪ Students will memorize the Preamble to the Constitution and at least the following words from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." ▪ Students will identify and be able to discuss the concepts in songs that express American ideals, including <i>You're a Grand Old Flag</i> and <i>My Country 'Tis of Thee</i>.
GRADE 4	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	Mapmaking. The student will create simple maps using standard cartographic procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will create sketch maps with basic map elements of title, orientation, date, author and legend.
GRADE 4	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and globes to demonstrate specific and increasingly complex geographic knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will specify directions and locate places using a compass rose. ▪ Students will locate places on a map using grid coordinates. ▪ Students will read maps and globes using longitude, latitude, prime meridian and equator. ▪ Students will measure distance using the map's scale. ▪ Students will use map legends to identify elevation. ▪ Students will be able to read and use various types of maps and symbols: population, political, topographical, land use, vegetation, and climate. ▪ Students will identify and locate countries: Spain, France, Portugal and the British Isles, England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mali and Egypt. ▪ Students will compare political, physical and thematic maps.
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"Re: 7th bullet, Does this mean memorize or locate?"</p>				
GRADE 4	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	The student will be able to understand the physical and culture features of continents studied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate and identify major mountain systems of the world using geographical terms. ▪ Students will be able to explain and use terms such as: mountain, valley, range, plateau, mesa, etc. ▪ Students will locate major mountain systems on continents studied (Andes in South America, Rockies and Appalachians in North America, Himalayas and Urals in Asia, Atlas Mountains in Africa, Alps and Pyrenees in Europe). ▪ The student will be able to identify all 50 states.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 4	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will understand the relationships between geography and culture. The student will understand that people are connected to each other and the environment and these interconnections influence how and where people live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will analyze the locations of places to suggest why particular locations are used for certain human activities including Minnesota (e.g., recreational, residential, agricultural, industrial, community services). ▪ Students will identify ways in which human activities are influenced by the physical environment including Minnesota (e.g., housing, clothing, jobs, recreation, effects of weather and climate). ▪ Students will understand some of the factors that drew people to the local community. ▪ Students will describe how geography affects where and how people live. ▪ Students will research the origins of groups represented in their local community. ▪ Students will identify reasons that brought settlers to Minnesota.
GRADE 4	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand the concepts of markets and prices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that a market exists when consumers and producers exchange goods and services. ▪ Students will understand that a price is what people pay when they buy a good or service, and what they receive when they sell a good or service. ▪ Students will demonstrate understanding of the interrelationship of supply, demand, markets, and prices.
GRADE 4	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand that people respond predictably to positive and negative incentives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that rewards are positive incentives that make people better off. ▪ Students will recognize that penalties are negative incentives that make people worse off. ▪ Students will understand that both positive and negative incentives affect people's choices and behavior.
GRADE 5	HISTORY			
GRADE 5	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Growth and Westward Expansion, 1801-1861	The student will demonstrate knowledge of western expansion, conflict, and reform in America from 1801-1861.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand territorial expansion and how it affected the political map of the U.S., with emphasis on the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark expedition, and the acquisitions of Florida, Texas, Oregon, and California. ▪ Students will know and understand the geographic, economic, and social factors that influenced the westward movement of settlers. ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of inventions on life in America including, but not limited to, the cotton gin, the reaper, the steamboat, the telegraph and the steam locomotive.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 5	I. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes, major events, people, and effects of the Civil War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the main ideas of the abolitionist movement, and contributions of key figures, including but not limited to, Frederick Douglas, William Lloyd Garrison, Dred Scott, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Harriet Tubman. ▪ Students will know and understand cultural, social, economic, and constitutional issues that divided the nation. ▪ Students will know and understand how the issues of states' rights and slavery increased sectional tensions. ▪ Students will identify on a map the states that seceded from the Union, and those that remained in the Union. ▪ Students will know and understand the roles of Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Abraham Lincoln in events leading to and during the War. ▪ Students will use maps to identify and explain critical developments in the war, including major battles. ▪ Students will describe the effects of the war, from the perspectives of Union and Confederate soldiers and civilians (including free blacks, women, and slaves).
GRADE 5	I. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of Reconstruction on American life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand provisions of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution and their impact on the expansion of freedom in America. ▪ Students will describe the impact of Reconstruction policies on the South, and on newly freed blacks in particular.
GRADE 5	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of civilizations and empires of the Eastern Hemisphere and their interactions through regional trade patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the Silk Road, and identify Marco Polo, Genghis Khan and the Mongol conquest.
GRADE 5	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of civilizations and empires of the Western Hemisphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify major contributions of the Mayan, Aztec and Incan civilizations.
GRADE 5	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of social, economic, and political changes and cultural achievements in late medieval Europe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe Muslim control of earlier European trade routes, hence waves of exploration by Europeans to seek new trade routes and lands. ▪ Students will describe rivalry of England, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands in Africa, East Indies and the Western Hemisphere. ▪ Students will describe decline of European feudal system and the rebirth of cities. ▪ Students will describe the importance of Islamic occupation of Spain and Eastern Europe, including Russia.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 5	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D.	d. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Renaissance in Europe in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe a "rebirth" of ideas from ancient Greece and Rome through transmission from Arabic and Byzantine civilizations. ▪ Students will locate and describe Italian city-states such as Florence, Venice, and Rome. ▪ Students will identify people associated with the arts and learning such as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Medici family. ▪ Students will identify significance of the Gutenberg printing press, Bible translations into common languages, the Protestant Reformation, Copernicus and Galileo. ▪ Students will describe Russian isolation from Western civilization.
GRADE 5	III. ESSENTIAL SKILLS	(none listed)	The student will acquire skills of chronological thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will develop a chronological sequence of persons, events and concepts in each historical era studied this grade.
GRADE 5	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 5	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Character Traits of Good Citizens	The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of trustworthiness and honesty. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of courtesy and respect for the rights of others. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of responsibility, accountability, and pursuing self-reliance. ▪ Students will identify and recognize the importance of respect for the law.
GRADE 5	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will demonstrate mastery of the social studies skills citizenship requires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define bias and identify it in political cartoons, political advertisements, pictures, and other graphic media. ▪ Students will be able to find and identify primary and secondary source documents. ▪ Students will be able to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information. ▪ Students will be able to evaluate information for accuracy, separating fact from opinion. ▪ Students will be able to select and defend positions in writing, discussion, and debate.
GRADE 5	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will understand elements of thoughtful and effective participation in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the importance of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Performing public service; b. Keeping informed about current issues; c. Respecting differing opinions in a diverse society.
GRADE 5	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities	The student will compare other governments with the government in the United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the distribution of governmental power. ▪ Students will explain the relationship between the legislative and executive branches. ▪ Students will compare the extent of participation in the political process.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 5	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events	The student will identify and describe the symbols, icon, songs, and traditions of the United States that illustrate American ideals and provide a sense of community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and be able to discuss the concepts expressed in songs such as <i>The Battle Hymn of the Republic</i> and <i>God Bless America</i>. ▪ Students will identify significant themes and concepts in, and be able to explain, the Gettysburg Address.
GRADE 5	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	The student will use five fundamental themes (location, place, human environment interaction, movement and region) to analyze the earth surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will use the concept of region to compare and contrast locations around the world and within Minnesota. ▪ Students will be able to create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets.
GRADE 5	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and globes to demonstrate specific and increasingly complex geographic knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will use various categories of maps: population, historical, elevation, land use, vegetation, climate, topographical Choropleth, density, flow. ▪ Students will locate places on a map using grid coordinates and degrees. ▪ Students will locate Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn: relation to seasons and temperatures. ▪ Students will identify climate zones: Arctic, Tropical, Temperate. ▪ Students will identify and explain time zones: Prime Meridian, 0° as Zulu time, and the International date line. ▪ Students will understand the relationship between globes and different map projections such as conformal and equal area. ▪ Students will understand the Gulf Stream and how it affects climate.
GRADE 5	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	The student will identify and locate geography associated with Westward Expansion and locate key geographical features associated with eras studied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify physical features, such as rivers, mountains, and the continental divide. ▪ Students will identify significant cities such as: Boston, New York, San Francisco and New Orleans. ▪ Students will identify cultural features such as Oregon Trail, Mason-Dixon Line. ▪ Students will name and locate all 50 states and their major cities and capitals.
GRADE 5	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features	<p>The student should be able to understand the physical and cultural features of world regions.</p> <p>The student will recognize geography associated with the United States Civil War.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize geography associated with the United States Civil War (e.g., Mason-Dixon Line, Fort Sumter, Battle of Antietam Creek, Gettysburg, Atlanta, Richmond, Appomattox). ▪ Students will identify significant physical features such as mountain ranges, river valleys, vegetation and climatic regions. ▪ Students will identify major political units, significant cities, language regions, etc. ▪ Students will identify cultural features such as land use patterns, architectural monuments, etc.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 5	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will understand the changing relationships between patterns of settlement and land use and geographic features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe how geography affects where and how people live (for example, reasons for Westward Expansion, conflicts occurring due to the expansion of settlers into American Indian lands). ▪ Students will know how changes in technology assisted agriculture development west of the Mississippi. ▪ Students will know how attitudes toward mining conflicted with the American Indian value of sacred lands. ▪ Students will describe how local resources are used in the region and the world.
GRADE 5	III. ECONOMICS	A. Producers and Consumers	The student will understand basic components of a market economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that in market economies individuals and firms produce goods and services, earn revenue and incur costs. ▪ Students will be able to define entrepreneurship. ▪ Students will recognize the factors of production. ▪ Students will define the roles of production, distribution and consumption.
GRADE 5	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand different countries have different currencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify different currencies around the globe.
GRADE 5	III. ECONOMICS	B. Economic Choices	The student will understand they have choices in investment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define various forms of investment in relation to human, natural, and capital resources.
GRADE 6	HISTORY			
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"Please keep 6th grade for MN History/ World History only."</p>				
GRADE 6	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	(none listed)	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Minnesota and its first inhabitants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate the areas occupied by American Indian tribes, including, but not limited to, the Dakotah, Lakotah, and Ojibwe. ▪ Students will know and understand distinctive characteristics of these tribes. ▪ Students will know and understand the interaction among these groups with the environment and one another.
GRADE 6	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	(none listed)	The student will identify important physical and cultural features in Minnesota.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will connect the current geologic formation with the process by which it was formed. ▪ Students will identify significant landforms, bodies of water, vegetation regions and climate zones within the state. ▪ Students will demonstrate knowledge of and be able to distinguish the different geographic regions within our state.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 6	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	(none listed)	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Minnesota's first explorers, their impact on native cultures and the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand how early explorations affected the development of Minnesota, including, but not limited to, the establishment of the fur trade posts, religious missions, and settlement patterns. ▪ Students will map the waterways used by early explorers. ▪ Students will know and understand the interaction between the American Indians and the explorers.
GRADE 6	III. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will study the geography, religions, and politics of the Middle East.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the geography of the Middle East and know its significance as the birthplace of three major religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. ▪ Students will describe the origins and significance of Judaism, including monotheism and moral law. ▪ Students will discuss the settlements and movements of the Hebrews and the significance of the Exodus to the Jews and other people in other eras (for example, slaves in America before the Civil War called Harriet Tubman "Moses"). ▪ Students will identify the impact of the growth of Christianity.
<p>Public Comments:</p> <p>"Last bullet: Christianity should not be stressed."</p> <p>"Monotheism – This is a code for teaching the 10 commandments in the schools."</p> <p>"Grade 6, World History is too demanding"</p>				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 6	III. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will study the geography, religions, and politics of Ancient Greece.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will discuss the development of the Greek polis (city-state), the geography of the region, connections between the geography and the development of the city-states, their commerce and colonies, and the importance of the Greek alphabet in creating a unifying language in the Mediterranean region. ▪ Students will identify the different types of regimes that appear among the city-states (oligarchy, monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, and tyranny) and discuss the role of citizens in each. ▪ Students will be able to explain the significance of Greek mythology and religion to the people and city-states and how Greek literature continues to permeate our literature and language today. ▪ Students will be able to state the key differences between the direct democracy present in Athens and representative democracy. ▪ Students will compare and contrast Athens and Sparta, considering their roles in the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars. ▪ Students will trace the rise of Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture. ▪ Students will identify important statesman, philosophers and other significant people that contribute to Greek culture.
GRADE 6	III. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will study the geography, religions, and politics of Ancient Rome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate and describe the rise of the Roman Republic, including the importance of mythical and actual figures. ▪ Students will compare and contrast the Roman Republic with the Athenian democracy focusing on tripartite government, civic duty, and written laws, and explain how it relates to American government today. ▪ Students will be able to identify the location of and the reason for the growth of Roman territories and expansion of the empire. ▪ Students will discuss the influence Julius and Augustus Caesar had on Rome's transition from republic to empire. ▪ Students will describe the origins and spread of Christianity. ▪ Students will discuss the continuing influence of Roman architecture and engineering. ▪ Students will describe the rise of Constantinople as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and the fall of Rome. ▪ Students will describe the rise of the Byzantine Empire.
GRADE 6	III. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations 500-1000 A.D.	The student will understand the transitions in Europe and the Middle East after the fall of Rome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student will describe the rise and expansion of Islam. ▪ Students will be able to describe the relationship between Islam and Christianity. ▪ Students will be able to explain the relationship between the Latin and Greek Christian traditions.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 6	III. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D.	The student will study the geography, religion, economics, and politics of Europe after the fall of Rome and up to the time of exploration and colonization of America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the physical and political geography of Europe. ▪ Students will be able to explain the split between Eastern and Western Christianity. ▪ Students will understand the development of the feudal system and its role in medieval European life. ▪ Students will examine the conflict and cooperation between the Papacy and European monarchs (e.g. Charlemagne, Gregory VII, Emperor Henry IV, Henry VIII). ▪ Students will identify and locate the European regions that remained Roman Catholic and those that became Protestant during the Reformation. ▪ Students will be able to explain why political thinkers and statesmen in Europe and America began to speak on behalf of freedom of religious worship as a natural right government should secure. ▪ Students will be able to map and discuss the great voyages of discovery from the Vikings to Drake, the locations of routes, and the influence of cartography. ▪ Students will be able to explain how the cultures and resources of the New World influenced Europe.

Public Comment:

"Rise of Christianity is repeated."

GRADE 6	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 6	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Foundations of the American Political System B. America's Founding Documents C. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship (all three sub-strands relate to this standard)	The student will be familiar with the broad foundation of Western civilization in order to understand the ideas and beliefs that shaped the American political system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be familiar with the Ancient Hebrew civilization, its belief in a divinely revealed moral code and monotheism. ▪ Students will be familiar with the cities of Ancient Greece, its development of the polis (city-state), direct democracy, and its idea that human reason can discover in nature a civic standard of right and wrong. ▪ Students will be familiar with the civics of Ancient Rome, its development of a Republican form of government, and its statesmen such as Cincinnatus. ▪ Students will understand the place of monarchy and feudalism in Europe after the fall of Rome, the religious wars, the clash between church and state, and the conflict between the theories of the divine right of Kings and the natural rights of man.

Public Comment:

"1st bullet: ...divinely revealed moral code – troubling wording!"

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 6	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	The student will use the five fundamental themes of geography to analyze human/ environmental interactions on the surface of the Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will create a map to scale. ▪ Students will use maps and pictures to analyze interactions between people and their environment. ▪ Students will create a flow map to show movement of people.
GRADE 6	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, analyze and report on the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain why maps are distorted representations of Earth's surface. ▪ Students will draw an accurate sketch map of physical and cultural regions of Minnesota, past/present and other cultures studied. ▪ Students will analyze the physical and cultural landscapes of the world past and present.
GRADE 6	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Systems Features	The student will be able to identify physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define regions, their relationships with other regions, and their patterns of change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the concept of region and can distinguish common characteristics of regions within Minnesota and other world regions (landforms, climate, vegetation, farming, land use). ▪ Students will describe the major physical and cultural features of Minnesota and other world regions studied, such as Greece, Rome, and Medieval Europe.
GRADE 6	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain how physical features (waterways, vegetation, and climate) influenced the development of cultures studied. ▪ Students will discuss the connections between geography and the development of cultures and civilization. ▪ Students will be able to explain the diffusion of people and ideas from the early centers of innovation to other regions of the world (i.e. trade, conquest, migration, food, customs, etc.).
GRADE 6	II. GEOGRAPHY	E. Physical Processes	The student will give examples of physical systems and explain the role of physical processes in shaping life on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe physical system changes such as seasons, weather and climate, and identify geographic patterns associated with them. ▪ Students will be able to explain patterns in the physical environment within the context of physical processes (examples erosion, earth-sun relationships and seasons, weather and climate, renewable and nonrenewable resources). ▪ Students will provide examples of how physical processes have shaped Minnesota (i.e. glaciers). ▪ Students will describe the major ecosystems of Minnesota and explain why they differ from place to place.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 6	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand that in a market economy income is earned in different ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define forms of income: wages and salary, rent, interest and profit. ▪ Students will recognize how career choice, education, and skills affect future income.
GRADE 6	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand business organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize types and roles of firms. ▪ Students will be able to define an industry. ▪ Students will be able to define revenue, costs, and profits.
GRADE 6	III. ECONOMICS	B. National Economy	The student will understand the economic role of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain that the government pays for the goods and services it provides through taxing and borrowing. ▪ Students will recognize that the government regulates the economy.
GRADE 7	HISTORY			
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>“Please focus on more limited areas in grades 7-8. We want a survey of U.S. History in grades 7-8.”</p>				
GRADE 7	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY		The student will demonstrate knowledge of Minnesota's first settlers and their impact on native cultures, the environment and Minnesota's move to statehood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand how Minnesota's people came to govern themselves as a territory. ▪ Students will know and understand physical, political, economic, and religious factors that encouraged these groups to come to Minnesota. ▪ Students will know and understand the conflicts, compromises, and cooperation that developed among Native Americans and the settlers and the results (e.g., armed conflict or treaty). ▪ Students will know and understand Minnesota's progression from territory to statehood. ▪ Students will know and understand Dred Scott and the impact of his story on American history.
GRADE 7	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	(none listed)	The student will understand Minnesota history from statehood through the end of the Civil War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand Minnesota's role in the Civil War. ▪ Students will name major battles in which Minnesotans were involved (e.g. Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chancellorsville). ▪ Students will know and understand the Dakota War and its impact on the state and its people.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 7	II. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 3: Founding of the Nation and Westward Expansion, 1775-1860	The student will know and understand the development of the U.S. Constitutional form of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1051 241 2050 328">▪ Students will know and understand the relationship between the religious, social and political ideas of the Great Awakening and the development of revolutionary fervor in western political thought. <li data-bbox="1051 328 2050 453">▪ Students will know and understand the principles of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights”). <li data-bbox="1051 453 2050 507">▪ Students will know and understand the significance of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and the Mayflower Compact on the founding of the United States. <li data-bbox="1051 507 2050 594">▪ Students will know and understand the failure of the Articles of Confederation and the success of the Constitution in implementing a government founded on the principle of ordered liberty. <li data-bbox="1051 594 2050 703">▪ Students will know and understand the major debates that occurred during the development of the Constitution and their ultimate resolution in such areas as: separation of powers; federalism; slavery; the rights of individuals and states (later addressed by the addition of the Bill of Rights); the status of American Indian nations. <li data-bbox="1051 703 2050 866">▪ Students will know and understand the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution as specified by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay in the Federalist Papers, and the role of leaders such as Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, Governor Morris, and James Wilson in the writing and ratification of the Constitution. <li data-bbox="1051 866 2050 992">▪ Students will know and understand the significance of Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom as a forerunner of the First Amendment and the origins, purpose, and differing views of the founding fathers on the issue of the separation of church and state.

Public Comment:

"4th bullet: 'ordered liberty' is a key term for conservatives – Ashcroft and Bennett use this to justify a cutback in rights. "

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 7	II. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 3: Founding of the Nation and Westward Expansion, 1775-1860	The student will understand the challenges to gaining and preserving our independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1051 241 2044 409">▪ Students will know and understand the political, social and economic causes and consequences of the American Revolution and know the major battles, including, but not limited to, Lexington, Concord, Breeds/Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Trenton; leaders, including, but not limited to, John, Abigail Adams; Washington; and events (writings by Thomas Paine, French entry on American side, Benjamin Franklin in France) that led to a final peace. <li data-bbox="1051 417 2044 535">▪ Students will know and understand the principles of federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, the nature and purpose of majority rule, and the ways in which the American idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights. <li data-bbox="1051 543 2044 621">▪ Students will know and understand the principles and concepts codified in state constitutions between 1777 and 1781 that created the context out of which American political institutions and ideas developed. <li data-bbox="1051 629 2044 708">▪ Students will know and understand how the ordinances of 1785 and 1787 privatized national resources and transferred federally owned lands into private holdings, townships, and states. <li data-bbox="1051 716 2044 801">▪ Students will know and understand the advantages of common market among the states as foreseen in and protected by the Constitution's clauses on interstate commerce, common coinage, and full-faith and credit. <li data-bbox="1051 809 2044 855">▪ Students will know and understand how the conflicts between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton resulted in the emergence of two political parties. <li data-bbox="1051 863 2044 948">▪ Students will know and understand the significance of domestic resistance movements and ways in which the central government responded to such movements (e.g. Shays' Rebellion, the Whiskey Rebellion). <li data-bbox="1051 956 2044 1078">▪ Students will know and understand the basic law-making process and how the Constitution provides numerous opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process and to monitor and influence government (e.g., function of elections, political parties, interest groups). <li data-bbox="1051 1086 2044 1116">▪ Students will know and understand the functions and responsibilities of a free press. <li data-bbox="1051 1124 2044 1192">▪ Students will know and understand the political, social and economic causes and consequences of the War of 1812 and the major battles, leaders, and events that led to a final peace.

Public Comment:

"4th bullet: Inaccurate! These were not about privatization. Privitization is a 20th century concept. The \$7 billion contract to Halliburton is privatization. This is a misuse of taxpayer funds.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 7	II. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 3: Founding of the Nation and Westward Expansion, 1775-1860	The student will understand the causes and effects of westward expansion on the formation of the United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the changing boundaries of the United States and describe the relationships the country had with its neighbors (current Mexico and Canada) and Europe during this period. ▪ Students will know and understand the influence of the Monroe Doctrine. ▪ Students will know and understand the significance of the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark's expedition. ▪ Students will know and understand the significance of routes followed by Lewis and Clark, the native peoples they met, and the expedition's success and the meaning of that success for native people and for the new United States nation. ▪ Students will know and understand the significance of the Mexican-American War and its effects on the United States, Mexico and their economies, maps/boundaries and citizens. ▪ Students will know and understand the major policies with American Indian nations during the administration of the first four presidents. ▪ Students will know and understand the geographic, social, and economic factors that influenced the westward movement of settlers to Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Oregon, California and the Mormon settlements of Utah and Arizona.
GRADE 7	II. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will recognize the Civil War as a major test of America's founding principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the reason for the rise of, and the main ideas and figures behind, the abolitionist movement. ▪ Students will know and understand the debate between pro-slavery advocates and abolitionists and how the issues of states' rights and slavery increased sectional tensions. ▪ Students will know and understand the significance of the creation of Liberia and the "Back to Africa" movement. ▪ Students will know the function and reasons for the Underground Railroad. ▪ Students will know and understand the role escaped slaves and free blacks played in the abolitionist movement and the Civil War itself. ▪ Students will know and understand the roles of Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Sojourner Truth in events leading to and during the war. ▪ Students will know and understand the political, social, and economic causes and consequences of the Civil War. ▪ Students will know and understand the role Lincoln's assassination played in hardening the North's attitude toward the South and Reconstruction.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 7	II. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will analyze and comprehend renewed westward expansion, reconstruction and their lasting consequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the role of pioneer women and the new status that western women achieved, (e.g., Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bidwell, Narcissa Whitman, slave women gaining freedom in the west, Wyoming granting suffrage to women in 1869). ▪ Students will know and understand the Freedman's Bureaus. ▪ Students will know and understand the role of "Carpet Baggers," the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, Northerners (white and free black) and religious groups in southern reconstruction. ▪ Students will know and understand the historical reasons for the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the south.
Public Comment:				
"Last bullet: Combine with other bullet, shouldn't stand alone. Why give attention to the KKK? "				
GRADE 7	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 7	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Foundations of the American Political System B. America's Founding Documents C. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship (all three sub-strands relate to this standard)	The student will study the Declaration of Independence and understand its principles and civic importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain that the Founders declared that the principles of the Declaration are universal in character, for all people. ▪ Students will know that the Founders saw these principles as discoveries of human reason, because they are rooted in human nature. ▪ Students will understand the Founders' view of equality and doctrine of natural rights. ▪ Students will discuss why the Founders identified "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" as natural rights, and differentiate "happiness" from "pursuit of happiness." ▪ Students will identify how the recognition of differences, desires, and abilities among people leads them to form governments to secure their natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. ▪ Students will understand the Founder's view of the right to revolution tempered with prudence, as articulated in the Declaration of Independence. ▪ Students will understand the significance of the Founders' sense of duty and honor: "We pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." ▪ Students will recognize the significance of the Founders' four references to God in the Declaration of Independence.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
Public Comments:				
<p>“Grade 7, Government and Citizenship standards refer to ‘four mentions of God in the Declaration of Independence.’ A dispassionate reading would show the word ‘God’ appears only once, where it is qualified by the modifier ‘Nature’s God.’ To understand this reference and those to ‘their Creator,’ ‘divine Providence’ and ‘sacred Honor’ – which one assumes are meant by the standard reference – would take a full understanding of the varied religious beliefs the Founders brought to the table, chief among them Deism. If this is what is meant by the standard it should be made clearer. On the other hand, if the standard refers to the Christian God as that term is understood by many believers today, a strong argument can be made that it is misleading and inaccurate; and that selecting this one aspect of the Declaration rather than, say, its reference to ‘the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions,’ is special pleading in the interest of a particular religious belief rather than a legitimate educational purpose.”</p> <p>“Last bullet: four references to God – Why is this here? ”</p> <p>“4th bullet: Why is there a debate over ‘happiness’ and ‘pursuit of happiness?’ This is a partisan issue. ”</p>				
GRADE 7	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	The student will use the five fundamental themes of geography to analyze human/ environmental interactions on the surface of the Earth.	
GRADE 7	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, analyze and report on the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will illustrate spatial information using data, symbols, and colors to create thematic maps (i.e. patterns of population, economics, rainfall, vegetation, landforms). ▪ Students will interpret information from a variety of maps and globes, with emphasis on historical maps. ▪ Students will be able to construct sketch maps of major political and physical features of the U.S. showing accurate relative locations and spatial relationships.
GRADE 7	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Systems	The student will be able to identify physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define regions, their relationships with other regions, and their patterns of change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate and describe the major physical features and cultural landscapes that define places and regions in the U.S. (e.g. Great Plains, Midwest and Southwest plantations, fishing villages). ▪ Students will describe the changing pattern of political regions that occurred during the territorial expansion of the U.S.. ▪ Students will give examples of how climate is influenced by landforms, latitude, and distance from the sea, elevation, wind patterns and ocean currents. ▪ Students will identify the location and describe the major ecosystems/ biomes of the U.S. (i.e. forests, prairie, deserts).

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 7	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know the effect of landforms and major climate on settlement patterns throughout the U.S.. ▪ Students will be able to classify ways in which human activities are influenced by physical systems. ▪ Students will compare and contrast European/North American attitudes towards the environment. ▪ Students will describe migration patterns of major groups (i.e., Europeans to Africa, rural to urban). ▪ Students will identify major settlement types and reasons for their location (plantation, ranch, fishing village). ▪ Students will describe the consequences of industrialization and urbanization patterns (i.e., factors effecting location of industry, impact of rise or decline of a manufacturing area, changing spatial patterns of major industries, changes and effects of settlement patterns, links between industrial development and rural-urban migration). ▪ Students will identify the causes and types of human migration and its effect on places. ▪ Students will describe the impact that canals and railroads had on the settlement of the nation and their impact on relative location.
GRADE 7	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the financial institutions that operate within our economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize various financial institutions including, but not limited to, banks, insurance companies, investment companies, etc. ▪ Students will be able to describe the Federal Reserve System.
GRADE 7	III. ECONOMICS	B. National Economy	The student will understand the concepts that measure the national economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to define basic economic terms: unemployment, inflation, interest rates, and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). ▪ Students will be able to define competition and monopoly. ▪ Students will describe conditions that exist during depression, recession and expansion. ▪ Students will be able to explain the relationship between economic freedom and political freedom.
GRADE 7	III. ECONOMICS	D. Economic Systems	The student will understand various economic systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will distinguish among command economies, free market economies and mixed economies.
GRADE 8	HISTORY			

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	1880-1900	The student will identify the resources and developing technologies that changed life for Minnesotans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the roles of property rights and entrepreneurs in developing the lumber, grain milling and iron mining industries. ▪ Students will know and understand the occupational and lifestyle changes brought about by large numbers of people immigrating to Minnesota. ▪ Students will know and understand how flourmills, iron ore, and the lumber industries changed where people lived and how they made their living. ▪ Students will know and understand how Minnesota raw materials and agricultural products were moved to market. ▪ Students will know and understand the transformation of Minnesota's environment through logging, mining and agriculture.
GRADE 8	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	1900-1968	The student will review significant events that took place between 1914 through 1968 and their impact on Minnesota.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the resistance of some Minnesotans to entering into World War I. ▪ Students will know and understand the participation and the motivation of Native Americans in enlisting to fight in World War I. ▪ Students will know and understand the influence of the Great Depression and Prohibition in Minnesota. ▪ Students will know and understand the importance of Minnesota's natural resources and products during times of war and peace. ▪ Students will know and understand the development of Minnesota's role in the world according to five prominent Minnesotans: Frank B. Kellogg, Charles Lindbergh, Harold Stassen, Eugene McCarthy, and Hubert Humphrey.
GRADE 8	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	1968-2000	The student will understand the reasons for the influx of new immigrants and their impact on Minnesota.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand evolving patterns of immigration and their impact on Minnesota culture, including, but not limited to: Hispanic, Somali and Hmong immigrants.
GRADE 8	I. MINNESOTA HISTORY	2000-present	The student will understand the interrelationship of Minnesotans with the world economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the relationship between the use of natural resources and its impact on Minnesota's economy. ▪ Students will know and understand the relationship between comparative advantage and globalization and its impact on Minnesota's economy.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 5: The development of the Industrial United States, 1880's-1900	The student will analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in response to the Industrial Revolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the reasons for the increase in immigration, growth of cities, new inventions, and political challenges to American government arising from the industrial revolution. ▪ Students will know and understand racial segregation, the rise of "Jim Crow," the Ku Klux Klan and other constraints faced by African Americans in the post-Reconstruction South. ▪ Students will identify the segregation and racism that faced new immigrants such as the Irish and Chinese. ▪ Students will know and understand the rise of big business, the growth of industry, and the change in life on American farms and small towns with increased mechanization. ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of the Progressive Movement on child labor, working conditions, the rise of organized labor, women's suffrage, the temperance movement and politics in the U.S.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (referring to bullet/benchmark #2 above.) The KKK was more than a restraint.
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 6: The Emergence of Modern America, 1896-1929	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political, geographical, cultural, social, and economic forces shaping the modern United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the reasons for and results of the Spanish American War. ▪ Students will know and understand the U.S.'s actions in the Pacific, specifically in China, the Philippines, Panama and the annexation of Hawaii. ▪ Students will know and understand the reaction to the U.S. entry into the Pacific by the people of the Philippines and China, e.g., the guerilla war in the Philippines and the Boxer Rebellion in China, as well as Russia and Japan. ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of Theodore Roosevelt on the development of the American nation in the 20th Century. ▪ Students will know and understand the reasons for the United States' neutrality and delayed entry into World War I. ▪ Students will know and understand the reason for the change in the U.S. decision in favor of involvement in World War I. ▪ Students will know and understand Wilson's 14 Points and the failure of post-war internationalism, and the rise of U.S. isolationism, which helped set the stage for World War II.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	E. Era 7: The Great Depression and World War Two, 1929-1945	The student will understand the economic, social, and political transformation of the United States and the world, from the stock market crash of 1929 to the early 1940s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand how developments in transportation (including the use of the automobile), communication, and rural electrification changed American life. ▪ Students will know and understand the social changes that took place, including prohibition, and the Great Migration north. ▪ Students will know and understand the art, literature, and music from the 1920s and 1930s, including the Harlem Renaissance, and emphasizing artists such as Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, and Georgia O'Keefe. ▪ Students will know and understand the causes of the Great Depression. ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of the Depression on Americans, American culture and politics. ▪ Students will know and understand Herbert Hoover's response and the reason for that response. ▪ Students will know and understand the major features of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	E. Era 7: The Great Depression and World War Two, 1929-1945	The student will understand and analyze the economic, social, and political transition of the United States during and after World War II.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the major causes and effects of American involvement in World War II. ▪ Students will know and understand the U.S. desire to remain neutral and the political forces urging neutrality. ▪ Students will know, understand, and identify the causes and events that led to U.S. involvement in the war, including the attack on Pearl Harbor. ▪ Students will recognize the contributions of significant American leaders during the war, including but not limited to Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, and Douglas MacArthur. ▪ Students will know and understand the major events and turning points of the war in Europe and the Pacific (e.g. the battle for Midway; Normandy, Battle of the Bulge). ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of World War II on the home front and on American culture, specifically on new opportunities for women and minorities.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	F. Era 8: The Cold War and a changing America, 1945-1980's	The student will analyze the economic, social, and political transformation of the United States and the world between the end of World War II and the present.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the rebuilding of Europe and Japan after World War II through the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, the U.S. victory during the Berlin Blockade, as well as McArthur's occupation of Japan. ▪ Students will know and understand the emergence of the United States as a superpower, and the establishment of the United Nations. ▪ Students will know and understand the shift from a wartime to a peacetime economy, the GI Bill and its benefits. ▪ Students will know and understand the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam, the Cuban missile crisis, and the collapse of communism in Europe. ▪ Students will know and understand the changing patterns of society, including expanded educational and economic opportunities for military veterans, women, and minorities.
Public comment:				
“Defending freedom” that is a statement of debate.				
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	G. Era 9: The United States in an unsettled world 1989-present	The student will recognize the opportunities and challenges facing the United States and explore its role in the world since 1989.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the causes of the fall of the Soviet Union, including the significance of the role of Ronald Reagan. ▪ Students will know and understand the new clash of civilizations in a post-communist world and the challenges it presents to the United States.
Public Comments:				
“This comment is in reference to substrand G, Era 9: The United States in an unsettled world 1989-present.				
Why must this standard isolate ‘the significance of the role of Ronald Reagan’ as a ‘cause of the fall of the Soviet Union?’ If Reagan is one of many causes, why single him out in the standard? This is an excellent example of why people feel this process has been ceded to conservative ideologues. Beatify Reagan in your own homes, if you like, but please don’t distort the public school curriculum in order to appease political factions. “				
" (bullet 1) Just Reagan?"				
"Bullet 1: Ronald Reagan?! Truman started this in 1948. Reagan only put the nails in the coffin. Why give him credit?"				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. U.S. HISTORY	G. Era 9: The United States in an unsettled world 1989-present	The student will demonstrate knowledge of key domestic issues during the second half of the twentieth century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the significance of the Civil Rights Movement, including its leaders and opponents. ▪ Students will know and understand the evolving role of women. ▪ Students will know and understand the development of new technologies and their impact on American life, culture, politics and economics. ▪ Students will know and understand the impact of Vietnam, Watergate and the counter culture on American life, culture, politics and economics. ▪ Students will know and understand the Presidencies of 1970s through the 1990s.
GRADE 8	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 8	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Foundations of the American Political System	The student will understand the success of the Framers of the Constitution in securing the equal rights of all citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be familiar with constitutionalism, which makes it clear government was subordinated to a higher or supreme law. ▪ Students will understand the concept of federalism. ▪ Students will be familiar with the rule of law, that no one is above the law, and those who live under the law must be able to participate in making those laws, and those who make the laws must live under the laws they make.
GRADE 8	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. America's Founding Documents	The student will understand the success of Framers of the Constitution in securing a government that still exists today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand separation of powers and its purpose to limit government. ▪ Students will understand the concept of checks and balances. ▪ Students will understand the arguments and concepts set forth in the Federalist Papers, especially the concepts of checks and balances (Paper 9 and 48), federalism (Papers 10 and 45) and representation (Paper 10). ▪ Students will understand that our government has the same foundation as it did at the time of its founding, and how our government has changed within that foundation over time.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. Essential Skills	The student will use the five fundamental themes of geography to analyze human/ environmental interactions on the surface of the Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will apply the concept of region by explaining how cultural characteristics link or divide regions. ▪ Students will compare the physical and human characteristics of places using observation data and geographic resources (examples: soils, landforms, vegetation, wildlife, religion, language, politics, population, land use). ▪ Students will use geographic tools and technologies to pose and answer questions about past and present spatial distributions and patterns on Earth (mountain ranges, river systems, field patterns, settlements, transportation routes). ▪ Students will be able to draw sketch maps from memory of major physical and cultural features of world regions and be able to compare the relative locations of these features (continents, oceans, mountains, deserts, languages, religions). ▪ Students will evaluate the impact of human activity on landscapes over time using maps, graphs and satellite-produced images (examples: agricultural patterns in different areas of the world, urban growth, land use change). ▪ Students will analyze the geographic aspects of current and historical issues or conflicts.
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, analyze and report on the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will illustrate spatial information using data, symbols, and colors to create political, physical and thematic maps. ▪ Students will use maps to determine patterns of population, economics, rainfall, vegetation, landforms, and international trade in commodities evaluate the relative merits of maps, graphic representations, tools, and technologies in terms of their value in solving geographic problems (e.g. map projections, aerial photographs, satellite images, geographic information systems).
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Systems	The student will be able to identify physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define regions, their relationships with other regions, and their patterns of change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify and describe varying landforms and geographic features and explain their relationship within the ecosystem.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Interconnections	The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize changes over time in a nearby ecosystem resulting from human intervention (examples: natural wetlands being replaced by farms, forests and farmland being replaced by housing developments). ▪ Students will analyze how selected physical and ecological processes shape the Earth's surface by identifying regional climatic patterns and weather phenomena and their effects on people and places. ▪ Students will evaluate the impact of human activity on Minnesota's landscape over time using maps, graphs and satellite-produced images. ▪ Students will be able to explain how the U.S. and world regions are interdependent (i.e. through trade, diffusion of ideas, human migration, economic networks, international conflicts, etc.). ▪ Students will locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of world regions; Latin America, North Africa, etc. <p>▪ Public comment: (bullet 2) What about global warming?</p>
GRADE 8	GEOGRAPHY Non-Integrated			
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	A. Essential Skills	The student will use the five fundamental themes of geography to analyze human environmental interaction on the surface of the Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will create a map to scale. ▪ Students will be able to use maps and images to analyze interactions between people and their environment. ▪ Students will create a flow map to show movement of people. ▪ Students will use the concept of region and can distinguish common characteristics of regions within Minnesota, the United States and the World (landforms, climate, vegetation, farming, land use).
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	B. Maps and Globes	The student will make and use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, analyze and report on the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain why maps are distorted representations of Earth's surface. ▪ Students will make and interpret information from a variety of maps and globes, with emphasis on thematic maps. ▪ Students will be able to draw sketch maps from memory of major political and physical features of the United States and be able to compare the relative location of those features (borders, landforms, rivers and other bodies of water, vegetation patterns, cities, etc.). ▪ Students will be able to draw sketch maps from memory of major physical and cultural features of world regions and be able to compare the relative locations of these features (Continents, oceans, mountains, deserts, languages, religions).

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	C. Physical Features	The student will be able to identify physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define regions, their relationships with other regions, and their patterns of change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1036 230 2029 290">▪ Students will describe the major physical and cultural features of Minnesota, the United States and the World. <li data-bbox="1036 290 2029 350">▪ Students will describe the major ecosystems of Minnesota and explain why they differ from place to place. <li data-bbox="1036 350 2029 411">▪ Students will give examples of how climate is influenced by landforms, latitude, distance from the sea, elevation, wind patterns and ocean currents. <li data-bbox="1036 411 2029 471">▪ Students will identify and describe varying landforms and geographic features and explain their relationship within the ecosystem.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	D. Interconnections	<p>The student will describe the cultural, economic and environmental processes that interact to shape patterns of human populations, density, interdependence, and cooperation and conflict.</p> <p>(continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain how major landforms affect settlement patterns throughout the U.S.. ▪ Students will identify the major climates of the U.S. and their relative advantages and disadvantages for settlement. ▪ Students will recognize changes over time in a nearby ecosystem resulting from human intervention (examples: natural wetlands being replaced by farms, forests and farmland being replaced by housing developments). ▪ Students will evaluate the impact of human activity on Minnesota's landscape over time using maps, graphs and satellite-produced images. ▪ Students will describe examples of migration (examples: immigration from Europe and Africa, rural to urban migration, southerners into northern areas of the United States in the twentieth century, northerners into the southern region in the late twentieth century). ▪ Students will be able to explain how the U.S. and world regions are interdependent (i.e. through trade, diffusion of ideas, human migration, economic networks, international conflicts, etc.). ▪ Students will locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of world regions: Latin America, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Russia and Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Australia. ▪ Students will identify the causes and types of human migration and its effect on places. ▪ Students will be able to explain the distribution patterns of economic activities and how changes in technology, transportation, communication, and resources affect the location of those activities. ▪ Students will describe and analyze the characteristics, structure, and patterns of different populations through the use of demographic concepts (i.e. population pyramids, population growth rates, migration patterns). ▪ Students will identify current or historical issues or conflicts that involve particular regions and give examples of how those conflicts are influenced by geography distinguish between developed and developing countries and relate the level of economic development to the standards of living and quality of life. ▪ Students will provide examples of how physical systems affect human systems in Minnesota, the United States and around the World. ▪ Students will be able to explain the roles of natural resources, industry and available means of transportation in determining where people settled in Minnesota, the United States and around the World. ▪ Students will trace patterns of agricultural and industrial development in the United States and the world as they relate to climate, use of natural resources, markets, and trade and will locate such development on a map. <p>(continued)</p>

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	D. Interconnections	(continued) The student will describe the cultural, economic and environmental processes that interact to shape patterns of human populations, density, interdependence, and cooperation and conflict.	(continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will discuss major industries in the United States from the perspective of how geography and the factors of production helped determine the locations of manufacturing plants. ▪ Students will give examples of ways changes in technology (such as flour mills, or the discovery of iron) impact where people live and how they make their living in Minnesota, the United States and the World.
GRADE 8	II. GEOGRAPHY (Non-Integrated)	E. Physical Processes	The student will give examples of physical systems and explain the role of physical processes in shaping life on Earth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe physical system changes such as seasons, weather and climate, and identify geographic patterns associated with them. ▪ Students will be able to explain patterns in the physical environment within the context of physical processes (e.g., erosion, and renewable and nonrenewable resources). ▪ Students will provide examples of how physical processes have shaped Minnesota (e.g., glaciers).
GRADE 8	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	Students will understand the basic components of personal financial management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will define and state the importance of a budget. ▪ Students will recognize the use of consumer credit. ▪ Students will recognize personal investment options, such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. ▪ Students will recognize insurance and other risk management strategies to protect against financial loss.
GRADE 9-12	HISTORY			
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 1: Pre-Colonial America, prehistory through 1607	The student will demonstrate knowledge of American Indian cultures in North America prior to and during western exploration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate and identify the major Native American groups. These will include, but are not limited to Mayans, Incas, Aztecs, Plains, Iroquois and Ojibwe. ▪ Students will know and understand important cultural aspects of major American Indian tribes, including their traditions, customs and beliefs as well as their scientific and cultural contributions.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	A. Era 1: Pre-Colonial America, prehistory through 1607	The student will demonstrate knowledge of European exploration in North America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the motivations, obstacles and accomplishments of the French, Spanish, Portuguese and English exploration. ▪ Students will describe the cultural interactions (including agricultural, disease and resources) between Europeans and American Indians that led to cooperation, compromise, and conflict.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 2: Colonization and Conflict, 1607-1780s	The student will recognize the three colonial regions that developed in America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the social, political, religious and economic conditions that led to the colonization of America. ▪ Students will compare and contrast life in the three colonial regions. This will include social, economic, governmental and religious factors. ▪ Students will connect the economic development and trading of the three colonial regions with the development of regional political thought (including discussions of tariffs, foreign government relations and cultural development). ▪ Students will explain the impact of North American slavery on colonial life (including the features and impact of indentured servants, Atlantic slave trade, the Middle Passage, and the southern plantation system).
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 2: Colonization and Conflict, 1607-1780s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes of the American Revolution through conflict, intellectual writings, economic trade, and the move to unity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will trace the critical conflicts leading to the American Revolution. These will include, but are not limited to the: French and Indian War, Boston Tea Party, and Lexington and Concord. ▪ Students will analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution. This will include the Magna Carta, the political writings of the enlightenment (Locke, Montesquieu), and Thomas Paine. ▪ Students will explain the economic and political reasons for the American Revolution with an emphasis on the attempts to regulate colonial trade (including the Tea Act, Stamp Act, Intolerable Acts) and colonial reaction to British policy (including boycotts, the Sons of Liberty and petitions to Parliament). ▪ Students will understand the move to unity among some American colonists including the work of the First and Second Continental Congresses and the importance of the Declaration of Independence.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	B. Era 2: Colonization and Conflict, 1607-1780s	The student will comprehend the course and the consequences of the Revolutionary War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify key leaders and personalities. These will include but not be limited to, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Paul Revere, Baron Von Steuben, Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Cornwallis, and Lafayette. ▪ Students will know the major campaigns, which will include but not be limited to Saratoga, Valley Forge and Yorktown. ▪ Students will know and understand the major provisions of the Treaty of Paris.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth and Westward Expansion, 1781-mid-1800s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Articles of Confederation and the creation of the Constitution and the resulting growth of political parties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. ▪ Students will be able to discuss the Constitutional Convention and its role in forming the new government, including the key debates in the Convention, and key personalities (i.e., Madison, Franklin, Washington). ▪ Students will understand and identify key actors in the debate over ratification of the Constitution, including knowledge of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists. ▪ Students will be able to describe the structure of the U.S. government as established by the Constitution, including a discussion of the federal system and the separation of powers. ▪ Students will be able to identify and discuss all provisions of the Bill of Rights. ▪ Students will understand how the role of the Supreme Court emerged, including a discussion of judicial supremacy in analyzing the Constitution (especially <i>Marbury v. Madison</i>). ▪ Students will identify the key events and personalities that led to the rise of the first political parties in America.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth and Westward Expansion, 1781-mid-1800s	The student will explain the political and diplomatic causes and effects of the War of 1812, including the Monroe Doctrine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the major provisions of the Monroe Doctrine. ▪ Students will understand political interests and views regarding the War of 1812 (e.g., U.S. responses to shipping harassment prior to the war; interests of Native American and white settlers of the Northwest Territory during the war; congressional positions for and against the war resolution of June 3, 1812).
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth and Westward Expansion, 1781-mid-1800s	The student will understand the relationship between territorial expansion and the growth of the American System (expansion, tariffs, banking, & transportation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to describe the territorial expansion of the United States throughout the eighteenth century, with emphasis on the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and acquisition of Florida, Texas, Oregon and California. ▪ Students will identify the geographic and economic factors that influenced the westward movement of settlers. ▪ Students will be able to describe the impact of inventions on life in America, including the cotton gin, the reaper, the steamboat, and the steam locomotive. ▪ Students will understand the debates between proponents and opponents of a National Bank, tariffs and internal improvements, with an emphasis on sectional differences.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth and Westward Expansion, 1781-mid-1800s	The student will understand other important political, economic and social issues in the period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the successes and failures of the reforms during the age of Jacksonian Democracy, including Jackson's Common Man Ideal, the National Bank Controversy, tariff issues, and the Nullification Crisis. ▪ Students will understand the sources and character of cultural, religious (including knowledge of the Second Great Awakening), and social reform movements (including the women's suffrage, abolition and temperance movements) in the antebellum period. ▪ Students will examine the emergence of industrialization and immigration during the antebellum period.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	C. Era 3: Political Growth and Westward Expansion, 1781-mid-1800s	The student will understand the growing sectional division within the U.S., including cultural, economic, religious, and governmental shifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to describe the factors leading the growing sectional crisis including the Compromise of 1850, the Fugitive Slave Act, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the formation of the Republican party, the <i>Dred Scott</i> decision, and John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will understand the long and short term causes of the Civil War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to describe and analyze the cultural, economic, social and constitutional issues that divided the nation. ▪ Students will be able to explain the roles of slavery and states rights in leading to the Civil War. ▪ Students will understand the key political figures leading up to the Civil War, including Abraham Lincoln, Stephen Douglas and their debates.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the various events that led to the abolition of slavery, including but not limited to the abolitionists, the Emancipation Proclamation, black military units, and the role of Frederick Douglass. ▪ Students will describe (both in writing and by using maps) Union and Confederate states, critical battles (including but not limited to Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Atlanta), and the significance of key personnel of the Civil War (including but not limited to Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson). ▪ Students will read and understand the significance of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and its views of American political life, including Lincoln's emphasis on equality and self-government. ▪ Students will examine various Union war aims and how they changed over time, with an emphasis on the role of slavery in Union decision-making.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	D. Era 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Reconstruction on American life and evaluate its successes and failures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the provisions of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States and their legacy. ▪ Students will describe the effect of early Reconstruction governments on the South generally, as well as the plight of newly freed slaves and dispossessed landowners. ▪ Students will understand how and why the Reconstruction Era ended, and describe the re-emergence of state power in the South.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S.HISTORY	E. Era 5: Reshaping the Nation and the Emergence of Modern America, 1877-1916	The student will understand the changing nature of America in the late 19 th century and early 20 th century with an emphasis on how the industrial revolution transformed America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the effect of the closing of the frontier, the settlement of the Midwest and West, the growth of industry to westward expansion and the resulting conflict with American Indian cultures. ▪ Students will understand how the rise of corporations, heavy industry, inventions, and mechanized farming transformed American society. ▪ Students will understand the changing role of the farmer, the rise of urbanization, including the move from farm to city, migration of blacks to the North and Midwest, and the growth of urban centers. ▪ Students will describe the immigration movement after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity, and agrarian unrest. ▪ Students will understand the rise and growth of the American labor movement, women's suffrage, the temperance movement and how political issues reflected social and economic changes. ▪ Students will understand the significance of key people during the time of social and economic changes, including but not limited to, William Jennings Bryant, James J. Hill, and Andrew Carnegie. ▪ Students will understand the rise of the Progressive Movement and other issues concerning industrial capitalization, urbanization, and political corruption. ▪ Students will describe racial segregation, the rise of "Jim Crow," and other challenges faced by black citizens in the "New South."
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	F. Era 6: World Wars and the Emergence of Modern America, 1900-1930s	The student will understand the rise of government in early 20 th century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the causes of the Spanish-American War and its effect on foreign policy and American identity. ▪ Students will understand the causes and effects of the increased role of the federal government in American life, including antitrust laws, labor reforms, income tax, stock market regulations, the conservation movement and the Federal Reserve System. ▪ Students will understand the significance of key people in the Progressive movement including but not limited to Sinclair Lewis, Robert La Follette, Ida Tarbell, and Theodore Roosevelt. ▪ Students will understand the economic, social, cultural, and political changes and conflicts that occurred in the United States during the 1920's.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	F. Era 6: World Wars and the Emergence of Modern America, 1900-1930s	The student will understand the causes and consequences of World War I.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the causes of World War I, major battles, and the impact on the American people. ▪ Students will understand the significance of key people in World War I, including but not limited to Woodrow Wilson and Alvin York. ▪ Students will understand the controversy surrounding Wilson's 14 Points, the Treaty of Versailles and the consequences of both. ▪ Students will understand the changing role of the United States in world affairs as a result of World War I.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	F. Era 6: World Wars and the Emergence of Modern America, 1900-1930s	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the social, economic and technological changes of the early twentieth century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain how developments in transportation, communications, and rural electrification changed American life. ▪ Students will describe social changes that took place, including suffrage, prohibition and the Great Migration north. ▪ Students will examine the changing role of art, literature and music in the 1920s and 1930s, including, but not limited to, Louis Armstrong, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Edward Hopper, Sinclair Lewis, and the Harlem Renaissance. ▪ Students will understand the causes of the Great Depression and how Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" addressed the depression and transformed American federalism. ▪ Students will understand the Supreme Court's role in blocking New Deal legislation, Roosevelt's court-packing plan, and the Supreme Court's change in philosophy.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	G. Era 7: A World at War, 1930s-1945	The student will understand the conflict between the internationalists and isolationists in the 1920s and 1930s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will discuss America's rejection of world leadership after World War I, including but not limited to, the causes and consequences of Woodrow Wilson's failure to obtain ratification of the League of Nations. ▪ Students will understand how America reacted to the move to war in Europe throughout the 1930s contrasting the internationalist foreign policy of Franklin Roosevelt with the more isolationist sentiment in Congress during the 1930s, including a discussion of the Lend Lease program with Britain.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	G. Era 7: A World at War, 1930s-1945	The student will understand the causes and major issues and battles of World War II.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the rise of fascism in Europe and aggressive military power in Japan and why America and the world failed to act against these threats earlier. ▪ Students will identify the attack on Pearl Harbor and the chain of events that led to America's entry into the war, including study of Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech. ▪ Students will identify and understand major battles in the European Theatre (including the Battle of Britain, D-Day, Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of Paris and Germany) and the Pacific Theatre (including Midway, Okinawa and the Philippines). ▪ Students will understand the religious, social, and political causes of the Holocaust, and its long-term effect on American and international foreign policy.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	G. Era 7: A World at War, 1930s-1945	The student will understand the significant economic, cultural, and geopolitical consequences of World War II.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the impact of atomic weaponry on diplomacy and warfare, including the reasons why America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. ▪ Students will examine the changing role of women and blacks during World War II and how these changes set the stage for post-war society. ▪ Students will understand the rise of United States and the Soviet Union as twin superpowers, and the corresponding Cold War.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	H. Era 8: Post WWII Era	The student will understand the beginnings of the Cold War and how it shifted foreign and domestic policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the rise of anti-communism and concerns over the influence of communists in American government and public life (including the role of Joseph McCarthy). ▪ Students will know and understand the key aspects and significance of the occupation of Japan and Germany, as well as the significance of the Marshall Plan. ▪ Students will understand the doctrine of containment between 1945 and 1975, including but not limited to, the Berlin airlift, NATO, the Warsaw Pact, the Korean War, the Truman Doctrine, and the Vietnam War.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	H. Era 8: Post WWII Era	The student will identify and describe the major cultural and political changes that occurred during the 1950's and 1960's.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the rise of the federal highway system and suburbs in the 1950s and the competing forces of conformity and nonconformity in American society. ▪ Students will know and understand key people and events in the civil rights movement including but not limited to, <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>, Thurgood Marshall, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr. (including the "I Have a Dream" speech), Malcolm X, and the Voting Rights Act.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	I. Era 9: Contemporary America, 1980-present	The student will understand major developments in foreign policy between the Nixon and Bush II presidencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know the political and economic policies which led to the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, including the role of Ronald Reagan. ▪ Students will know the key events and policies in the war on terrorism during the early 2000s.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (bullet 2) Clinton also had a role in the "war on terrorism" World Trade Center bomber was convicted.
GRADE 9-12	I. U.S. HISTORY	I. Era 9: Contemporary America, 1980-present	The student will understand the major economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary America.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will know and understand the effects of increased participation of women in the labor force. ▪ Students will know and understand the significance of the changing patterns of immigration and migration and their contributions to contemporary America. ▪ Students will know and understand the influence of the media on contemporary American culture, and how scientific and technological advances affect the workplace, health care and education.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 1: Early Civilizations, prehistory to 1000 B.C.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of early development of humankind from the Paleolithic Era to the agricultural revolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain the impact of geographic environment on hunter-gatherer societies; ▪ Students will list characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies, including their use of tools and fire; ▪ Students will describe technological and social advancements that gave rise to stable communities; ▪ Students will be able to explain how archaeological discoveries are changing present-day knowledge of early peoples.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	A. Era 1: Early Civilizations, prehistory to 1000 B.C.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient river valley civilizations, including Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus river Valley, and China and the later civilizations of the Middle East (e.g., Hebrews, Phoenicians, Assyrians and Babylonians).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate these civilizations in time and place. ▪ Students will describe the development of social, political and economic patterns, (including slavery). ▪ Students will be able to explain the development of religious traditions. ▪ Students will be able to explain the development of language and writing.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient India and China.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe India, with emphasis on Aryan migrations and the caste system. ▪ Students will describe China, with emphasis on the development of empires and the construction of the Great Wall. ▪ Students will be able to identify the religions of China and India and the role religion plays in the social, cultural, and political contexts of those countries.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Greece in terms of its impact on Western Civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will assess the influence of geography on Greek economic, social, and political development, including the impact of Greek commerce and colonies. ▪ Students will describe Greek mythology and religion. ▪ Students will identify the social structure and role of slavery, explaining the significance of citizenship and the development of democracy, and comparing the city-states of Athens, and Sparta. ▪ Students will evaluate the significance of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars. ▪ Students will cite contributions in drama, poetry, history, sculpture, architecture, science, mathematics, and philosophy, with emphasis on Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. ▪ Students will be able to explain the conquest of Greece by Macedonia and the spread of Hellenistic culture by Alexander the Great citing contributions in philosophy, science, art and architecture.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Rome from about 700 B.C. to 500 A.D. in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will assess the influence of geography on Roman economic, social, and political development. ▪ Students will describe Roman mythology and religion and explain how they are similar to or different from Greek mythology and religion. ▪ Students will be able to explain the social structure and role of slavery, significance of citizenship, and the development of democratic features in the government of the Roman Republic. ▪ Students will sequence events leading to Roman military domination of the Mediterranean basin and Western Europe and the spread of Roman culture in these areas. ▪ Students will assess the impact of military conquests on the army, economy, and social structure of Rome. ▪ Students will assess the roles of Julius and Augustus Caesar in the collapse of the Republic and the rise of imperial monarchs. ▪ Students will describe the significance of key historical figures in Rome including but not limited to Caesar, Nero, and Caligula. ▪ Students will describe the economic, social, and political development during the Pax Romana. ▪ Students will describe the origin, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Christianity. ▪ Students will be able to explain the development and significance of the Church in the late Roman Empire. ▪ Students will list Roman contributions in art and architecture, engineering and science, medicine, literature and history, language, religious institutions, and law. ▪ Students will cite the reasons for the decline and fall of the Western Roman Empire.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Byzantine Empire and Russia from about 300 to 1000 A.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain the establishment of Constantinople as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. ▪ Students will identify Justinian and his contributions, including the codification of Roman law, and describe the expansion of the Byzantine Empire and economy. ▪ Students will characterize Byzantine art, architecture and science and the preservation of Greek and Roman traditions. ▪ Students will be able to explain disputes that led to the split between the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church. ▪ Students will assess the impact of Byzantine influence and trade on Russia and Eastern Europe.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Islamic civilization from about 600 to 1000 A.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the origin, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Islam. ▪ Students will assess the influence of geography on Islamic economic, social, and political development, including the impact of conquest and trade. ▪ Students will identify historical turning points that affected the spread and influence of Islamic civilization, with emphasis on the Sunni-Shi'a division and the Battle of Tours. ▪ Students will cite cultural and scientific contributions and achievements of Islamic civilization with emphasis on Spain. ▪ Students will compare and contrast major characteristics of the five major religions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	C. Era 3: Postclassical Civilizations, 500-1000 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of Western Europe during the Middle Ages from about 500 to 1000 A.D. in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will sequence events related to the spread and influence of Christianity and the Catholic Church throughout Europe. ▪ Students will be able to explain the structure of feudal society and its economic, social, and political effects. ▪ Students will be able to explain the rise of Frankish kings, the Age of Charlemagne, and the settlement of the Barbarian tribes. ▪ Students will sequence events related to the invasions, settlements, and influence of migratory groups, including Angles, Saxons, Magyars, and Vikings.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1450 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of civilizations and empires of the Eastern Hemisphere and their interactions through regional trade patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will locate major trade routes. ▪ Students will identify technological advances and transfers, networks of economic interdependence, and cultural interactions. ▪ Students will describe Japan, with emphasis on the impact of Shinto and Buddhist traditions and the influence of Chinese culture. ▪ Students will describe east African kingdoms of Axum and Zimbabwe and West African civilizations of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai in terms of geography, society, economy, and religion.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1450 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of major civilizations of the Western Hemisphere, including the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe geographic relationship, with emphasis on patterns of development in terms of climate and physical features of these civilizations. ▪ Students will describe culture, politics and economics of these civilizations.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	D. Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1450 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of social, economic and political changes and cultural achievements in the late medieval period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the emergence of nation-states (England, France, Spain and Russia) and distinctive political developments in each. ▪ Students will be able to explain conflicts among Eurasian powers, including the Crusades, the Mongol conquests, and the fall of Constantinople. ▪ Students will be able to explain the significance of key people, including but not limited to, Charlemagne and William the Conqueror. ▪ Students will identify patterns of crisis and recovery related to the Black Death. ▪ Students will be able to explain the preservation and transfer to Western Europe of Greek, Roman and Arabic philosophy, medicine, and science. ▪ Students will be able to explain the uniqueness of the Hanseatic League.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	E. Era 5: Emergence of a Global Age, 1450-1650, A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of development leading to the Renaissance in Europe in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the economic foundations of the Renaissance, including the contributions of Johann Gutenberg. ▪ Students will sequence events related to the rise of Italian city-states and their political development, including Machiavelli's theory of governing as described in <i>The Prince</i>. ▪ Students will cite artistic, literary, and philosophical creativity of the period (e.g., Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo), Petrarch, and Shakespeare. ▪ Students will compare the Italian and the Northern Renaissance, citing contributions of each.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	E. Era 5: Emergence of a Global Age, 1450-1650, A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Reformation in terms of its impact on Western civilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain the effects of the theological, political and economic differences that emerged, (e.g., the views and actions of Martin Luther, John Calvin and Henry VIII); ▪ Students will describe the impact of religious conflicts, including the Inquisition, on society and government actions; ▪ Students will describe changing cultural values, traditions, and philosophies, and assessing the role of the printing press.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	E. Era 5: Emergence of a Global Age, 1450-1650, A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the impact of the European Age of Discovery and expansion into the Americas, Africa and Asia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain the roles of explorers and conquistadors. ▪ Students will describe the influence of religion. ▪ Students will be able to explain migration, settlement patterns, cultural diffusion and social classes in the colonized areas. ▪ Students will be able to explain the triangular trade. ▪ Students will describe the impact of precious metal exports from the Americas.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	E. Era 5: Emergence of a Global Age, 1450-1650, A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the status and impact of global trade on regional civilizations of the world after 1500 A.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the location and development of the Ottoman Empire. ▪ Students will describe India, including the Mughal Empire and coastal trade. ▪ Students will describe East Asia, including China and the Japanese shogunate. ▪ Students will describe Africa and its increasing involvement in global trade. ▪ Students will describe the growth of European nations, including the Commercial Revolution and mercantilism.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	F. Era 6: Age of Revolutions, 1650-1914 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of scientific, political, economic and religious changes during the 16 th , 17 th , and 18 th centuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the Scientific Revolution and its effects. ▪ Students will describe the Age of Absolutism, (e.g., the monarchies of Louis XIV, Frederick the Great and Peter the Great). ▪ Students will assess the impacts of the English Civil War and the Glorious Revolution on democracy. ▪ Students will be able to explain the political, religious and social ideas of the Enlightenment and the ways in which they influenced the founders of the United States. ▪ Students will describe the French Revolution, including the roles of Louis XVI and Robespierre. ▪ Students will compare and contrast the causes and effects of the American and French Revolutions. ▪ Students will describe the expansion of the arts, philosophy, literature, and new technology.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	F. Era 6: Age of Revolutions, 1650-1914 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of political and philosophical developments in Europe during the 19 th century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will assess the impact of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna, including changes in political boundaries in Europe after 1815. ▪ Students will describe the influence of revolutions on the expansion of political rights in Europe. ▪ Students will be able to explain events related to the unification of Italy and the role of Italian nationalists. ▪ Students will be able to explain events related to the unification of Germany and the role of Bismarck.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	F. Era 6: Age of Revolutions, 1650-1914 A.D.	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of the Industrial Revolution during the 19 th century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will cite scientific, technological and industrial developments and explain how they brought about urbanization and social and environmental changes. ▪ Students will be able to explain the emergence of capitalism as a dominant economic pattern and subsequent development of socialism and communism. ▪ Students will describe the evolution of the nature of work and the labor force, including its effects on families, the status of women and children, the slave trade and the labor union movement. ▪ Students will be able to explain the rise of industrial economies and their link to imperialism and nationalism. ▪ Students will assess the impact of European economic and military power on Asia and Africa, with emphasis on the competition for resources and the responses of colonized peoples.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	G. Era 7: Global Conflict, 1914-1945	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the worldwide impact of World War I.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain economic and political causes, major events, and identify major leaders of the war, (e.g., Woodrow Wilson, Kaiser Wilhelm II and Lloyd George). ▪ Students will be able to explain the outcomes and global effect of the war and the Treaty of Versailles. ▪ Students will cite causes and consequences of the Russian Revolution.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	G. Era 7: Global Conflict, 1914-1945	The student will demonstrate knowledge of political, economic, social and cultural developments during the Interwar Period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the League of Nations and the mandate system. ▪ Students will cite causes and assess the impact of worldwide depression in the 1930s. ▪ Students will examine events related to the rise, aggression and human costs of dictatorial regimes in the Soviet Union, Germany, Italy and Japan, and identifying their major leaders, (i.e., Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Hirohito and Hideki Tojo).
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	G. Era 7: Global Conflict, 1914-1945	The student will demonstrate knowledge of the worldwide impact of World War II.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain economic and political causes, major events, and identify leaders of the war, (e.g., Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, George Marshall, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Hideki Tojo, Hirohito). ▪ Students will examine the Holocaust and other examples of genocide in the twentieth century. ▪ Students will be able to explain the terms of the peace, the war crimes trials, the division of Europe, plans to rebuild Germany and Japan, and the creation of international cooperative organizations.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	H. Era 8: The Post-war Period, 1945-present	The student will demonstrate knowledge of major events and outcomes of the Cold War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain key events of the Cold War, including the competition between the American and Soviet economic and political systems and the causes of the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. ▪ Students will assess the impact of nuclear weaponry on patterns of conflict and cooperation since 1945 (e.g., Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine, SALT treaties). ▪ Students will describe conflicts and revolutionary movements in eastern Asia, including those in China and Vietnam, and their major leaders, i.e., Mao Tse-tung (Zedong), Chiang Kai-shek, and Ho Chi Minh.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	H. Era 8: The Post-war Period, 1945-present	The student will demonstrate knowledge of political, economic, social and cultural aspects of independence movements and development efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the struggles for self-rule, including Gandhi's leadership in India. ▪ Students will describe Africa's achievement of independence, including Kenyatta's leadership of Kenya. ▪ Students will describe the end of the mandate system and the creation of states in the Middle East.
GRADE 9-12	II. WORLD HISTORY	H. Era 8: The Post-war Period, 1945-present	The student will demonstrate knowledge of cultural, economic, and social conditions in developed and developing nations of the contemporary world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify contemporary political issues, with emphasis on migrations of refugees and others, ethnic/religious conflicts, and the impact of technology, including chemical and biological technologies. ▪ Students will assess the impact of economic development and global population growth on the environment and society, including an understanding of the links between economic and political freedom. ▪ Students will describe economic interdependence, including the rise of multinational corporations, international organizations and trade agreements.
GRADE 9-12	SOCIAL STUDIES			
GRADE 9-12	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	A. Foundations of the American Political System	The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the philosophical foundations of the United States government, as stated in the Declaration of Independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will analyze the influence of leading western thinkers including but not limited to John Locke (natural rights), Charles de Montesquieu (separation of powers), and William Blackstone (English common law, rights of individuals). ▪ Students will describe the influence of religion (such as the Puritans) and colonial self-governing congregations (moral and ethical principles) including religion tolerance. ▪ Students will describe the influence of ancient Greek and Roman governments (democracy and representative government) on America's philosophical foundations. ▪ Students will describe changes in the colonial relationship between Great Britain and the American colonies, which led to American's Declaration of Independence. ▪ Students will identify the significance of key concepts in the Declaration of Independence, including but not limited to, national sovereignty; natural law; self-evident truths; the inalienable ("endowed by their Creator") rights of life, liberty, and property; and the purpose of government to protect these rights.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	B. America's Founding Documents	The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and moral values of the United States as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and other foundational documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will analyze and define the fundamental principles of the Constitution, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The purpose of the Constitution, as stated in the Preamble; b. The nature of the Constitution as the highest law of the land; c. Federalism, including the doctrine of designated powers versus reserved powers; and limited government as defined in the Tenth Amendment; d. The rule of law; e. The separation of powers, and checks and balances; f. Representative government; g. The constitutional process for amendment. ▪ Students will explain why the Articles of Confederation was a failed social contract with the people of the United States, while the Constitution is a successful social contract. ▪ Students will explain how the Founders' view of human nature, as articulated in the Federalist Papers, led to the establishment of a constitutional system that limited the power of government. ▪ Students will describe how the Northwest Ordinance provided for the creation of new states and territories. ▪ Students will describe the creation of the Bill of Rights and its role in limiting the national government's power, as well as the rights associated with subsequent amendments.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: (bullet 1, e) What about separation of church and state?
GRADE 9-12	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship	The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will define the inherent rights of all Americans and explain how protecting individuals rights promotes the common good. ▪ Students will describe the processes by which an individual becomes a citizen of the United States. ▪ Students will explain the duties of citizenship, including but not limited to, protection of the inherent rights of all persons, obeying the laws, paying taxes, voting, defending the nation and serving in court. ▪ Students will describe the activities of civic life, including but not limited to, registering to vote and informed voting, participating in political campaigns, communicating with government officials, keeping informed about current issues, respecting diverse opinions in a diverse society, and setting an example of freedom in the world community.
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"This needs a benchmark that says 'students will <u>do</u>.'"</p>				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	C. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship	The student will understand the American political system and be prepared to participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will analyze tensions between large and small states, and the compromises that keep the Union together, such as the Electoral College, numbers of Senators vs. House members, and states' rights vs. federal rights. ▪ Students will identify major milestones in U.S. and Minnesota development of political thought (and traditions that arose along the way), including but not limited to: Washington's election; Jackson; the Depression; FDR (including impact of New Deal on voters' future expectations of federal government role); 15th and 19th amendments; Earl Warren court; Nixon and Watergate; Reagan; and judicial activism. ▪ Students will be familiar with how technology has shaped political development, campaigns and voters, including newspapers and print media, telephone, transportation, radio, television and Internet. ▪ Students will identify the influences of special interest and voter groups and how they work with and against each other, including commercial media; trade, industry and labor groups; grassroots activists; political party units; and social structures, such as religion and pop culture.
GRADE 9-12	I. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP	D. Other forms of government, past and present.	The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the different philosophies and structures of feudalism, socialism, communism, monarchies and parliamentary systems; in terms of their economic, social structure and human rights practices; and how these philosophies compare with the American system. ▪ Students will compare the various ways in which power is distributed, shared, and limited in systems of shared powers and parliamentary systems, including the influence and roles of parliamentary leaders. ▪ Students will describe the difference between inalienable rights as described in the U.S. Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights, versus limited rights as described in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. U.S. and World Regions	The student will explain the pattern of economic activities and land use in the United States and the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to understand how the transportation and communication systems have impacted the development of regions of the United States. ▪ Students will be able to explain the patterns of consumption and production in the world and explain the networks of business and trade that link the regions together. ▪ Students will be able to use the models of spatial interactions (distance decay, Vvon Thunen, Webber) to explain the location of commercial activities and land use patterns in the United States and the world. ▪ Students will be able to explain the variations in economic activity and land use within the state of Minnesota (the Iron Range, agricultural areas, etc.) and reach conclusions about the potential for change in the various regions. ▪ Students will be able to describe the differences between developed and developing countries and understand how the transportation and communication systems of the major regions of the world have impacted their rates of development. ▪ Students will demonstrate an understanding of how economic changes in major regions of the world will affect their lifestyle (such as the industrialization of China, or the establishment of international call centers in India).
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. U.S. and World Regions	The student will explain how patterns of political systems create government units at various scales in the United States and the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the impact of international boundaries on human behavior and economic activities of Americans. ▪ Students will understand how the concept of sovereign political states arose and how it is being impacted by international agreements such as NATO, the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement. ▪ Students will understand the changing nature of sovereignty and its impact on political units in the United States. ▪ Students will demonstrate an understanding of how voting districts are established.
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	A. U.S. and World Regions	The student will describe and explain the primary factors behind the contemporary spatial distribution of major culture groups in the United States and the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to use the concepts and models of the process of diffusion to explain the changing patterns of cultures in the United States. ▪ Students will be able to describe the distribution of the major ethnic groups of the United States. ▪ Students will be able to explain how regional landscapes reflect the cultural characteristics of their inhabitants.
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Global Regions	The student will describe and explain the primary factors behind the location of major physical regions of the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to describe and explain the distribution of the major climates of the world. ▪ Students will be able to explain how regional landscapes of the world reflect the earth's tectonic forces. ▪ Students will be able to explain the forces behind the major watersheds and water bodies of the world. ▪ Students will recognize the differences in the patterns of natural vegetation and soil types of the world.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Global Regions	The student will understand the distribution, the patterns of growth, and the demographic characteristics of the human population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain the pattern of human population density in the major regions of the world. ▪ Students will explain the impact of the demographic transition on the growth of the human population in the major regions of the world. ▪ Students will be able to use population pyramids to compare and contrast the characteristic of national and regional populations.
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	B. Global Regions	The student will explain trends in migrations of the modern era in the major regions of the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will use the concepts of push and pull factors and barriers to describe and explain the general patterns of human movement in the modern era. ▪ Students will identify and explain the major source and destination areas for contemporary voluntary and forced migrations. ▪ Students will demonstrate an understanding of the connections between the demographic transition and patterns of international migration. ▪ Students will demonstrate an understanding of the patterns of rural to urban migrations in the major regions and countries of the world. ▪ Students will demonstrate an understanding of the process behind the major patterns of labor migration in the contemporary world.
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	C. Interconnections	The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be able to explain how technology affects one's ability to change the environment and adapt to it. ▪ Students will explain the importance of sustainable use of the environment. ▪ Students will understand the impact of natural hazards on human activities and land use.
GRADE 9-12	II. GEOGRAPHY	D. Essential Skills	The student will use maps, globes, Geographic Information Systems, and other databases to answer geographic questions at a variety of scales from local to global.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize different map projections and explain the concept of map distortion and its importance in making and reading maps. ▪ Students will be able to draw elaborate sketch maps of the United States and the world that contains more knowledge of the character of the United States and major regions of the world than is required by the middle school geography standards. ▪ Students will demonstrate the ability to obtain geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources and apply concepts of location scale and orientation. ▪ Students will be able to draw conclusions about the character of places based on a comparison of maps, air photos and other images. ▪ Students will demonstrate knowledge of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the implications of the economic problem of scarcity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will indicate how limited productive resources and unlimited human wants cause individuals, governments and nations to choose some things and give up others. ▪ Students will be able to list and give examples of the factors of production – land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship. ▪ Students will be able to explain that opportunity cost is the highest valued alternative forgone when an economic choice is made. ▪ Students will understand that the economic choices people make have both present and future consequences.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the basic principles of decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize that effective decision-making typically requires comparing the additional costs of alternatives with the additional benefits. ▪ Students will know that people make both personal and professional decisions on behalf of themselves, their household, their employer, their governments, etc. ▪ Students will analyze how career choice, education, and skills affect future income. ▪ Students will be able to compute short and long term personal financial goals and plans by considering flows of income, spending and saving. ▪ Students will be able to compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of using consumer credit. ▪ Students will be able to analyze short and long term personal investment options such as stocks, bonds and mutual funds by comparing the risk, return, and liquidity of these options. ▪ Students will be able to describe how insurance and other risk management strategies protect against financial loss.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand how households, firms, and governments are interdependent and how their relationship is affected by trade, exchange, money and the economic system in which they are operating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will recognize why voluntary exchange occurs only when all participating parties expect to gain from the exchange. ▪ Students will identify the role and interdependence of households, firms and the government in the circular flow of economic activity. ▪ Students will recognize that money makes trade easier by replacing barter with transactions that involve currency, coins and/or checks. ▪ Students will understand the roles of production, distributions, and consumption of goods and services in market, command, and mixed economic systems. ▪ Students will describe how people and nations gain through trade. ▪ Students will define and explain how principles of comparative advantage lead to specialization and trade. ▪ Students will analyze the effects of trade barriers, including tariffs and quotas, on international trade and national living standards.
<p>Public Comment:</p> <p>"Re: 4th bullet, This is good. I'm glad to see different economics systems mentioned."</p>				

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the basic characteristics of markets and the role of prices in modern market economies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will describe the determination of equilibrium market prices by applying principles of supply and demand to markets for goods and services. ▪ Students will explain the causes and consequences of market shortage and surplus. ▪ Students will identify the direct and indirect effects of price floors and price ceilings. ▪ Students will identify several factors that lead to variation in market prices and quantities exchanged by causing changes in supply and/or demand. ▪ Students will recognize that interest rates, like other prices, are determined by forces of supply and demand. ▪ Students will explain that an exchange rate is the price of one nation's currency in terms of another nation's currency, which, like other prices, is determined by the forces of supply and demand.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand that firms in a market economy experience varying degrees of competition for the good or service that they sell.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand that competition among sellers often results in lower prices, higher product quality, better customer service and a more efficient allocation of scarce resources. ▪ Students will recognize that the level of competition in an industry is affected by the ease with which new producers can enter the industry, by consumers' information, and by the availability, price, and quantity of substitute goods and services. ▪ Students will recognize that a monopoly exists when only one producer sells a product for which there are no close substitutes. ▪ Students will compare and contrast the characteristics of firms in market settings with varying degrees of competitive forces.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the risks and opportunities associated with entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain that entrepreneurs accept the risks associated with organizing productive resources to produce goods and services, with the hope to earn profits. ▪ Students will understand that entrepreneurs and other sellers earn profits when buyers purchase the products they sell at prices high enough to cover the costs of production. ▪ Students will understand that entrepreneurs and other sellers incur losses when buyers do not purchase the products they sell at prices high enough to cover the costs of production. ▪ Students will recognize that, in market economies, profits are the reward for successful entrepreneurship and losses (and possible bankruptcy) are the penalty for the inefficient organization of productive resources. ▪ Students will explain that, in addition to profits, entrepreneurs respond to other incentives including the opportunity to be their own boss, the chance to achieve recognition, and the satisfaction of creating new products or improving existing ones. ▪ Students will explain that, in addition to financial losses, other disincentives to which entrepreneurs respond include the responsibility long hours, and stress of running a business.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment: Too many benchmarks for entrepreneurship.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	A. The Market Economy	The student will understand the economic role of government in a market economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify that an important role for government in the economy is to define, establish, and enforce property rights. ▪ Students will analyze the appropriate role of government in cases where economic externalities—also known as spillover or third party effects—are known to exist. ▪ Students will identify circumstances in which it is appropriate for governments to provide public goods. ▪ Students will recognize that, in the U.S., the federal government enforces antitrust laws and regulations to try to maintain effective levels of competition in as many markets as possible. ▪ Students will recognize that many government policies attempt to redistribute income. ▪ Students will understand that a government policy to correct a market imperfection is not justified economically if its expected costs exceed its expected benefits.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	B. The National Economy	The student will understand basic measures of aggregate economic performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will define and explain the significance of the unemployment rate, the inflation rate, the level of national output, and the rate of economic growth. ▪ Students will identify and distinguish between real and nominal measures of output and interest rates. ▪ Students will describe how the concept of the balance of trade is used to measure the international flow of goods, services.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	B. The National Economy	The student will analyze the causes and consequences of aggregate economic fluctuations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify the phases of the business cycle. ▪ Students will describe the basic characteristics of economic recessions and economic expansions. ▪ Students will understand that one source of aggregate economic fluctuations is changes in overall spending by consumers, firms, governments, or foreigners. ▪ Students will recognize that aggregate economic fluctuations may also result from changes in overall productivity, an overall change in firms' costs of production, or from unexpected shocks that cause general supply disruptions.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	B. The National Economy	The student will understand that federal government budgetary policy and the Federal Reserve System's monetary policy influence the overall levels of employment, output, and prices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will identify that fiscal policies are decisions to change spending and/or tax levels by the federal government. ▪ Students will explain the direct and indirect effects of fiscal policy on employment, output, and interest rates. ▪ Students will explain the relationship between federal budget deficits and the national debt. ▪ Students will identify the functions of the Federal Reserve System and its influence on economic activity. ▪ Students will identify the ways in which monetary policy influences employment, output, inflation, and interest rates. ▪ Students will recognize that in the long run, inflation results from increases in the money supply, which exceed increases in the output of goods and services. ▪ Students will explain that higher interest rates reduce business investment spending and consumer spending in housing, cars, and other major purchases.

Grade Level	Strand	Sub-Strand	Standard	Benchmarks
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	B. The National Economy	The student will understand that economic growth is the primary means by which a country can improve the future economic standard of living for its citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will explain that real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita is a measure that permits comparisons of material living standards over time and among people in different nations. ▪ Students will identify that the productivity of workers is measured by dividing the output of goods and services by the number of hours worked. ▪ Students will recognize that standards of living increase as the productivity of workers rises. ▪ Students will understand that investments in physical capital (machinery, equipment, and structures), human capital (education, training, skills), and new technologies commonly increase productivity and contribute to an expansion of future economic prosperity.
GRADE 9-12	III. ECONOMICS	D. Essential Skills	The student will be able to understand and use economic concepts, theories, principles and quantitative methods to analyze current events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will use tables, graphs, equations, diagrams, and charts to interpret economic information, including the inflation rate, unemployment rate, the level of national output, interest rates, trade deficit, budget deficit, and the rate of economic growth, trade deficits and budget deficits. ▪ Students will evaluate the economic implications of current events as found in such sources as magazine articles, radio and television reports, editorials, and Internet sites.

Public Comments:

"I think tests should be developed for the social studies standards."

"Will all 7th graders be expected to complete all the s.s. subject standards in one year? They are so diverse - from econ. to hist. to geog? what will a 7th grade class look like?"

"Looking at our current social studies curriculum, I have concluded that to meet the new standards we would have to order 3 or more textbooks for each grade to meet all the different standards. No textbook or curriculum that I know of teaches just a 'chunk' of US History for one time period and then switches to world history for a brief time period and then to politics and then to geography. It seems to be that best practice would be to teach say 'US history' one year and then integrate the geography and economics that relate to that subject into it. IT's asking a lot for kids to remember what they learned this previous years about Rome and then apply in a time line continuum the next year in relation to Egypt or Italy. As far as teaching the kids 'God Bless America' and it's meaning, I think that is blurring the church and state line. I know I have 4 students who due to their religious beliefs, would not be able to meet that standard."

"I like the standards in theory, but in practice I am confident they will just put us back where we were before we brought in the profile. Students will sit at their desks trying to memorize the names of Revolutionary War battles while really wanting to be anywhere else but history class. The ones who come from good homes will behave even though they hate and the ones who have difficult families or biological problems will act up and become failures for the rest of their lives.

If a teacher tries to make it interesting by doing battle reenactments or role playing, the kids will never learn all the things you want them to learn for the test. That's just the reality. So we will have a bunch of kids who think history is boring, they will get through it, forget everything and hate school. Thanks."

"Way too much too early. Remember, these are little kids. Economics in third grade? Elementary kids learning about juries? You have problems with kids doing way too much now and not learning. This needs to be cut waaaayyy back. Elementary means just what it says, elementary. You should be worrying about just getting these kids to learn the basics, not right a phd thesis by sixth grade. This stuff may be ok for the advanced student but the little guys that struggle will get left even further behind."

There are kids now spending 4 hours a night doing homework. You will have fourth graders up until midnight."

"Patriotic Symbols, Songs, and Events' represents the worst type of nationalistic propaganda and must be eliminated from the standards. In particular, the elevation of such cultural trivia as 'It's a Grand Old Flag,' and 'My Country 'Tis of Thee,' and the White House, Mount Rushmore, the Liberty Bell, the state bird and flower, money design, the 'great seal' of the United States, etc. do NOT belong in required standards.

The ideas and beliefs of the American political system does NOT begin with the Hebrews. It began long before that, and includes far more influences than the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans. The Babylonians and the Iroquois, are two well-documented examples. Rousseau and other enlightenment thinkers are given short shrift in this draft as well.

Finally, the efforts to interject a particular religious view into the understanding of the founding of American democracy is transparent and offensive. Yes, those views were there. Students should study them. But students should also study the secularism of Jefferson and other Founders.

There are many Americans who would be surprised even today to find that the Framers of the Constitution succeeded in securing the equal rights of all citizens. Didn't we have a Civil War, the Suffragist, Labor, Civil Rights, and other movements to change shortcomings of the Constitution? Give credit where it's due, but don't overstate the case."

"I don't think that the Vietnam conflict can be termed as a conflict the US got into to free people. I think that many people disagree with this viewpoint and it should be treated separately as far as a subject in US history. I don't think that being positive about everything the US has done is conveying the kind of message that will help our kids in the future. The classroom needs to be a place for lively discussion with well trained teachers if we want our children to be capable of handling the new and ever changing problems that our world is facing both on the homefront and abroad. Thank you for your time."

"Each school and local school district should set their own standard. I am tired of this Walmart mind set that says everyone should learn the same thing."

"I have several comments or concerns about the social studies standards as they pertain to the grades of 6th through 8th. It seems as though the standards for each grade level may be unrealistic. First, the information may be covered, but it will be impossible to go through it in great detail. While the teachers will be able to say, 'I got through the curriculum.', students will never break that wall of surface knowledge that truly makes learning an internalizing process. Second, who will be paying for the resources for the way the new standards are set up (e.g. textbooks). In the current curriculum our school has courses that are content specific (e.g. 8th grade geography, 7th grade U.S. history, 6th grade Minnesota history). In the new standards it looks as though the required content has been split up (and changed) so each grade level is covering several different topics. It is much easier and more effective to teach an actual subject to the students rather than a bunch of segmented subjects (e.g. 8th grade Minnesota history, geography, U.S. history, and economics.). The time it will take to prepare for this type of class will be enormous because I doubt there is one textbook that will cover all of the standards listed in the draft. If there is a textbook, I am still wondering who will pay for it considering the current economic situation in the state of Minnesota as it pertains to the funding of education. Maybe I am missing something, but from the draft I have seen I am not impressed. I have taken a look at other standards from other states (e.g. Virginia) and I am impressed by their intense focus by subject and their very clear and detailed outlines of what will be covered in each grade level and how it could be done. Please, consider the concerns of an 8th grade geography teacher. Thank you,"

"I see a clear, strong conservative bias and propagandistic tone in much of the social studies standard. The multiple references to patriotism, flags, national anthems and God are the clearest examples. It is one thing to learn to understand and defend the democratic and egalitarian values of America, and of many other nations that value democracy and egalitarianism. It is another thing to teach our children to mouth platitudes about how great America is. To the degree these values still live in our country, they owe far more to a humanitarian spirit of rebellion and dissent than to the dubious virtues of patriotism and love of God.

* Many of the capitalistic threads in the document are just as biased. The following statement--'Students will understand that a government policy to correct a market imperfection is not justified economically if its expected costs exceed its expected benefits.'--is pure opinion, but presented as scientific fact. It pretends that human suffering, which can be the direct result of poverty and economic oppression, can be quantified, and thus justified using a cost-benefit analysis.

While capitalism, patriotism and theism are explicitly praised as positive values in the document, nowhere does the document explicitly criticize slavery, the internment of Japanese American families, the wholesale slaughter of American Indians, the annihilation of the citizens of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. If values are to be a part of this document--and they currently are--those values should openly acknowledge America's failures as well as its successes. Additionally, the voices of dissent regarding capitalism, patriotism, war and theism should be acknowledged.

The alternative is to strive for objectivity rather than injecting values which are far from unanimously supported."

"As I look at the new standards, what bothers me the most is the apparent demise of process in favor of pure (rote?) content. I guess I've always felt that history is not so much a list of names, places, dates and events to be memorized as it is an on-going debate about what happened. I fear kids might come to see history only in the light of being able to correctly answer Jay Leno when he bushwhacks them in on-the-street interviews about 'Who was the first President?', etc. Such a 'Jeopardy' version of history is a perversion, because it portrays history as a static thing, unchanging, and ignores the effect of time and events on historical perspective. It leads to an ideological misuse of history as a means to an end (rather than an end in itself). We've seen this time and again in oppressive, insular societies and nations, from Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and Maoist China, to Saddam Hussein and 'modern' Saudi Arabia. Control of a society's view of itself through the lens of its own history leads to control over minds, ideas and destinies. Such a view also depicts history as a dead thing, immutable, unchallengeable, not as a living thing. And when teachers present it as such, kids often come to hate it or (at best) become cynical about it."

"The majority of the material that the committee wants the third grade to learn is developmentally not at their level.

How much time does the state think we spend on social studies at the elementary level. Our primary focus is and should be reading and math. There aren't enough hours in the day/year to accomplish this standard and that of language arts, science, math etc.

Is the state going to provide materials for curriculum for all the new topics that are listed.

There is just too much expected.

I have high expectations for my students, I feel that these are unrealistic."

"We need students to learn and demonstrate civic engagement skills through service-learning and civic projects. Please include a high school project requirement with appropriate staff development and support for schools to implement it."

"I am third grade teacher. The proposed standards for third graders are much too lengthy to be able to cover in a year. I am also concerned that several of them are beyond the capability of 8 and 9 year olds to conceptualize, because they are so far away in place and time from their experience."

"I think that it is wrong to only give World History a .5 credit requirement for high school graduation. America has become increasingly interconnected with the rest of the world, especially since 9/11, and students need to devote just as much time to studying the rest of the world as they do to studying America. As a World History teacher myself, I don't time to fully teach my curriculum in a 1.0 credit class. Considering the detail listed in the social studies standards, it would be a joke to try to teach the material well in a .5 credit class."

"Great to see strands of all types of social studies throughout all grade levels. It has been frustrating having students get to twelfth grade never having had a unit of economics or only one unit. Economics is the heart of cause and effect in history and society.

Also, I think the standards as they are presented in 'era' form for history are extremely helpful as far as being specific but not so overwhelming in detail as to not know how to fit it in. They are presented like 'objectives' in a 'unit' that can be completed in a year.

I am pleased that the standards take a balanced approach to social studies by providing actual standards in understanding diverse cultures, the perspectives of different genders, as well as the wars and the founding fathers, ancient history as well as modern."

"These standards will be detrimental to the state of education in the state of Minnesota. Forcing the children to memorize dates and identify specific people greatly cuts down on the time left over for real learning - learning how to learn. Critical thinking is a far more vital skill than being able to recite the dates of the Civil War. Dates and facts can be found in books. Higher order thinking can not. Also, teachers will have much less choice in what and how they teach, making them frustrated and making their teaching suffer. I suggest the committee for standards visit www.alfiekohn.org/standards/standards.htm"

"Social studies: These new standards underline military history and do not expose children to diverse heroes/sheroes in the country and world. It also asks children to talk about God's role in nations which should not be mandatory. It leaves out major history such as the suffragettes, Indian struggles and other history that people have fought to be part of this school curriculums for many years. It is a major step backwards, eliminating aspects of diversity that acknowledges the contributions of all races, colors and culture to this country."

"a teacher of 29 years from New York Mills, MN. I went over the proposed standards for Social Studies for third grade. I am seriously concerned, actually, seriously worried about some of the standards, specifically the standards for World History. I feel I have more than enough experience to truly understand the capabilities of an eight to nine year old child. There is absolutely no way a child at this age can possibly handle this level of knowledge. I personally have high expectations for my students, and what is expected in the standards for World History are unbelievably a nightmare for children, teachers, and parents. Before these standards are implemented, try to look at the following suggestions. 1. At what level of knowledge do you really believe these standards would have to be presented at. 2. What do you honestly feel would be the reading level of material for this 8-9 year old? 3. Try to divide all of the standards for third grade into four quarters, or about 170 student teacher contact days. Come on, be realistic! Yes, we want our children in Minnesota to be the most well educated children among the children in the U.S., but we have to be realistic, not completely ridiculous. Don't you realize that we want these children to master all of the standards dealing with the Roman Empire, know about Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, etc. etc. when most of these kids were in diapers only five to six years ago. Well, you wanted my opinion, and you got it. Be real. I still can't believe...."

"I have taught 6th grade social studies for many years. In looking at the new standards, out entire curriculum will need to rewritten and textbooks purchased. Is the state of MN funding these changes? Our district is in financial trouble as many districts are. How are we going to make all these changes?"

"The elementary social studies standards draft are far too inclusive starting at K-6. Junior high standards look to be very appropriate and students should be able to meet these levels without difficulty based on what we are teaching now. The low elementary (K-3) is so extensive that there would be little time for instruction in the other disciplines. Thank you."

"I would like to comment on the high school social studies standard. Having worked for 12 years as a U. S. Senate staff member and for 2 years on the staff at the Minnesota governor's office I feel that our citizenry is woefully incapable of engaging in a public policy dialogue with elected officials that represent them. These standards can make a huge difference by taking the service learning model, which is so important and needs to be included in the standard, and using it to give students the understanding they need to function as citizens and not just as tax payers or voters. Each high school student should be required to engage in a dialogue with an elected official or his staff about a public policy issue that interests them. They should use this direct experience to learn how citizen input does make a difference in the public policy process at the local, state, and national levels. They could read and discuss the experience of other students doing this but the key would be for each of them to engage personally in this activity. Citizens are more than voters. Our system relies on an active, informed and engaged citizenry. And it relies on strong connections between elected officials and their citizen constituents. Polling, declining voter turnout, and other indicators as well as my personal experience lead me to believe that we are not adequately teaching this important skill set that is essential to the health and even continuation of our system of representative democracy."

"As an educator I recognize that coming up with balanced, effective and thorough standards is a complex task. Thank you for your efforts in providing a starting place from which to focus in on that task. Please allow the time necessary to let this discussion evolve a set of broader, more balanced and more grounded standards. I am concerned that the timeline under which these standards are being drafted will be definition compromise their quality and their usefulness as tools to teachers. Please allow time for experienced educators to synthesize effective mission statements and goals that provide useful guidelines for teachers in developing curriculums. Hastily compiled lists will only bog down the teachers intent on finding effective ways to share content with their students."

"In the 6th grade students study ideas and beliefs that shaped the political system. While I believe that providing information on the history of democracy is crucial, I believe that the current standards do not reflect the diversity and depth of that history. The current choice of which components are stressed seems to reflect a political bias that does not reflect well on the depth and diversity of education that I seek for my children. Examples of overlooked voices include the role of Quakers, the Iroquois Confederacy, and Babylon's Code of Hammurabi. Please include perspectives more broad than the European history currently cited.

I find the Grade 4 section on patriotic songs and symbols to be unbalanced. Although I can see the value of children being exposed to the sentiments celebrated in the chosen songs, I expect to find a curriculum which balances this nationalistic celebration with an understanding, appreciation and celebration of global community. I am concerned about the lack of balance apparent in the 9th -12th grade standards. While I very much value the study of the constitution and its crucial role in providing a framework for securing equal rights of all citizens, I would like to have the role of the Suffragist Movement, the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement be given equal currency in understanding the true and complete history of who and how equal rights have come to be secured.

I am extremely concerned about the absence of environmental science goals integrated throughout the standards. An entire section must be added in which students are taught to value the natural resources upon which our lives are sustained, what the threats are to those resources and what tools exist to protect them."

"The sub-standard concerning 'Patriotic Symbols, Songs and Events' contains a number of items that seem to have little educational value, and are more directed at encouraging patriotism, rather than deepening students' understanding of the responsibilities of living as a citizen in a democracy. I fail to see, for example, how memorizing the words to 'You're A Grand Old Flag' serves any educational purpose."

"These standards should not reflect political bias one way or another. For example, I think people of good will can argue whether America's cold war policies were about 'defending freedom' as is mentioned in the standards, and whether Ronald Reagan ought to be singled out in the collapse of Communism, which was arguably due to a large number of internal and external factors."

"I am concerned that for 8th grade, the amount of material is too vast to cover in the course of a year. It appears that there is about 3.5 semesters worth of work to cover in 2."

"I have reviewed the social studies standards and have some concerns about the standards and benchmarks for the U.S. History and World History standards in the K - 5 curriculum. It seems that they are closely aligned to the Core Curriculum developed by E.B. Hirsch. They do not seem to reflect any other recognized history standards such as the National History Standards or the National Social Studies standards. The Core Curriculum focus does not align well with any other existing social studies textbook curriculum used in most Minnesota school districts. Districts would have to procure many more resources that support the Core Curriculum to be able to teach to and assess these standards and benchmarks. I do not think it is appropriate to develop standards around a specific curriculum. An example of this is in the Gr. 3 world history standard, the benchmark is 'Students will identify and explain the following: Roman Republic, Roman Empire, etc.' This is not addressed anywhere in current 3rd Gr. social studies textbooks. A teacher would have to locate age appropriate materials (which there are not a lot on the Roman Empire for 3rd Gr.) to be able to teach to this benchmark. It also does not seem to be an age appropriate benchmark for an 8 yr. old to be able to know and be assessed upon. There are numerous other history standards and benchmarks throughout the K - 5 standards which reflect an emphasis on Core Curriculum components. They also do not align well with current social studies curriculum at some of these grade levels. The other alternative would be for a district to adopt the Core Curriculum program. Since most districts are already in budget crisis, this does not seem to be a plausible alternative."

It appears that some members of the committee have an agenda to infuse the new standards with the Core Curriculum. I strongly urge the committee to reevaluate the history standards and look beyond the Core Curriculum for identifying history standards. The National History Standards and the National Social Studies Standards both provide age appropriate standards which do not support any one curriculum approach such as the Core Curriculum. These should also be examined in developing history standards and benchmarks. I am quite troubled that the standards would only reflect one approach to studying history."

"These standards represent right-wing Christian conservative ideology, and not sound educational philosophy. For example, they only site sources for the development of American democracy which are NOT critical of the process. The strength of our country's educational system lies more in fairness and truth, openness, relevance of our education to our lives, and developing critical thinking skills. The draft standards should be immediately withdrawn and substantially rewritten with the above values in mind. Thanks!"

"H0w is the state going to fund the materials needed to teach the new sequence for US History? Since the state funding for schools is decreasing , how can schools teach the new standards without materilas.Example 4th grade US History is now Minnesota the new standarard is the American Revolution. "

"As the Chair of the Le Sueur-Henderson Social Studies Dept., I look at the standards as preping our students to play Jeopardy or Trivial Pursuit. I am very concerned about the amount of 'stuff' our kids are going to have to know with very little substance. I'm passionate about what I teach, and am concerned with state mandated curriculum. The students who come through our doors are not one size fits all, but what we are going to have to teach them will be. Rep. Davney made the comment 'A mile wide and an inch deep' when describing the new standards last week on Almanac. That pretty much sums it up."

"The majority of the Social Studies standards for first grade are beyond their comprehension. They are NOT developmentally appropriate!"

"I read that students in kindergarten are going to learn about Christopher Columbus. Are they going to learn the truth about him, as he was a rapist, a pillager, and was generally cruel to those he and his men encountered? Will the students learn as well that he actually never set foot in what today is the United States? Or will the students continue to learn fallacies that have pervaded the teaching of history like I did when I was in grade school?"

"I would hope that we teach critical thinking and not memorize the names and places. our students need to be global citizens and be futuristic thinkers. to do this they need

some solid background and relate it to today and see some relevance in what is being taught. what happen to Fenton?"

"en re to the currency standard, they need to know that some currencies are pegged and some are fixed. they are not all determined by supply and demand"

"I am reading through the 8th grade standards and am shocked by how much there is to cover. I am worried that this will change my teaching into a mile wide and inch deep view of the world. In other words, kids will know a little bit about a lot of different topics, but will not have a deep understanding of any of these topics. In my school we currently teach geography in both seventh and eighth grade. I found a huge portion of our eighth grade curriculum in ONE bullet on the standards. ' Students will locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of world regions: Latin America, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Russia and Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Australia.' Right now, this takes us 3 quarters of a school year. I sometimes feel that I rush through even at this pace! Now, this is simply one of MANY bullet points. I am nervous that we are losing the rigor of our curriculum in order to cover everything under the sun."

"I am a 7th grade Geography teacher in a district where we require 2 years of Geography in the 7th and 8th grade. I was utterly appalled at the 1st draft of the standards for the middle level. What you are proposing is mile wide and an inch deep! We will lose all of the depth we have been able to establish if required to teach a survey course in the Social Sciences which is what is proposed. A little bit of this, a little bit of that - but no connection between topics - it is too much like a salad bar approach. When did 7th and 8th grade return to the elementary model of curriculum? We are secondary level courses and should be designed that way. All history, all geography - but not samples of five different social sciences! If the standards that you have proposed become 'the standards' we will become teachers of 30 years ago, teaching from textbooks, teaching to the test. Where is the inquiry, the chance to really dig into a subject?"

"Citizenship/Government Standards are too narrow. US History Standards are too narrow and too repetitive"

"The geography in 8th grade is sound and well written. There should be a geography only 8th grade requirement - the non-integrated 8th gr. s.s. should work, there are so many schools that have 8th grade geography only already."

"As I review the proposed standards for grades 5-8 I feel that grade groupings such as those in high school 9-12 need to be used. At these grade levels specific subjects are normally taught and the scope of the new standards does not address those needs. Each school will have to revamp curriculum, purchase new materials, etc. Looking at the standards in grade levels would allow more flexibility for the teacher and school. Other thoughts include some items which may not be age appropriate in the lower elementary grades. A closer look needs to be made prior to the standards being adopted."

"We are teaching reading and math too?"

"As a 4th grader teacher, I feel you may be a year ahead in what you are asking the students to know. We are dealing with 9 and 10 year olds who need a lot of background with just knowing the US."

"According to the outline nothing apparently happened during the 1970's even though end of the Viet Nam war, the draft, watergate, the resignation of Richard Nixon, the oil embargo are the dominant historical events for the Baby boomer generation."

There appears to be a strong political bias in these standards. The statement that the students will know the role of Ronald Reagan implies that there is a definitive as to exactly what the role is."

"Am I reading correctly? These are awful!! What textbook covers everything from government to American History to geography at every elementary grade level? I hope I am misunderstanding these standards! Thank you!"

"As a 5th grade teacher for many years, the working draft of the social studies standards is pretty scary to me!!! Some of the items in the standard are way beyond the realm of the typical 5th grader. The study of European history in the sub-strand 'Regional Interactions 1000-1500A.D. is way beyond what an average 10 year can comprehend. In fact many have a hard time identifying the 7 continents, the 50 states, or their own state and the basic history of the U.S. Our school just adopted a brand new social studies series. The topic of medieval Europe and the Renaissance in Europe is not even in the textbook. That is usually material covered in 6th grade textbooks. I would hope that you would reconsider the topics you have listed in World History. Our new textbook does cover Mayan, Aztec, and Incan civilizations."

Those may be more appropriate for 5th graders to study."

"I am very pleased with the increased emphasis on World Geography in the 9-12 Social Studies Standards, and with the inclusion of Global Positioning Systems and Geographic Information Systems. Students need hands-on experience with the real world tools of the geographer such as GPS and GIS. These tools are a perfect fit with the steps of geographic inquiry."

"I counted and read each of the 66 benchmarks. I feel a mistake must have been made. How could anyone be successful in getting a 3rd grader to meet those benchmarks? The time period you are covering is huge. How would an 8 or 9 year old keep all that straight? For the most part, they can't understand concepts of time such as 200 years ago compared to 500 years ago. They know 500 is a larger number, but they do not relate to these time periods. The standards state students will recognize, know, be able to, compare and contrast, identify, describe, locate, recognize, etc. How could they ever accomplish all that with the wide scope of these 66 benchmarks. I would be impressed if a senior in high school could do everything you are asking an 8 or 9 year old kid to do. Has anyone considered the growth and developmental stages of a 3rd grader and what they are capable of as a whole? If these benchmarks stayed as is, I do not feel the slightest bit confident that I could accomplish them even if I spent the entire school day all year long working on them. I feel these standards are a disservice to students and teachers. The only thing they would accomplish is an unbelievable amount of stress for everyone involved. When I read a small example of these to family and friends, they laughed and thought there is no way they meant that for 3 grade. Please look carefully at these standards. Narrow them WAY down and give our students and teachers a chance to feel successful. I also want to state that after reviewing the math, reading, and writing standards, I found them perfectly reasonable."

"I believe there are a few things to address with these new standards. First off, the nature of what is required of students to graduate. I object to the requirement of world history as a requirement to graduate. I don't know where this comes from, nor do I understand the need. The teaching of world history in our school will replace a vital class that most schools do and all should offer: Current issues. We deal with the issues of today, what they are and mean, and how to think on their own. Rather than how to recite information on civilizations that lived 5000 years ago. This does not help the critical thinking skills of student. It denies them. Kids today are growing up in a complex world, they need to understand the things and society around them, not the legacy of the Byzantine Empire. I just don't see the benefit of one over the other. The second comment I have is the nature of the standards. I have looked over the standards and have come to one conclusion: packing in names and dates. In otherwords: the same old social studies of 'an inch wide and a mile deep' curriculum. A step back in time, not forward. Is not knowing why and how and the processes and ideas of social studies important, or will names and dates get kids to where they need to be in life."

1. Why have you separated Minnesota History into three different grade levels rather than keeping it with 6th grade?
2. How are school districts going to provide materials for the new curriculum? Are school districts expected to purchase new textbooks to support these standards? As of right now, 6th grade in our district does not have any of the materials to teach with for what you have dictated will be the curriculum? How can you expect districts to pay for all of the materials that may be needed when we are in tight times financially?"

"These comments pertain to the Social Studies draft. I am a third grade teacher and I cannot believe what I see for standards and benchmarks. If I am required to do what is listed, then I can throw away my brand new social text and begin developing all new curriculum to meet the standards, at no pay because we are on a budget crunch plus using all my own time outside of school to rewrite this curriculum. And just who dreamed up the standards and benchmarks? Who was on this committee? Some of the standards and benchmarks listed have no business being addressed in grade 3. If I am expected to follow through with the proposals then I will, for the first time in my 30 year career, will have to refuse to comply. And I will. But I will make the public aware of what is going on and I am sure to have their support. This is not a threat. I believe in MN, in what I do, and in all the other academic standards. But the social ones are poor. These are not designed in the best educational interests of third graders."

"I am a current 1st grade teacher and my feeling is that these social studies standards are almost impossible for a first grader. I have been teaching 1st graders for 25 years so I have many years of experience. First graders are not able to 'compare/contrast' or 'evaluate'. These are extremely high level thinking skills-the majority of first graders cannot handle this. Asking a first grader to understand the difference between a privilege, right, and responsibility is asking too much. As for time concepts, they understand a time line from this morning till lunch time, not months, years, or throughout history. Child development shows us that children at this age level are egocentric and working towards understanding others. How can we teach ancient cultures to 6 year olds when last year is ancient history to them? I agree we need high expectations for our students, but let's be realistic in what this age group can accomplish. I don't believe there is a current k-2 teacher on the social studies standards committee and this shows up in the standards. Our young children are being set up for failure if these standards pass. The science standards are much more realistic and

workable. 90% of the social studies standards are innappropriate. "

"There are way too many benchmarks in the social studies standards. There would be no time left to teach reading, math or science if students were expected to know all of the fact related benchmarks that are listed, especially at the 3rd grade level."

"I am greatly concerned about the unswerving focus on 'Western Civ.' and wars in the standards, particularly the U.S. History standards. How can you have a specific standard focusing on Ronald Reagan's role in the demise of communism, but have absolutely no mention of the anti-war movements of the 1960s/1970s (or mention of LBJ), watergate, or the War on Poverty? There is very little focus on social history, or even on social policy. It is unthinkable to have no mention of the Social Security system in the standards, but to have very detailed listings of important WWII battles.

These standards need to go back to the drawing board. I'm going to have to do a whole lot of supplemental education at home for my daughters if these are the final standards."

"As a middle school we are concerned that the philosophy researched in Best Practices and Turning Points 2000 seems to be ignored. Great emphasize is placed on covering less topics but being more indepth - (less survey), less emphasize on memorization and more on application, less lecture more authentic, etc. The standards seem to be the opposite of this. I am especially concerned with the wide variety of subjects that are currently included for grades 6-8. Each level has Minnesota history, World or US history, Geography, Citizenship, Government - etc.

When you teach the social studies curriculum you automatically include many areas in your discussion. The way the standards are set up you would have to have various textbooks and skip from Minnesota history then to 1,000 BC then to geography, etc. They did not seem to make sense. I strongly support keeping one or two topics per grade level and having some flexibility in 6-8 grades. We would like to recommend Minnesota History and US Geography, including map and globe skills in seventh grade, World Geography in Seventh Grade and World History in Eighth Grade. US History should be combined with Government at the Ninth and Tenth Grade Levels for more consistency. Thanks"

"Some sections seem overtly political, leaning strongly toward conservative Christian thought. I don't agree with this approach. As an example, it says 7th Grade students will 'recognize the significance of the Founders' four references to God in the Declaration of Independence.' 8th Grade students will 'be familiar with constitutionalism, which makes it clear government was subordinated to a higher or supreme law.' Also, the strong emphasis on memorizing patriotic songs and the meaning of specific patriotic symbols has a definite conservative odor to it.

"I have a Ph.D. in Public Policy, am a professor of policy, and have 3 kids who are/will be in the Minnesota public school system. I strongly object to your characteristic of cost-benefit analysis - implying that government intervention is only appropriate when benefits outweigh the costs. This is not a standard economic principle, this is a philosophical statement. And in our country, the government is involved quite often in correcting market imperfections when benefits do not outweigh the costs. If you are going to have a standard about cost-benefit analysis, I'd expect it to also include a statement about the enormous difficulties in measuring non-economic costs and benefits, and even in forecasting future benefits. Standard cost-benefit analysis tends to dismiss non-economic costs. Either change the standard to include a more balanced discussion of cost-benefit analysis, or scrap this benchmark. Further, this particular standard should include a discussion of 'market failure' as an important role for government to become involved in the economy (many economists would say that this was equally important to protecting property rights, which was given its own benchmark). Frankly, I'm concerned about the overall tone of these standards. They definitely represent a conservative ideology, which I find repeatedly in the U.S. History, World History, and Economics sections, both in what's included/excluded and in the language used. I could spend all day picking through the standards if I had time to highlight other examples. One notable example that I found especially telling - there is not a single mention of Thoreau or the role of 'civil disobedience' in the standards. This is a basic American value that has influenced great American & foreign leaders (MLK Jr., Ghandi, etc.), and I find it telling that students will be more well-versed in Confederate values (states' rights) than in this key American value."

"I would like to comment to the 5th grade social standards. I find the world history standards to be not appropriate for the 5th grade. Most of the subject matter listed for 5th graders is not found in any text book published for this level. Many of the ideas and concepts just are not appropriate for 5th grade. The amount of material to be studied for 5th grade would take 2 years for the students to do. I really feel these standards need to be looked at and modified. The students have no background in many of the areas so their knowledge is limited. I find studying the Muslims to be a difficult area also. Even the American History standards don't allow us to build background to the areas of study."

"These Social Studies Standards are unrealistic and not developmentally appropriate. My bright, motivated 9 year old daughter who attends an excellent public school could not possibly meet all the requirements for 4th grade and I don't want her school to try. It would set her and her school up to fail and it would ruin her love of school to have to try to memorize all this information. There are not enough hours in the day for a teacher to try to cram all this information into the curriculum. What are you thinking?!"

"I am very concerned after reviewing these standards (in two separate sittings) that the content is unbalanced and students are not equally informed on topics. The role of women and women's rights are sadly failing in this draft. There is little to no attention paid to alternate views of government and society ie anti war movement and its impact on society and the war. In the gov't and economic realm, social security is suspiciously absent and yet its impact is strongly felt today. I am shocked by the partisan, conservative stance this takes. I urge you to revisit this draft!"

flow to the topics, no connections from one standard to another, and in my opinion, topics that are far too advanced for 9 and 10-year-olds. I believe that 5th grade should continue to teach all history, including the Revolutionary War. Items such as the United States Constitution is still too abstract for this age, as is medieval Europe and the Byzantine Empire. A true understanding of the concepts would not be obtained at such a young age. I believe that focusing mainly on geography, with some information on how our U.S. government operates and some history of immigration are sufficient for this age. Most importantly, as a teacher of many years, I know how important it is to teach topics that are connected in some way and flow easily. With the new standards, we'd be teaching a mile wide and an inch deep. I don't feel much of anything will be retained in the students' minds once the school year is over."

"The standards are quite difficult to judge because terms like loyalty are not defined. Loyalty is indeed a part of citizenship, but it can also be used as a club by some to stifle active citizenship. I will have more to say as I read them more carefully."

"The 4th grade standards are overwhelming. I have been teaching 32 years. The new standards are way too much. Let us focus on one area--like the U.S. These standards cover history, geography, and economics in 4 different continents. Typical 4th graders are not ready for all of this. Let's just focus on the U.S. and maybe mostly on geography. We would not have materials to teach all of those standards. Our district (833) is already financially strapped. We don't need to total reinvent the wheel in Social Studies in these tight times. Cut back on your areas of focus!!!!

"I am concerned about the 'Character Traits of Good Citizens' which appears in K, 1 & 2 include only 'honesty, courage, patriotism and individual responsibility.' These are all good traits, of course, but where are 'respect' and 'consideration of others'? Our democracy doesn't work without respect for others, and we need to include at least this basic value. Further, a good citizen respects the rights of others. I know in my daughters' Kindergarten class this is one of the main lessons of the year - why does this not appear in the standards for the early grades?"

"These standards are generally too advanced. I thought I was looking at a junior high curriculum for much of the history. I believe the authors have no idea how much time is possible for social studies in the primary grades. We spend the last 45 minutes per day dividing our time between science, social studies and health. The majority of our time is spent on reading and related areas such as spelling, writing, grammar, etc. We spend much time on math. There would not even begin to be enough time in the day, week, year to possibly cover all these standards. There are many, many specific problems with several of these standards which our staff will address specifically. In conclusion, these standards are FAR too wide, and too deep to even be close to being reasonable. I do not think a child's growth and development has even been considered. We are still concentrating on our community, and various types of communities. It is beyond most young children's abstract reasoning to even talk about ancient specific civilizations Roman and Greek) These are appropriate to the older child who can appreciate a world concept."

The general confusion of this document makes it very difficult to discuss at the school level. Having mapped a scope and sequence to try to understand the organization of the document made clear the disjointed arrangement of strands and sub-strands. The document contains 237 standards with a total of 949 benchmarks. This is an unmanageable number."

"Thank you for posting the proposed Minnesota Academic Standards for Social Studies. While I have not read in detail the entire document, a careful perusal gives me confidence that the Education Department is making a worthy, good-faith effort to teach our children the most important information to prepare them as valued, productive U.S. citizens. The standards reflect a rebirth of emphasis on basic historic knowledge as the foundation of American social studies education. That is a long cool drink of water after years of multiculturalism and assigning blame and shame to our roots as a nation. Thank you for your effort; I look forward to its eventual

"The document is bogged down with historical trivial pursuit. It is not necessary to prescribe patriotic songs that students should learn. It is not necessary to delineate the key persons participating in historical events. Classroom teachers are perfectly able to make those choices. Nor is it necessary to include specific battles of wars. Again, teachers can make that determination. There is no absolute when it comes to determining which of the Civil War battles were the most significant. It would be more effective to provide instruction and learning activities that help students understand the causes and effects of wars and conflicts than to concentrate on specific battles. The document calls for the inclusion (in grade 9-12 U.S. History) of the following battles of the Civil War: Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Atlanta. Certainly these were critical battles, but so were Chancellorsville and Antietam to name only two. Teachers can include Chancellorsville and Antietam, yes. But can they possibly find the time when so many other items are included in the document already. The document appears to portray a philosophy that memorizing facts is the key to understanding history. In fact, this may lead to more misunderstanding. I strongly encourage less emphasis on historical trivia and more emphasis on the study of society and the ideas that have and do shape events and change."

"This comment relates to the Geography strands. I fully support the rigor displayed in these standards. The material required is age-appropriate, but challenging. I believe that a good foundation in geography is essential for our students. That being said, maps and globes are expensive. Will this mandate be fully funded by the Legislature?" I am concerned with the citizenship element throughout the proposed standards, specifically: 1) talking to kindergartners about 'patriotism' - how is this defined? I'm worried it could easily become jingoistic. 2) equating 'good citizenship' with loyalty in grade 1. Sometimes good citizenship means standing *against* the government, but for the people. 3) in grade 3, the emphasis on the pledge of allegiance and the underlying assumption that all citizens agree with and/or can in good conscience (because of religious or other reasons) recite the pledge. 4) in grade 4, talking about the 2 political parties - i thought there were more than that. i also object to the term 'dark ages' - it is full of value judgement. i would prefer 'middle ages.' Also beginning in grade 4, but continuing on into the 5th, the presentation of 'songs that express American ideals.' Who decides which songs express which universal ideals? For example, the song 'you're a grand old flag,' suggested for 4th grade, could be offensive to the same people who don't believe in pledging allegiance. And the 'battle hymn of the republic' and 'god bless america' have clearly religious messages and ought not be taught in school as expressing 'American ideals.' Again, not all Americans believe in God. Or if these songs get included, at least there needs to be a balance, say by including *all* verses of 'this land is your land' or songs of protest - also an American ideal. 5) in grade 5 you propose 'identifying bias' in print, advertising, etc. - how will you insure that both conservative *and* liberal biases are identified? 6) any discussion of the spread of Christianity *must* include the history of oppression and abuse accompanying this spread. 7) in grade 6 there is to be a discussion of religious freedom in America - this *must* include the freedom to practice *no* religion or atheism. And on the same topic, this is the first time separation of church and state is discussed? after all the talk about the importance of Christianity? It feels like too late. "

"8) in grade 7 I'm concerned about the presentation of 2 political parties - it needs to be made clear that there *are* more than two, and that the major parties conspired to make it more difficult for alternatives to compete on a level playing field. Furthermore, continuing my concerns about the excessive prominence of religion, I disagree with a need to point out the 'four instances of God in the declaration of independence.' 9) in grade 8 you would talk about 'defending freedom during the Cold War.' this is an egocentric view/statement and ignores American cultural imperialism and the role of our government overthrowing legitimate states in central and south america because they were socialist/communist. And the emphasis on Ronald Reagan is offensive. What about the roles played by Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter? The case could be made (and very strongly) that Reagan just *happened* to be in power when the USSR collapsed of its own accord. And where is the discussion of the student movement and opposition to the Viet Nam war? The standard also says the constitution is 'subordinate to a higher or supreme law.' Again, let's separate religion from politics. 10) re: Ronald Reagan, see above. 11) how is the spread of Christianity presented? 12) i object to the charged terminology of 'Barbarian tribes.' "

"13) Gutenberg as an economic founder? Is there an implication that the Bible supports capitalism?! 14) 'Describe the influence of religion' - HUH? Who defines that, do you include atheism and pagan religions, and how is it presented? This needs to be a part of the discussion of the enlightenment, seeing as how many philosophers then were pantheists, deists and atheists. 15) what primary texts are to be used to understand socialism and communism? Will students be required to read and discuss the Communist Manifesto? 16) Discussions of the 'consequences of the Russian Revolution' must include the freedom from an oppressive autocracy (not unlike the claims in Iraq these days...) 17) when talking about the 'creation of states in the Middle East,' will there also be a discussion of the elimination of states (Palestine?) 18) discussing puritans, religious tolerance, etc, will that include discussing atheism and native religions? 19) I repeat my concerns about emphasis on God when you propose emphasizing 'endowed by their Creator' in the constitution - do you think High School students can't find that on their own? 20) You say 'individual rights promote the common good.' Always? How did we get Enron, homelessness, poverty, starvation then? 21) after the last election, how can anyone say the Electoral College promotes 'compromise' and 'keeps the Union together?' 22) the contention that 'patterns of production and consumption...link regions' ignores NAFTA and the impulse seen by many firms to move overseas to exploit cheap labor, taking jobs from the US - not linking. 23) the pro-business assumption that is inherent in 'describe how people and

nations gain through trade' - see above. 24) likewise 'Standards of living increase as the productivity of workers rises.' Not if you read Marx! Not if the profit doesn't benefit the workers, but only the ceo's (remember Enron) 25) ditto 'investments...increase productivity and contribute to an expansion of future economic prosperity.'"

"I am in favor of the standards."

"I am a social studies teacher who strongly dislikes the proposed new academic standards. Much too much emphasis is placed on memorizing facts and dates with little emphasis on content or understanding. I've heard it said that Albert Einstein once said, "I never memorize anything I can look up." If such an approach to learning was good enough for Mr. Einstein, it's good enough for our students. Memorizing a lot of facts and figures simply uses brain power for no good purpose. No thinking is involved. That's what is wrong with the Hirsch view of education and the proposed standards. There is no time for thinking because so much time is spent on memorizing and regurgitating. Clearly, Mr. Einstein wanted to spend his time thinking. Personally, I'm rather glad he developed his thinking skills. I'd hate to think we might miss an opportunity to develop the next Einstein because he is she is busy memorizing the name of the ship on which the Japanese signed the unconditional surrender that ended World War II."

"I have strong concern that the social studies standards for the high school students presents a non holistic and Western view of that period in our history. The standards don't mention anything about the anti-war movements surrounding Vietnam or the War on Poverty, but do have this as a standard: 'students will know the political and economic policies which led to the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, including the role of Ronald Reagan.' They don't mention LBJ or Clinton, or God forbid, Jimmy Carter and their political accomplishments and influences throughout the world. The lives of influential and everyday women and their changing role and power in the United States and the world are also hardly reflected anywhere in the standards. I appreciate the opportunity to comment but I think these need to be completely re-thought and alternative views should be integrated into the standards - ones that reflect the holistic make up of opinion about history and our world."

"I feel that the elementary standards (especially for K - 2) are not appropriate to the developmental level of children at that age. A few children may be able to repeat what they've heard, but will have no idea what it means. Setting high standards shouldn't mean teaching harder material to younger students. It should mean making sure that as many students as possible can master what is usable and understandable to children of their growth and developmental level."

"I want to express my disappointment that the social studies standard committee failed to include the economics classes taught by competent Business Education teachers. The economics classes taught in business education have virtually the same curriculum and in some cases use the same text. Many business education teachers also hold business degrees which require them to take many economics courses. We should have been listed as at least an option for students. By not including the business ed economics classes we are telling students that the course is not as valuable as the one taught in social studies, which is just not true. I am disappointed at the committee's close-mindedness."

"I am a teacher in a small district in Southern Minnesota that has just come out of a meeting on the new Social Studies standards. We are very concerned about our students and the lack of 'life skills' that they will be taking with them because of the new standards. Currently, we strive to teach our students what we feel is necessary to acquire the information they need to know in all social studies areas along with the content set out by the state. With the new standards however, we will be forced to push all of that aside and lecture or 'stand and deliver' as many call it and skip the 'how to' part of teaching. Most of the new standards say how; students should know or students should be able to, but very few of them have students actually doing things to show that they know how to get information. In today's society, it is so easy for students to get information if they just know where to look. The sad part is, many of them don't have those skills. That is what we are trying to teach the kids here at our school and I feel that with these new standards we won't be doing that. Thank you for your time."

"I have several concerns about the proposed social studies standards. They are as follows: who is going to pay for all of the new curriculum that is to be taught at each level? For example, in the 8th grade we are to teach MN history, US History, Geography, and Economics. Secondly, how are we to teach all of that in one year....is the plan to skim everything and not have our students have an deep, clear understanding of the topics. Third, is the purpose of the standards to force our children to be robots who can spit out facts about our country and that makes our children knowledgeable? And finally....I firmly believe in the value of learning and understanding our country's history, however, does that mean we should forget about the rest of the world. Geography will be the first to go when there is so much to teach!!"

"The grade 7 Social Studies standards dealing with Minnesota History will be very difficult to accomplish in 7th grade because our district has split the curriculum in a way that 7th grade is for American History up to the Civil War. My curriculum is full of trying to get through over 400 years of history in 9 months. I will not be able to fit in all of the standards that are being asked of me. These standards are more fitting for fifth or sixth grade. Also, the geography standards for seventh grade are very

complex, when once again in our district geography is taught as a whole course in eighth grade. I touch on all the major themes of geography, but to get into specific interconnections and maps & globes and teach all the basic facts of American History is way too much for one school year! I agree the concepts listed are important, but I feel that the standards should be looked at a little more closely to see where they actually align with curriculums most school districts in the state have already set up."

I notice that one of our 5 zillion strands is "Concept of Time." Apparently this is something you folks are lacking because if you had any concept of time you would realize that **YOU CAN'T TEACH ALL OF THESE THINGS IN A 50 MINUTE CLASS THAT MEETS 175 TIMES**. As usual, the state has picked some unbelievably utopian teacher want to be's to come up with unrealistic demands that will result in less real understanding and more apathy amongst students and teachers. Why don't you think about teaching one focus area and diving deeply into it. Is the goal to have every teacher in every school teaching the exact same thing on the exact same day in the exact same way? If so, maybe you should speak to one of my colleagues. He has a great idea for how to lessen education costs. He suggests that a new use for the Metrodome might be to have Minnesota students pack the place for a state taught curriculum. That way, only one teacher would be needed. With the curriculum you are prescribing, one state guided robotic teacher is all you really need anyway. Nice going.

I am a seventh grade social studies teacher. I am concerned about the placement of many of the standards. If we are expected to cover the content assigned each grade, most districts will have to purchase new curriculum. For instance, the 7th grade standards cover U.S. History until the Civil War. In 7th grade in our district, we cover U.S. History **AFTER** the Civil War. My question is: must the standards be covered in the grade assigned? Why can't the standards be assigned to multiple grade levels, as the high school standards are? Then districts would still be able to maintain local control over scope and sequence. Thank you.

Are you serious? Who is writing these?

First of all, Minnesota History is a major part of 6th grade curriculum, and the standards only go through the fur trade portion of MN history. Nothing about the settlers and farming? What about the logging industry? The shipping out of Duluth? The iron-ore industry? What about the 1900's up to the current date? I feel we should turn our focus from world history and have a more in depth concentration on MN history from the past to the present day. There are so many resources right here for us to incorporate into MN history lessons.

It also doesn't take a genius to figure out you basically want us to study Chapters 5, 6, and 7 from the Northern Lights book. **ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE MN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JUST PUBLISHED A NEW NORTHERN LIGHTS BOOK?**

Going onto World History..... This is where I wonder who is writing this. I think we are fooling ourselves if you really think 6th graders will be able to do these tasks. What about the sheer quantity of Standards? I'm sorry, you need to be reasonable. Have the people writing these standards been in a classroom recently? These standards are geared for a perfect world. I may be crazy, but my sixth grade is not a perfect world. And I have no special needs students.

What about your inner city schools, schools and classrooms with high numbers of special needs students. AND... no child is to be left behind. With these standards you are going to leave a large majority of students in the dust.

Another thought, maybe you'd better send some of our teachers to school before you require them to teach these topics.

To the writers of the Standards, take over my class for one year, go back to the writing board and see if what you have written truly pertains to the students of today's schools. These are not realistic expectations.

I foresee nothing but failure if you truly plan on implementing these standards.

Are all of these standards research based? The students at this grade level are NOT developmentally able or ready to grasp such abstract concepts as the skills listed in the World History portion of these standards.

With the great variety and volume of these standards we will not be able to teach them the basic reading, math, etc. skills that will enable them to show their understanding and demonstrate their skills. Example: Students will correctly place several people and events of Roman history on a time line. Our students need to learn how to make a time line, understand how it works, and why it is a useful tool. This task alone will take class time, to teach them about Roman history will be overwhelming - we need to address what continents are, what continent they live on, what country they live in and learn about it before they can compare and contrast it with Rome. Without a framework for Rome to fit into they will not be able to understand it! We realize that world history is important but think it is too abstract to children who are still in the concrete operations stage of

I find it hard to believe any 5th grade teachers had any input into these standards. We teach US History from the Mayan, Inca, and Aztec civilizations through the Civil War and it takes the entire school year. How do you expect a 10 year old to learn a 3 year study in 170+ days? We usually have to read the texts together as the vocabulary and ideas are beyond their comprehension as they are written 2+ years above grade level. I certainly hope someone in your organization understands child development. Wouldn't it be better to teach one strand (US History or World History) and teach it well instead of trying to cram a Junior High Study into 5th grade? Elementary students need to learn how to study nonfiction subjects rather than regurgitate facts. Are we going to state textbook adoption?

good

Yikes! Will we be teaching the other academic subjects too, or just Social Studies. Way too many, way too specific.

These standards are a joke. Where is the thinking process. This exercise is just fore rote memory.

I just feel the content is too much for 6th grade. Also how do we pay for new material that are needed. Is this at a 6th grade interest level. I really like our curriculum we have now - it works why change?

The draft of the social studies standards for 5th grade (and other grades) are absurd!! There are enough "strands" there to cover about 4 years, not to mention we only have the kids for one year. (not counting the days we have MCA's, DARE, and other testing). How can 5th graders expect to learn economics when our government can't even balance our state's budget. What about curriculum? There is no social studies curriculum out there that covers geography, government, economics, ancient history, modern history, and what ever else is listed. People writing these standards need to wake up. Obviously they have not been in a classroom lately or ever. They do not understand kids, their potential, or their needs.

While I'm pleased that information about recent immigrants has been incorporated into the Grade 8 Minnesota History standard, I am disappointed that there is no mention of the Japanese American internment at all in any of the standards relating to World War II. This was such a critical part of U.S. history and WW II that I cannot imagine that we as Minnesotans would want our children graduating from high school having never learned that this took place. If we do, we run the risk of letting ignorance prevail and of history repeating itself.

My greatest concern over the new Social Studies standards is the absence of classes that deal with the behavior of human beings - namely sociology and psychology. The need for these two classes is enormous as we try to understand all of the "facts" that the students will be required to know.

My other major concern is the lack of choices that high school students will have in the social studies area. In our school the students can meet the school requirements for graduation by taking a wide variety of social studies classes. With these new requirements, their exposure to the various specialties of social studies would be lost. Since our district has over 90% of its seniors attend college, and most report that they were well prepared, I think consideration needs to be given to offering local district some flexibility in meeting social studies requirements.

I hope that you would consider offering districts the choices that continue to make social studies a vibrant and popular subject area for students to explore.

Although as a parent and educator I understand how difficult it is to prioritize all the things we want children to know and do, to revert to what is mostly a "famous men" narrative of history disempowers children by causing them to believe that history is caused by a few illustrious people in positions of power, for the most part. What students need to be active and informed citizens is a grounding in the cause and effect of history both at official levels but more importantly at levels that every single person operates at-- especially grassroots movements and labor history. We do not need to further breed the kind of ethnocentrism and pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist sensibilities that are at the root cause of various groups who are targeting the U.S. with violence.

The Constitutionalism standard incorrectly portrays constitutionalism, as devised by Locke, Hobbes, the Founders, etc.

Constitutionalism essentially means following the rule of laws, and that the power of leaders and government bodies is limited, and that these limits can be enforced through established procedures. There is nothing in this concept about "higher law". And it should be noted that constitutionalism is a prominent political philosophy associated with

American conservatism today (which doesn't quite seem to get what Locke was talking about!).

This definitely needs to be dropped. There is already an entire benchmark related to "rule of law".

(who is writing these standards, by the way. Don't they know what constitutionalism means? This is basic civics 101. Editorial over.)

About the standard F Era 8: (the student will analyze the economic, social, and political transformation of the US. and the world between the end of World War II and the present."

Specific benchmark - Students will know and understand the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War....."

#1) Take out veterans. While veterans participated, what students need to know is not how veterans participated, but how the military participated.

2) take out "defending freedom." This is an ideological statement. Many would argue that the U.S. was not defending "freedom" during the Vietnam war. This can be kept non-ideological if you just said - "know and understand the role of America's military during the Cold War, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the collapse of the Soviet Union, (and you can add in others too, like Chile, for example)

Grade 8, G. Era 9. The Civil Rights Movement was most successful prior to this era. It should definitely be moved to era 8: the Cold War and Changing America, 1945-1980s.

Similarly, Vietnam, Watergate and the "counter-culture" is in the wrong Era. This was all pre-1989, not post-1989.

Grade 8, Era 7: The great Depression and WWII: The student will understand economic, social & political transition....

There is no mention of the Internment camps for Japanese-Americans here (or anywhere in the standards, by the way). This has enormous implications for today's world, and should definitely be included. If you are going to talk about how WWII created new opportunities for minorities, you have to also mention that it wasn't true for 'some minorities', the Japanese-Americans.

US History - Era 6. The benchmark on the Progressive Movement just doesn't make sense. The Progressive Movement essentially wanted the return to moral goodness that existed before rapid immigration, urbanization, etc. Those in the Progressive Movement pushed for economic, social and political reforms. Some changes that occurred as a result of the Progressives: the 17th and 18th Amendments, the Pure Food and Drug Act, the Meat Inspection Act, and the Sherman and Clayton Anti-Trust Acts. Progressives supported initiative, recall, referendum, and direct primary laws. Also during this time, attacks were made on child labor, sweatshops, slum conditions, and women working excessive hours. They can be classified as anti-slum (the Settlement House workers, social gospel, etc.), anti-trust (TR was the big trust-buster), and anti-boss (as in political boss). They were also pro-suffrage, anti-racist, etc.

Along with some of the key people mentioned in the Progressive Movement are: Woodrow Wilson, Eugene V. Debs, John Dewey, Jane Adams & W.E.B. DuBois.

The standards for the Progressive Movement need to be completely rewritten to show some coherent representation of the era. For example - having an entire benchmark talking about increased federalism, but not even defining the Progressive movement fully, is inaccurate. The social reforms of this era were not just at a national level, it was also prevalent at the state & local levels, in fact, probably more so.

Further, a key aspect of this era - from the Spanish-American war to the changes pushed by the Progressives - were the muckrakers. Muckraking needs to be mentioned here in the standards.

The "New Deal" is described as transforming American federalism. That is quite a conservative take on the New Deal. While accurate, it is just as accurate to say the "New Deal", particularly Social Security, transformed the American landscape by ending old age poverty for millions of Americans. In fact, the New Deal should be spelled out more. Better benchmarks would be...

"Students will understand the causes of the depression and failed attempts."

"Students will know the key components of FDR's New Deal, including Social Security, Aid to Dependent Children, and WPA; and understand how these programs ended the depression."

Why do the requirements for knowing American presidents in the 20th century skip from FDR (with reference to Nixon for Watergate & Eisenhower for war efforts) to Reagan. I want my kids to know more substance here. I want them to know that Truman was the one who ended the War. I want them to know about JFK (particularly the assassination and its effects on the US) and LBJ's Great Society and failure in Vietnam. I want them to know about Nixon. I want them to know about Clinton, the great economy of the 1990s & the impeachment. I don't like how Ronald Reagan is credited with ending communism. If we are going to mention Reagan more than once, than the 2nd time should be for Iran-Contra, and the 3rd for the huge deficits and raising debt. FDR & Truman aren't even mentioned for ending World War II, why is Reagan repeatedly listed as ending communism? It is a little more complicated than that, and I want my kids to have a balanced understanding of history..

This is so blatantly biased I had a hard time reading it.

The character traits of a good citizens that you have chosen could include some other traits. Being a good citizen also involves acquiring productive work habits. Psychologists who study the personality traits that contribute to successful work performance have found that the personality trait of 'conscientiousness' is important in all jobs. Conscientiousness involves setting goals and putting in effort to achieve them, conforming to group norms, orderliness in one's habits, dependable follow-through, thoroughness, attention to detail and controlling impulses. While honesty and individual responsibility are part of conscientiousness, they do not include the goal setting, orderly, rule following, effort aspects. Also, Psychology researchers studying expertise have found a direct relationship between the amount of time the one spends at an activity and ones performance. Thus I would hope you would consider including effort or hard work as a valuable citizenship trait. Also I was startled not to see traits such as 'generosity' which I would define as a concern for well being of others' and 'thoughtfulness' which I would define as a willingness to reflect on ones own behaviors and a desire to learn new ways of understanding.' The liberal democracy of which we are the lucky citizens was founded on the cultural values of the Yankees/WASP of old New England--principles of fair play, self restraint, personal reserve and orderliness, concern for the 'commons' that is, concern for the well-being of all citizens, commitment to public service and participation, and hard work and self-improvement through education. These characteristics are still essential aspects of good citizens. The set of values you have listed incorporate some of these, and some may incorporate more, depending on how you define your traits. I would hope our standards were both precise in definition and broad in scope.

Key dates, names and events are important, but do not lease out the context and the dark side of our history. Stress the ongoing evolution toward a more complete democracy by virtue of the struggles for social and economic justice. The labor movement, the hard fought battles to achieve equal rights for woman and minorities must be given full exposure. The heros of these movements can not be pushed to the background. The use Hward Zinn's "History of the United States: 1492 to the Present", would be a welcome addition to a complete Social Studies program.

As a social studies teacher who has spent time reviewing the new standards I can honestly say that I am very disappointed in what I have seen. The standards are full obvious bias and interest group pressure for Minnesota educators to teach their cause. I can see no way that it will be possible to teach the requirements for World History in a one semester class. The specific people and events required in United States History include some that even teachers haven't heard of. This document seems to have been thrown together with very little regard to the time that students will have in class to learn and what it will cost districts to implement the standards. Where is the money going to come from to add staff and purchase books and curriculum? The also seems to be an assumption that we teachers currently have no standards.

The first grade standards are extremely age inappropriate. Most of them belong in 4th grade or higher. "Students will give examples of civilizations of the ancient world and highlights of their culture..." This is just one of many ludicrous benchmarks for 6-7 year olds. You need to start from scratch at this level.

These standards, particularly the geography standards do not reference the Ice Age. Minnesota and much of the northern hemisphere was covered by Ice and the land forms left behind have a huge effect on human history and activities. Minneapolis is where it is because of Hennipen falls, a geographic remnant of the Ice age. The fertile Red River valley and the Iron Range are products of the Ice Age. The Science standards don't cover this topic either.

American History WWII era, sub-standard G: Asian-American history is completely ignored, and it shouldn't be. You have plenty about the discrimination against African-Americans, but nothing about the "internment" of the Japanese Americans and the conflicting treatment of German-Americans during the war. You need to include why the

Japanese-Americans were interned, how they reacted, how it affected them economically, how serious the threat they posed actually was, the valiance of the Japanese-American Division (the 8th?), how we treated the German-Americans, why we didn't intern them, the threat they actually posed, etc. The presence of Japanese- and German-Americans in the US during the war is very significant and should be emphasized in the standards.

Did we just reinvent the wheel or what! This looks like all the "basics" from the years 1959-1964, barring the standards in economics. So it's "Back to the Fifties." Not that it's all bad, but why the team effort, all that was needed was to grab an old curriculum guide and textbook from that era.

I looked at the standards with great anticipation. The reading and math standards were excellent and very developmentally appropriate for the first graders that I teach. However, the social studies standards for first graders (keep in mind that these are 6 and 7 year old children) are the stuff nightmares are made of. Yes, I am sorry, but I am embarrassed and angry that the current public relations message regarding these standards is focusing on nationalism and the needs of children are being ignored. These kids need to learn social skills and how to get along with their neighbor, not support a political agenda. These standards would have us teach them about ancient Egypt at the age of 6. They don't even know the name of the city that their Grandmother lives in at this age. They are not global thinkers. Has anyone on the committee taught a primary grade or even spoken to a 6 year old lately? You want them to create an historic timeline and children this age don't even know when their birthday is or the difference between days of the week, months, and seasons of the year. Social skills, work habits, and community are the social areas that we need to address in the primary grades. Let's teach these children something meaningful and real to them at their age, something that they can use every day. It's an embarrassment to the educators of this state when the standards do not reflect knowledge of child development.

I teach grade 5, while I think the effort to establish a comprehensive curriculum in Social studies is needed, I believe in general the committee has forgotten these children are 10 or 11 years old in 5th grade, the concepts are quite advanced in some areas. Curriculum support will be needed in all districts, and I am not a lover of a single text, but in both science and social, additional curriculum support will be needed at a reading level for 5th grade students. In addition, we must look at the current length of the school day. The Language arts and math standards are doable and needed, but our student contact time is not sufficient to teach to mastery all the strands in social and science in addition. How will the department support these changes and will the mca tests be changed to match these new standards and when?

I support the inclusion of geography in the social studies standards. I think it is important that MN's students understand concepts and themes of geography. It is crucial to success in a world of increased globalization.

In viewing the draft of the K-12 Social Studies Standards it appears that little attention was paid to higher order thinking. The words "know" and "identify" appear far too often compared to words such as "evaluate." Blooms Taxonomy takes a big hit in your proposal. Little is included about character education or valuing. Also, it appears that what you propose is altogether too specific and would lead to a learning environment that would seem quite prescriptive and boring. Memorizing the contents of a phone book comes to mind. It seems that the pendulum has swung completely to the right, away from experiential learning. The Profile in Learning, that was junked, perhaps emphasized too much of that approach and this new look at Social Studies has none of it! I think you missed the mark! The correct approach is, as usual, somewhere in the middle.

Dear MASC,

I'm glad to see that the standards are changing. I felt that the last batch were, overall, very confusing in their directions, and sometimes awkward and difficult to insert into my curriculum. However, except for the standards for geography, government and citizenship, and economics, these new standards seem to be just more work demanded from teachers. The state is looking for proof that students are understanding specific eras of history that we, as teachers, are quizzing and testing them on already- the proof of their success or failure in these areas is being monitored by classroom teachers through standard grading methods- asking teachers to have students complete these standards seems like just more of the same testing: testing upon testing.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

I feel that the benchmarks do not necessarily relate to the standard it is connected to. I also feel that many of the concepts are too abstract for third graders to really understand. The history standard does not flow enough and too many 'chunks' are disjointed. World religions need to be taught at a higher grade level and not at third grade. The use of timelines are just beginning in third grade as they relate to the children themselves. Timelines for the roman empire etc. does not connect to them and are too abstract. I can see using some timelines with the expansion of our own country and state but not for ancient history., I can understand reading literature and telling stories to get them interested but not to the extent of testing.

Students in third grade can barely figure out where they live, let alone figure out who the Romans are and where they lived and what they did. Put it in a higher grade. Students

in the lower grades need to know where they live now and what is here.

I have taught all day kindergarten for six years. In my experience, 5 and 6 year olds are very egocentric. This means they focus on themselves and have difficulties comprehending other time periods and places other than what they have experienced. While I feel EXPOSURE to famous people in history is valuable, it is developmentally inappropriate to expect them to fully COMPREHEND how native and immigrant peoples have contributed to US History.

Kindergartners focus on the here and now of situations. US History standards for kindergartners should be very limited.

Where are current events and the study of geopolitical issues affecting people of the world today?

The current standards reflect what has traditionally been known as "History" class.

Historical information is important only in its relevance to what is happening now and what will happen in the future.

Our students do need historical information. Social Studies is more than that. It is an integrated curriculum weaving current events and historical events and precedents together.

What about teachers and programs using a thematic approach? How will these standards affect these important, student focused programs. We also need to consider learning styles when we develop "standards" that will encompass all students.

I get very concerned when I hear a committee member speak out on public radio that the timelines given for early development of these standards allowed only for "cut and paste" of standards from other states given to them ahead of time. This is something that deserves long and careful consideration. Last year (in fifth grade) my son learned about the revolutionary war. He can now name the dates, battlefields, people etc. involved. He does not need this information repeated to him in the 7th grade. This year (6th grade), he is in a new innovative school. His social studies teacher is including local urban life, history and development of a local urban area, map skills, and African geography in his curriculum. As a part of this, my son will learn about life in various African cities and the AIDS crisis on the African continent. He will delve into issues with an examination of multiple facets and perspectives of those issues. This is social studies. Give this committee as much time as they need at the drawing table, for much more work needs to be done.

I have serious concerns about the proposed standards for elementary students. I believe students should learn content, but the amount of content proposed is unrealistic. Do we want children to leave elementary school with the ability to recite a litany of facts of which they have little understanding, or know how to comprehend what they read, write coherently, problem solve, think and compute. I would rather have children who know enough to understand what is being asked of them and are able to find resources to find answers than children who are a repository of facts.

Back to the Stone Age!

Facts, dates, people, places, and specific events are important. Equally important is the ability to relate to these facts. My first exposure to history that was engaging and useful after many years of rote memorization of what/when/where was when a college teacher connected events in literature, art, journalism, business, economics to political and government actions. I encourage the standards to balance the attention to "what" with similar attention to "why" because being able to list facts is meaningless without being able to understand the impact those facts had on events.

Our current district curriculum does not align with the following parts of the standards in Kindergarten. Neither time nor financial resources would allow us to cover this much social studies curriculum in a 1/2 day program.

Our current grade 1 social studies curriculum does not entirely align with the proposed standards. We would have to increase teaching time and spend additional money on textbooks to cover all this material.

Our grade 2 social studies curriculum doesn't align with these proposed standards.

There are many parts of the proposed grade 3 standards that do not align with our current curriculum. With the emphasis on reading and math at our grade level, we do not have time to add any more content to our social studies curriculum.

The focus of our current 4th grade social studies curriculum emphasizes Minnesota history and geography and also the regions and states of the U.S. These proposed standards would mean that we would have to purchase totally new curriculum materials because they don't align with what we have.

The following parts of the proposed standards do not align with our grade 5 curriculum

The following proposed grade 6 standards in social studies do not align with our current curriculum:

There is too much content and repetition at the grade levels in elementary. With the emphasis on reading and math, there isn't enough time to teach all this content. These are very fact oriented standards. Elementary grades need more flexibility in how they set the scope and sequence of their social studies content.

The following parts of the proposed 7th and 8th grade social studies standards do not align with our current curriculum:

We cover a lot of the content required, but would like the flexibility to have different concentrations at each of the middle level grades in order to go more in depth into the content.

If teachers are to teach about the early cultures in North America - will the state provide the appropriate culturally sensitive terminology that should be used. My understanding from Native Americans I have heard speak is that instead of the word American Indian tribes, the preferred terminology is American Indian Nations. Since teachers will be portraying a culture that has often been depicted in inaccurate and unflattering ways, it is important that this unit would be presented respectful of the culture.

After reviewing the middle level standards, I have concerns for my child's subject retention in the various areas of social studies. It is my belief that students at this age of development retain more when they are able to cover a specific subject more in depth. The way the middle school standard is outlined, it sounds as though the students will be exposed to U.S. history, geography, MN history, and civic/government each year. This would probably mean that the teacher will spend approx. 6 weeks on each subject area, and then move on. Also, given the specifics related to each standard, it will be "fly by" teaching. I am concerned that it will not "make sense" to the students. Also, I am trying to figure out why a teacher, who may be skilled in geography, will now be teaching my child some of each area that they are not as familiar with. Doesn't the No Child Left Behind Act have a clause stating that teachers must be certified in the area in which they teach. If so, how will a particular teacher be qualified to teach all those subjects each year, in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. In addition, how will supplies be shared. If the standard is written so that any future assessment will occur at the end of the 8th grade, it would be more feasible to cover those specific subjects by grade. For example, geography would be taught in 8th grade. However, given the way the standard is currently outlined, it appears that every year the students will have exposure to all of these subjects. I just don't think they will retain much with that type of layout, and that stage of development.

Confucianism is NOT a world religion. It is a moral code and type of government.

There is no mention of Asian Americans here, although there is mention of African Americans, and Hispanics. Additionally an estimated 15,000 Korean people have been adopted into Minnesota and raised by white families and there is no mention of them (or Korean nationals) here in Grade 8 Minnesota History.

I have reviewed your proposed standards and the only thing I really managed to notice was how long they are. With 54 pages of social studies standards alone, will students have time for anything else? Is this really a good way for every child in Minnesota to spend the first 18 years of their lives - memorizing facts about the Japanese Shogunate and the Ottoman Empire? There are many fine people in this state who have gotten through most of their lives so far without ever having heard of these things. The history of ancient Japan doesn't tend to come up much in conversation when you're working as a marine biologist, or as a teacher for that matter. Standards this exhaustive will sap the energy and creativity of our students, leaving them less, not more, prepared for college and working life.

I am concerned about the sequencing of standards in particular having two areas world history as a focus, and Minnesota history. For me as a teacher and a parent it is disjointed. Currently I teach world history from prehistoric man, to the Middle East Mesopotamia, Israel, and Egypt (which seems to have disappeared from the standards), continuing on to Greece, and Rome. All forementioned cultures and histories are integrated and shown how they connect to United States history, government, and culture. I then continue with the expansion of Rome through Rome's developed trade routes into China, and the expansion of Rome throughout Europe and connect to the middle ages. I connect explorers to the new world (America) and introduce the indigenous cultures of the Mayan, Aztec, and Incas and how these cultures impacted Europe and the United States. I end my year with our neighbor to the north Canada, and the countries in the ring of fire specifically Japan and how the United States and Japan have interacted and our history together.

Being an Ojibwa myself I feel it is important to teach about the original people of this state, but I believe that it would be more fully integrated if the native people of Minnesota were included at the fourth grade level with regions of the United States, or at fifth grade with United States history.

I am concerned with students losing the flow of ideas and for teachers not being able to show how cultures interact and relate to one another. The lack of teaching materials whether text books or supplemental materials covering the broad amount of information for each grade level specifically 4, 5, 6 is also of great concern as well as attempting to assess and evaluate my students' learning and my implementation of the standards. Thank you for listening.

The Profile of Learning was far too heavily weighted in favor of process, but it appears the pendulum has now gone to the opposite extreme. The Social Studies standards, particularly, seem far too heavily weighted in specific content and in some cases are totally divorced from what is currently being taught in 4th grade social studies.

Today, September 23, 2003, I read an article in the Star Tribune entitled "Standards face a critical crowd." Cheri Yecke is quoted as saying that "Parents are saying they want to hear what's good about America," implying that parents don't want any criticism made of US history. I am a parent. I have just read through the social studies standards. Where is the emphasis on critical thinking? If we are to really learn from history, we must teach our children to not make the same mistakes over and over again. We must teach our children that the world is complex and that there are no simple solutions. We must teach our children to be world citizens or we just may find ourselves without a country at all. Cheri Yecke, I think you are out of touch with what parents want for their children. I have an 11th grade and a 7th grade student in the Minneapolis district. sincerely,

Social Studies was boring to me when I grew up, because it involved memorizing facts and spitting them back out on a test. I am happy to see that times have changed, as my kids have social studies classes that are interesting, challenging, thought-provoking, and involve studying aspects of history (i.e. different viewpoints) that were not taught when I was in school. Today's social studies classrooms turn out kids who can examine and analyze issues and problems and come up with thoughtful ideas and solutions. Unfortunately, the proposed standards will return us to the days of rote memorization, where kids are rewarded for being able to recite names and dates of "important" historical events. Instead, our kids should be rewarded for being able to critically analyze historical situations. That skill will carry with them throughout their life, whereas being able to memorize "facts" will not provide them with any great benefit, especially if they simply forget the facts as soon as the test is over. It's sad to me to think that we would return to the social studies classrooms of my youth.

We are second grade public school teachers. We have reviewed the standards and would like to make the following comments:

1. Many of the first grade standards are presently taught in second grade. This would mean new materials, textbooks, etc. for our grade level...money our district does not have.
2. Our students are not ready for Minnesota history. They are just beginning to recognize our state and city. The history is beyond them at this point.
3. World history is too advance for seven and eight year olds. This is not in our curriculum.
4. Portions of the Geography are also too advanced for our grade level. We are referring to the sub-strand of Physical features.
5. The strand of Economics concerning Economic Choices is difficult and vague.
6. The strand of Government and Citizenship with the sub-strand B is not appropriate for this grade level.
7. Sub-Strand C of Government and Citizenship is very appropriate for second grade.
8. Sub-Strand A under Geography is also appropriate for second grade.

As I reviewed the social studies standards K-12, My thoughts were, If I were to teach to each and every standard listed for my grade level, I would not have taught any other subject that year. As an elementary teacher we need balance in the curriculum. Reading and Math are just as important as Science and Social Studies. We need to narrow the standards to a workable level. Stay in touch with what children at Kindergarten , First, Second grades etc. can comprehend and be realistic about your expectations.

From the nature of the discussions it seems that most folks have resigned themselves to the fact that the state is going to dictate curriculum to formerly independent school districts. I question the supposition that an appointed state committee has any more expertise or insight into what kids in my district need than the professionals who teach there. I believe that the scope and sequence of the SS curriculum in my district has just as much legitimacy as any ordained by any other body. I believe the standards to be a reactionary document—a reaction to the criticism of past Minnesota standards and a reaction to 9/11. Moreover, I suppose that anyone who questions the emphasis on American history could be looked at a fellow traveler. In all, I believe a chill wind blows in our discipline for those who think that a global perspective is valuable or even those who believe that sociology, psychology or current events hold merit.

Geography Standards:

What a welcome change to our educational system to see inclusion of geography throughout K-12. As a 10th grade geography teacher I use both physical and human geography in my curriculum. I should be able to rely on students' prior knowledge, however, too often I see students lacking basic geographic skills. These new standards should better prepare our students for higher critical thinking at the high school level.

As I view the world history standards I don't see any mention of Ancient Egypt. Ancient Egypt is a very important part of understanding ancient cultures and I certainly think it should be taught in the 6th grade. Thank you

After reading the standards I was simply amazed at the re-writing of history that had taken place. Then I heard the commmisar of education say that parents only wanted their kids to hear what was good about the US not the truth about both the good and the bad. If kids are taught actual history as it happened they can learn from the past and hopefully

not repeat the mistakes of the past. I hope the commission will realize that neglecting history is a mistake.

I am a 4th grade classroom teacher. In reading these standards I was surprised at the amount of benchmarks at the 4th grade level. Some of them sound like college 101 classes. In addition to social studies, I also teach reading, writing, math, science, health, penmanship, art, and spelling. The breadth and depth of these benchmarks are overwhelming considering the hours in each teaching day and the amount that we have to teach. Please reconsider these standards. Some of our children do not know how many oceans there are or where the 50 states are located. Let us spend time at this age getting our students up to speed on their own country, instead of traveling back 1,000 years across distant oceans. Thank you for your consideration.

Major religions should include Islam

Page 33: No discussion of weather phenomena would be complete without including Global Warming. Global Warming is an internationally accepted fact in the scientific community. The effects of global warming are already becoming apparent. Even the EPA has published data supporting global warming.

My comments are for the social studies standards. I signed up at 6:55 to speak at last night's meeting at Central High School. I had to leave at 9:05, there were too many speakers. I am a Global Studies Specialist at Frost Lake Magnet School in the St. Paul Public School system. The basic flow of social studies as follows is a good way to build knowledge: K-self, Grade 1 - Family, Grade 2 - Community, Grade 3 - City, Grade 4, State, Grade 5 - United States, Grade 6, World History. The way the standards are presently written, they do not connect, they are not coherent, and they are not age level appropriate. They seem to be a -mish-mash of topics. I believe we need to integrate global education, and global awareness into our standards. In St. Paul, we have the second largest Hmong population in the United States. Sometimes, students of other races fight the Hmong because they have not been taught their contributions to our war in Vietnam. It would make sense to add some global components to our state standards that "show-off" the rich, unique ethnic groups of people that live here, whether they are Hmong, Latino, Somali, Ethiopian, etc. I remember back to the old days when Minnesota in the World, and the World in Minnesota was taught in state social studies classrooms. I also remember Buckminster Fuller's world geography map that is wonderful. I would love to help narrow these standards down. I applied to the committee but was rejected. I believe we need more urban representation on this next draft. Thank you.

What are the assessments for the Social Studies standards. They are set up to be grade specific. Does that mean that each year we will administer an assessment to see if they have met the standard? Or are they getting a big test their senior year?

we do not have curriculum to supprt these standards. we just spent 100,000 in new s.s curriculum last year. gr. 2
these standards seem very over zealous also.

I heard that the state is using Battle hymn of the Republic in the standards for fifth graders. Do the officials believe that Battle Hymn is a good representation of American Ideals, since that is how it is being used for the standard, or do they wish to use the song as an example for students to learn from? In other words, do officials expect children to believe and demonstrate the ideas of the song, or do they wish the children to simply learn and be able to analyze them?

First grade U>S> History: First graders do not have enough background to understand the concepts of migration and colonization of the U.S.also the interaction of Native Americans and settlers would be hard as they don't have a good concept of who they are yet. First grade World history: First graders have a hard time with what is a country, state and town. It would be really hard to discuss ancient civilizations of the world. They don't have any idea about Greece and Egypt. We would be better teaching about our country and its symbols. The talking about our neighbor countries, Canada and Mexico. They could learn about the East Coast and the West coast and the Oceans.The Exploring through out the world would also be beyond their grasp. I have taught first grade for over twenty years and this has not ever been in the curriculum. thanks

The standards for the primary students are not developmentally appropriate. Children need to build a base from their own life before you can expect them to understand past cultures or wider areas. Please rethink those benchmarks!

Teaching 7 and 8 year olds about Persia, India, China and Japan when they need to first understand their own part of the world first is developmentally inappropriate.

As a fifth grade teacher for 15 years, I am very concerned with the broad range of topics included in the new social studies standards. If we did nothing but teach Social Studies in fifth grade, I don't believe I could cover all of this content area. I am also very concerned about where we would find proper materials to even cover all of these areas??? Who publishes books like this? These go way off the traditional topics covered in the grade levels, especially the elementary grades.

Also, where is the money going to come from to purchase new materials to cover these new standards???

If we are supposed to leave no child behind in Math, Reading, and Writing... then why are you trying to tie up our hands in the younger grades with such outrageous standards.

I was part of the pilot site in my school district for the Profile of Learning. Our district had 10+ years to work on and get those standards in place. I believe our district did an incredible job of making the assessments real and authentic. I did not like all of the double grading and the time consuming paperwork that took me away from planning time for my students, but I did like the assessments that we created.

Slow down. Why can't we work on getting the reading, writing and math scores up for our students before all of these other standards are heaped upon us.

We need to give our elementary teachers more time to teach reading, writing and arithmetic.

I attended the forum at Central High School last night. I was quite impressed with the number of people who attended. I was also moved by the many concerns people shared for both the proposed Social Studies and Science standards. If the committees who are working on these standards were listening at all, it had to be clear to them that they still have a lot of work to do. If possible, I intend to go to additional meetings. Thank you for having them. I agree with the people in attendance that encouraged more of these meetings to be held in Minneapolis and the Western Suburbs where none are presently scheduled. Please do not rush to judgement. Take your time. Your work is important.

Thanks,

We need to give our elementary teachers more time to teach reading, writing and arithmetic. Third graders do not need to know and understand the motivations, obstacles, and accomplishments of the Spanish, French, Portuguese and English Explorations.

My fifth graders, certainly do not need to be able to describe a "rebirth" of ideas from ancient Greece and Rome through the transmission from Arabic and Byzantine civilizations. Who wrote this stuff???

They do however, need time with me to learn how to read, construct well written multiple paragraph essays, and learn their math facts.

These standards are absolutely ridiculous.

It would be interesting to me to know who wrote these, and how they expect elementary teachers to present, U.S. history, World History, Economics, Government and Citizenship, and Geography all in one school year. You can't do justice to any of it. These standards simply cannot be approved.

I feel that these standards are way out of line for a third grade level! Some of this seems to me should be at a high school level or at the least higher elementary. Way to much to expect from a third grader.

I am very impressed with the Social Studies standards. They are clear, logical and are built upon each year. The Civics standards are great because at this point in time they haven't been learning much about why and how this country was founded and know none of the important contributors to the founding of our great country. It is good to put some requirements to learning about economics as well. These have been absent in recent years.

the civics standards are atrocious!!

I am concerned about the western civilization focus of the SS standards especially at the 9-12 level; human and cultural geography are given short shrift in this global era this is a disservice to our young citizens. In addition, the proposed standards are very chronologically-oriented, and so name- and date- specific by grade level that finding curricular support (textbooks, etc.) will be difficult and costly. The current configuration will force realignment in many K-8 programs. Specific examples required ("including but not limited to...") are frequently not representative of the scope of the curriculum. At the 9-12 level, the seat-time graduation requirements do not align well with the content standards; the World History content would be disastrous to deliver in a one-semester class. The standards are broad and students would achieve only surface understanding the content. While the idea of building on core standards through the grades makes sense philosophically, it is very constrictive and students often recognize the redundancies. Coverage of governmental processes at the 9-12 level (e.g., how a bill becomes a law, Supreme Court landmark cases, state, and local government) is lacking. Finally, the exclusion of any social sciences (specifically sociology and psychology) in the standards or as electives is detrimental to the social studies as a discipline and leaves students with a narrow view of their world.

Please remember that social studies should be taught by a teacher who is not only trained in History, but also geography. It is also important that college courses in geography be taught by a geographer, not someone who has been trained in sociology or anthropology. Being able to locate a country and explain its physical geography is as important to understanding its geopolitical significance in the world as having an understanding of its history or culture. Just simply being able to locate a country on a world map is a task most high school and college graduates are unable to do and we send these students out as voters to decide about democratic issues in a complex world. I was asked to train social studies teachers who were being sent out as teachers who had fewer courses in college geography than they were responsible to teach in high school. Thank You.

Standards are all over. Children need continuity--not jumping all over history from this to that!

Looking at the World History Standards I have concerns. How can a teacher be expected to cover 5000+ years of world history in a semester? They don't even do that in college classes. Can we please use some common sense.

My concerns are on the 3rd grade standards that my child has just brought home from school. After looking over the benchmarks, I am wondering if these standards weren't meant for an 18 year old; not an 8 or 9 year old child. Perhaps reviewing these subjects in a general manner would be fine, but to actually be tested and graded on them may be a drastic measure. Please relook some of these areas and take into consideration the age of the children this will affect. Thank you for your time.

There is a political agenda in many of the benchmarks. Educators should beware of political correctness, conservative as well as liberal.

I find the content of the standards disconnected and all over the board. The world history standards are vastly different than our school and districts current curriculum. For example, grade three covers colonization, prehistory to 1000 BC, 1000-500 AD, traits of good citizens, maps and globes, and various geography and economics standards. I share the grade three items because I am in a building with grade three however I have heard this same concern from multiple grades. How do you anticipate districts will fund the costs of new materials given these differences and the projection of no new dollars?

As social studies is generally organized on a course type structure, it makes sense to me to align the standards that way also, instead of following a spiraling of topics through several grade levels. Minnesota history, geography, economics, and political science should be taught in a Minnesota course. Similarly American history, economics, geography, and political science should be taught in a course on the U. S. World history should be a separate course and include world economics, political science, governments, and geography. It makes sense to start locally in the lower grades and expand globally as students proceed through middle school and high school.

I am also concerned that the middle school standards are developmentally inappropriate for 12-14 year olds.

Realigning curriculum to accommodate the new standards will require a large investment in teacher retraining, and materials for updating existing curricula.

World History-Sub Strand B-Third graders have no concept of Ancient Roman and origins for Buddhism, Christianity etc. Way over their head. Let's stick to U.S History where it makes more sense to them. Content a mile wide and an inch deep makes NO sense.

I believe more updated materials on American Indian is needed

There is absolutely no way that kindergarten teachers can include even a fraction of these standards with 1/2 day kindergarten. If we need to teach all of these areas, we absolutely need to have state supported and mandated all day every day kindergarten. Many of the standards are not developmentally appropriate for 5 year old children.

I represent the Twin Cities Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. I chair the Education Committee. I am a retired teacher and a former internee of a World War II internment camp. Representatives of our organization and the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans want to express our concern that the Japanese American internment experience during World War II was not included anywhere in this first draft of the Social Studies standards. The Commissioner's opening remarks that this was an oversight, and that it will be corrected encourages us.

For too many years, this chapter in American history has been all but ignored by the textbooks our students are using. Therefore others like myself with first-hand experience have made it our mission to go out and speak to classrooms on this topic.

As you know, some 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry (2/3 who were American citizens) lost their civil rights and were placed in American prison camps during World War

II. It is important for students to study not only the manner in which this decision was made, but also to know why such a gross violation of constitutional rights was sanctioned by the highest levels of government so that something like this will never happen again.

The Japanese American experience encompasses a wide range of subtopics, including, but not limited to, World War II American History, the role of the Nisei soldier in the 442nd regimental combat team and the 100th infantry battalion (which was the most decorated unit in all of WWII), diversity and racism issues, and the violations of the Bill of Rights.

Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in Minnesota, and it is important for that reason to include more information about Asian American history in the social studies standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

U.S. History (9-12)

The proposed Sub-Strands cover too much material to be dealt with in a meaningful way within one academic year. Ideally on the Senior High level, instruction should begin on "F. Era 6" World Wars and the Emergence of Modern America, 1900-1930s. In this way, in depth instruction could focus on meeting the stated "Benchmarks". Middle Schools should cover "Pre-Colonial America through "E. Era 5" and the Senior High level should begin with "F. Era 6" and extend through "I. Era 9: Comtemporary America, 1980-present". As a Social Studies teacher for over 30 years, this would make the most sense. As it is now, I barely make to the Reagan presidency before the end of the year. Simply, to better educate students in the area of U.S. History, reduce the time period to be taught in a year's course. The proposed Standards and Benchmarks as they are stated now, cover too much material for the students to understand at any appreciable depth.

These standards are too much!! It's great to have parents and teachers working on these but parents do not know how much time is needed to totally have kids understand concepts. Too many areas are covered in each grade level. These standards would force teachers to teach to the test forgetting what we strived for: critical thinking, creativity.... I thought we found out already that learning is not memorizing a lot of facts for a test and then forgetting them. Come on Minnesota, you can do better than this!!

As a High School student in the Minneapolis Public Schools, these standards affect my learning. I think that these standards tell only one side of each story, history belongs to the winner. As you know, there is always more than one side to each story, why don't we hear that? Also I believe that we as students have to learn this stuff, so why don't we get some kind of say in what we learn? None of our teachers are involved in these conferences or whatever, none of my teachers have even heard of these names on this list of people who make up our standards. how can students get more involved?

In reference to the 4th grade Social Studies proposed objectives, I feel that the proposed World History strands will be very hard to integrate into the other U.S. History, Government and Citizenship, Geography, and Economics strands. The proposed World History strands do not fit or tie in with any of the other proposed strands. They are from a completely different time period and do not link in any way with the other proposed strands.

I have reviewed the social studies standards for 3rd grade. They are not age and developmentally appropriate.

My grandson has the same information in his history book and he is in 7th grade. Let's do them over...I am willing to help!

Many of the first grade social studies benchmarks do not appear to be developmentally appropriate.

First graders tend to think concretely and need to see, touch and experience to understand ideas. Most of the standards and benchmarks could be introduced; however the list should be refined and thought given to what six and seven year olds are really able to master.

The standards that are placed for the elementary level are extremely ridiculous. Much of the material that we are suppose to focus on in that particular grade level is mentioned atleast 4 grade levels higher. Example: the fourth grade standards are not mentioned in the 4th grade books, they are in the 9th grade books. The people thinking about these standards need to have text book series next to them and make sure that the questions are grade appropriate. Please remember, we are here to help, teach and make our children successful in the future.

This is my 33rd year as a history teacher (Gr. 7) in Buffalo.

Although I find many things in the proposed standards to be important to a history curriculum and to an understanding of the development of the American system, my overall observation is that there are far too many standards (74 by my count, just for a 7th grade program) and they do not have any priority ranking. My other general comment is that they are almost all far too difficult for most 7th graders to understand. For example, I don't believe that a 7th grader needs to understand the Magna Carta in order to understand the basic reasons behind the Declaration of Independence.

Thirdly, various disciplines should not be integrated so specifically into the 7th grade history program. The Economics component should be removed (far too difficult) and the Geography, Government, and Minnesota History portions should be dramatically reduced, and probably eliminated. Historical themes based on age appropriateness, rather than have them dictated as something that must be covered by state mandate, regardless of the ability of the students.

If they are to be history standards, write them as such. Namely, factual information that students need to cover in a Grade 7 history program, not so much emphasis on non historical things and on less significant portions of a broader picture.

On the positive side, I'm glad to see that the state is saying that students in a middle school history program have to be able to know/understand basic facts about our country rather than just draw a poster, or create a picture representing the Civil War, for example. Students need to know things about the subject being studied. You're just asking them to know far too much--their little 12 year old brains can't hold it all.

Thank you for your time.

The social studies standards do not align within the grade levels. The world, country, state and local levels are completely unrelated. Are we setting our students up for success by expecting them to conceptualize so many topics that a fourth or fifth grader would have a difficult time grasping? Many 9th grade students would be unable to succeed if they were given the test for the fourth and fifth grade students. How are teachers supposed to find curriculum (and the money to purchase curriculum) to cover the range of topics listed. I believe it would benefit the students and set them up for success if we chunked the topics together in a more organized fashion that fit the developmental level of the child. (eg. Kindergarten = Focus on the local level, Fourth grade = Focus on the states within the U.S., Fifth grade = Focus on U.S. History, Sixth grade = Focus on continents, etc.) If we are creating standards that will set our students up for success, we will have a more positive response to the educational expectations from students, parents, teachers, and the community. By finding something that seems appropriate to everyone, we could save a lot of money by embedding the standards for several years rather than pouring money into programs that will become abandoned due to the unrealistic expectations.

Grade 3..page 7//benchmark A. Era 1

This material was in the 5th and 6th grade
and was thrown away about 10 years +
ago because some of the information was
incorrect.

On page 11..Era 3 and 4.

In 1954 I learned this knowledge to pass
the 8th grade test to go to High School.

In 1979 My son learned it in 8th grade.

In 2003 my grandson learned it in 7th grade. Now you want it lowered to 4th grade. Dial 1-800-U FAIL!

Let do these better!

In regard to the social studies standards:

I am a teacher of 2nd grade students, trying to teach about maps, history, changes in our country, and more! The standards I have read involve the students to come to us knowing more than they can possibly know. Students should be expected to know and understand what a map is and why we need them as well as how to follow a map key and identify different items on a map, they should not be expected to go as far as the standards take them. I would not be able to concentrate on the basics of reading and writing if that happens. Your standards do not take into consideration the age and abilities of our students. We want them to be challenged, but they are only 8 years old!

The U.S. History standard is enormous in its scope and sequence. As is, it begins with pre-colonial America and marches through to the present (specified in the standard as

1980). As a result of the magnitude of this standard, the core elements of a study of US History will effectively be reduced to the rote memorization of a series of facts, dates, names and places. There will be little time left to weave connections and examine the essential lessons of history because teachers will be too busy checking off items from the "laundry list" of benchmarks identified as important to know.

Students need to be engaged in a study of the key events that have shaped their world - this involves going beyond the surface level of "regurgitating information" to analyzing cause and effect, identifying trends and relating the information learned to the present. For example, a study of the Boston Tea party is critical in understanding the events leading up to the Revolutionary war. However, it is incomplete if one fails to connect this historical event to the present - after all, the Boston tea party was in effect a protest against a major corporation and there are important lessons to be learned for today in the examination of this historical event. The current draft leaves little opportunity (time) for these important connections to be made. A further examination of the Benchmarks leaves one with no doubt that our students will no longer be asked to think. They will instead be asked to list, to identify, to recognize, to explain...none of which rate very high on Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition. Translation for those unfamiliar with Bloom's work - regurgitate, don't think.

America does not need a generation whose educational experience will be limited to preparing for success at "Trivial Pursuit" or "Jeopardy" or "Who Wants to be a Millionaire". We need to educate our young people to understand their history, to summarize information, to make judgements about the past in order to shape our collective future as a nation.

That said, the US History standard is a comprehensive list of the white European male perspective...Does anybody else see a problem with that? Minimal reference is given to the role of Native Americans, Blacks or Women in the shaping of our nation's history and there is a complete oversight of the role of Asian and Hispanic Americans. In contrast, it appears as if anything to do with the "traditional white, male, Euro-centric view" has been painstakingly prescribed in benchmark after benchmark.

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The world history standard is also unrealistic in its scope - the thought that it might even be possible to do justice to the history of the world starting with pre-history (1000 BC) and ending with Post World War II is ludicrous. Currently world history teachers find it difficult enough to get through 1000 years of history in one year or semester. To think that a teacher would now be expected to "cover" 2000 years plus (with fewer resources, increased class sizes and in effect less time) is unreasonable.

Another disappointing fact with the World History Standard is its emphasis on western thoughts and contributions. Maybe we should rename this Strand "European

History"...the description would be more accurate. The role of women is significantly under-represented and the benchmarks are slanted in fully covering European history while "adding on" content from other areas of the world. In fact, many of the events of importance to world are to be addressed as to their impact on the West. There are no women mentioned, no specific mention of Canada or Mexico, South America seems not to exist, nor is there a mention of Apartheid. There is also a lot of redundancy between the World History and the Geography standard as many of the benchmarks listed in World History include reference to place, location and environmental impacts of a region.

Students will be able to perform on standardized tests, but will they be able to think? To reason? To argue? To formulate positions? To memorize a list of facts does not require much on the cognitive scale – access to the information, time to memorize and repetition. Businesses are not looking to hire someone who is good at fact/recall, who was successful in choosing (a) over (d).

From several sources, (including members from the actual committees who drafted the standards) I have been told that the groups did not actually look at the national content standards available for these areas (the national standards were drafted by leading experts in the social studies). Rather they relied on and were supplied with copies of state standards from around the nation. As an educator, I am concerned that some of the most troubled states in education (states whose students perform at the bottom on national and standardized tests) were selected to serve as models for the MN standards. I also have it on good authority that some of the committees doing the work were committees of 2 or 3, hardly the voice of the people.

Having read each standard and each benchmark for 9 – 12 social studies, it is also apparent that little dialogue took place between the different committees. The benchmarks are redundant. For example, students will study the Aztec and Incas in World and US History. They will also study the enlightenment philosophers in World History, American History, as well as Government. The list goes on...

I am concerned that the changes proposed to school curriculums (the purchase of materials to address the content, the hours necessary for rewriting curriculum, creating new tests, for training...) are for the most part unfunded by the state. This causes additional stress on school budgets and school staff that are working overtime to meet the needs of their student populations and again facing significant budget short-falls for the coming year.

While I agree that the Geography standard is important, the 9-12 version does not do what it is supposed to do - give students a greater understanding of the world in which they live. The geography standard as written is basically a compilation of benchmarks that were written into the World History, US History and Economic standards. It also borrows heavily from the geography version at the middle school level. There is little emphasis on cultural geography and a significant part of the benchmarks listed focus instead on the environment, landforms, climate, and temperature.

Another question I have after reading the skills section of the Geography standard is that students are going to be expected to know how to use GPS and GIS systems. Who is going to provide this technology to the schools so schools can meet the specifications of the standards?

I have high expectations for my senior high school students. I also believe that our students are capable of thinking deeply and critically about important issues and they should not be relegated to learning the same information over and over and over in different packages. Is the committee worried that students won't understand the facts the first time around? Is that the reason for so much repetition?

The Civics and Government standard is disappointing as it mostly centers on the framing of the ideas and beliefs behind the Constitution, and then a study of comparative governments including giving equal billing to feudalism in the benchmarks. It does not specify (other than separation of powers, checks and balances) a study of the three branches of government, how a bill becomes a law, the role of committees in making decisions, the Constitutional requirements for holding office. It ignores local governments completely and hardly mentions state governments.

Politicians have been telling educators for decades to do more with fewer resources...that less is more. Please take your own advice. Provide a broad framework to schools so they can "hit the same target" but don't prescribe the tools, training, techniques or grid to use. Allow schools the flexibility to reach all students. Allow teachers the power to do what they do best, to teach each student. Don't prescribe a square education for a round student.

The standards read like a checklist of facts to memorize much of which is pretty irrelevant. I am wondering how many legislators and CEO's could correctly identify the items

listed in this standard. I am wondering how the president himself would do. The list is far too long and filled with far too many things that are simply irrelevant to most people's lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. As a general matter, I think it is far more important to develop critical thinking skills in the social sciences than rote memorization of facts, such as specific Civil War Battles. Critical thinking skills are far more important as preparation for citizenship. To the extent that specific facts are emphasized, care should be taken to ensure that there is not an ideological slant embedded in the standards.

I have two specific standards. The significance of the first amendment should be emphasized much more, and should be introduced far earlier. I do not see it expressly treated until the seventh grade. Children much younger can understand the concepts involved, and should be taught the importance of the first amendment at an early age.

There is far too much emphasis on "national symbols." Other things are way more important.

The rule of law should be discussed at an earlier age. The related concept of judicial independence and the role of the judiciary in a free country should be discussed. These concepts are key to good citizenship.

More

Grade 2 History: US History Strand IA:

The first benchmark is good, but I would choose, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, or Rosa Parks over Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone.

Strand IB: Second graders should have some exposure to history and be able to name some historic events, but this strand is way beyond what should be expected of this age group. Learning about history at this age will give children the ability to reach those benchmarks at an older age. I consider all 3 benchmarks to be beyond a second grade level.

World History: Strand II A: The first benchmark is good. The second is developmentally inappropriate.

Strand II B: The first benchmark is workable. The second and third benchmarks give good guidelines for teaching, but should not be assessed at this age.

Time: Strand III: EXCELLENT!

Social Studies:

Strand IA is good

Strand IB should just be exposure, not a benchmark. These concepts are not appropriate for most 7 and 8 year olds.

Strand IC is Great!

II A:

The first benchmark is good.

The second benchmark should just say, "Students should know their home address, including city, state, county and continent.

The third and 4th benchmarks are OK.

IIB: Eliminate "Prime Meridian."

Eliminate benchmark 4.

The rest is good.

IIC: Eliminate the last benchmark.

IID:

Change "world" to "US" on the first benchmark.

Eliminate the 4th benchmark - too complex.

I really like the last benchmark.

Economics IIIA: The last 3 benchmarks are excellent. The first is too complex. Just naming natural resources and ways to conserve them would be better.

Economics IIIB: Save only the 3rd benchmark. The other two are developmentally inappropriate! At the risk of exposing my ignorance, what is "opportunity cost?"

I wonder if students will be taught that the Pledge of Allegiance originally did not have the words "under God".

Will you be teaching that early settlers came to America to escape state sponsored religions?

There are some age-appropriateness problems for the K-4th grades. I agree that Reagan SHOULD be emphasized in the demise (and prevention) of communism, since that was Reagan's #1 priority compared to all other Presidents. That is FACT!

These standards could alternately be called, "Everything I Would Ever Like to Learn About Social Studies in My Life!"

In order for the standards to be practical they need to be flexible. The middle school standards addressed in the publication should be allowed to be taught where the department sees fit. Curriculum taught in 6th may cover grade 8 strands. Districts should be able to approve coverage of the strands and they should not be grade specific.

Also, within the 8th grade strand, many districts do not use a full survey textbook on American History. Thus, covering strands related to the 1870's- present is not practical. This would force too much content and not enough in depth study.

The standards may look very impressive to an outsider, but they look very unrealistic from a teaching perspective. Please keep in mind the fact that we have many subject areas to teach in a very limited amount of time! Also, please keep in mind the fact that my third grade students are 8 and 9 years old. The standards/benchmarks seem unrealistic for that age level.

The social studies standard benchmarks for K-8 do not seem appropriately placed for the cognitive development of the students. They ask students to understand abstract concepts for which brain studies indicate they are not able to attain at the age levels expressed in the benchmarks. Aside from the advanced concepts they are expected to "know" - there is little rigor in what they are to "do" with the immense amount of data contained in the benchmarks. The benchmarks read like a list of facts that might be found in an out of date textbook. They seem to reflect an indoctrination approach to learning American "nationalism" rather than American history in a complex and global context. Students in America are diverse and culturally savvy and will recognize omissions in themes such as; the historical struggle for equal rights, which is still part of the reality of America in which they live. The social studies education that my children received in the Minnesota public schools prepared them for college by teaching them how to think critically about historical themes and issues, recognize bias, apply research methods and communicate their learning through reading, writing and speaking. Please utilize the wealth of research available that promotes authentic teaching and learning with multiple perspectives rather than simplifying the complex historical trends, issues and events of the past with a one-sided view and indoctrination of facts.

The world history requirement should be 2 credits. The contents of the world history standard cannot be taught in a one credit class. Some schools, albeit the minority, are on a trimester system which gives 12 weeks to the study. Two credits should be required.

What does "know and understand" really mean? This term is used frequently.

There needs to be a requirement for behavioral sciences -either psych or soc

Benchmark: "Students will know how diverse native and immigrant peoples have contributed to American history." The concept of time is limited for young children, thus affecting their ability yet to understand how "peoples have contributed to American history."

Benchmark: "Students will become aware that people have moved and explored through the world." Children of this age don't understand the concept.

Benchmarks for Concepts of Time (suggested changes):

Students will identify and order the days of the week and the seasons of the year. (take out months)

Students will become aware of the concepts of time including past, present and future.

Eliminate "Students will recognize that current events continue to shape history." Inappropriate for the age of the students.

Government and Citizenship:

Change wording so that it's more appropriate for the age of the kindergartners. Also, take out "national anthem" - very difficult for young children.

Geography (Maps and Globes): suggested change - "Students will use maps and globes to create awareness of places referenced in stories and real-life situations.

Eliminate "Students will be able to locate their town on a simple state map." too early - they need to learn the concept of map first.

I browsed the proposed standards and, although I am not a professional educator (I am the parent of two children in public schools), my first reactions were:

These standards are a "mile wide and an inch deep". My daughter (in high school) becomes a more powerful analyst when she is studying one topic or period of history in depth, not to mention that she enjoys the class so much more when there is engaging intellectual discussion, not boring lectures. Memorizing dates and names will never get a student to a more sophisticated level of thinking. I grew up with that kind of social studies class (rote memorization) and I hated it. I studied for the tests, took them, and then erased the data from my mind. I wouldn't remember many of the dates and names if you asked me today. But it doesn't matter much because I can look them up on the Internet anytime I need them. I'm finally able to enjoy learning about history as an adult because it is on my terms (no more rote memorization). Give the students some credit. They are capable of a higher level of analysis and deeper understanding of topics than you are asking of them. Forget about writing standards that are based on your need to create a multiple choice exam to satisfy the politicians. We need to encourage a new generation of thinking people, not automatons.

I strongly object to the use of the abbreviations B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (Latin for in the year of our Lord). They make assumptions about the religious make up of society that are not true. B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era) are better.

I am a history professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I live in Minneapolis, however. I hope that the standards reflect a balance between "learning the facts" and using them in an analytical way. It is a fruitless debate as to which aspect of student learning is more important. Students cannot do any analysis if they don't have some basic historical knowledge. And that knowledge doesn't do students any good if they cannot use it in a critical manner. For example, I cannot teach the social history of World War One, and the impact it had on women's rights, if they don't know when or what it was. There is a basic historical vocabulary that all students should know.

It appears that students will learn a little about everything, which usually translates to not much of anything. To expect quality learning when so many different areas are to be covered in 1 grade level is counterproductive, not to mention there are no good text books that cover such a broad range of topics. Our district spent about \$250,000 2 years ago to implement a new K-12 social studies curriculum starting last year. Should that now be discarded, or do we simply tear out pages from the various books and pass them along to the new grade level that covers a particular topic? I know we can't expect more money, because the surplus we had was returned to taxpayers. I expect that legislators will follow the usual pattern and mandate (but underfund) these changes and again make it look like the school district is spending over their heads...when in fact they are in over their heads. Our district has a very clear scope and sequence, new materials to provide wonderful lessons and activities, and will meet all of the standards...just not as they are currently suggested for the coming years. Please allow our educators to do what they are hired & trained to do...people who aren't in the classroom shouldn't be controlling what happens there just like educators wouldn't think of telling a business person how to be successful.

As an Scholar/Activist I am particularly troubled by the Social Science Standards. While there are numerous areas of concern, I would like to highlight those which are the most problematic. To this end, I am DEEPHY troubled by the ways in which the "Discovery of America" is being put forth as an historically accurate portrayal of an event which was really not an act of discovery at all--but was rather an accidental bumping into of a land mass, followed by the death, destruction and genocide of our nation's original inhabitants. Further, the fact that Thanksgiving is being taught as a holiday to celebrate is terribly depressing and smacks of the complete and total disregard these standards have for Indigenous Peoples let alone all peoples of color who have been historically marginalized. It is NOT appropriate to think that learning about SQUANTO somehow means we are teaching

about Native History. For those of us who have dedicated our lives and professions to empowering people of color, working to dismantle racism and deal with the complete and total oppressive nature of white privilege that is ever present and (largely ignored) in our school systems and curriculums--these standards just add fuel to our fire. This cannot be allowed to pass as democratic education!

Age inappropriateness in the standards starts in first grade, when the discussion of the concept of "scarcity" in economics begins followed in second grade by "opportunity costs."

The standards aren't age appropriate, do not reflect current standards in the state and do not often even make much sense. They seem more about memorization than inquiry or thinking. They seem intent on creating a docile citizenry more likely to recall the date of a battle than the reason the battle was fought.

Where's President Johnson, who helped pass the most significant civil rights legislation of the 20th century? Why is the Roman Empire covered twice – at length – while the British Empire, which has had a much greater impact on the modern world than the Roman Empire.

Why is Reagan credited with freeing Eastern Europe? The role of economic globalization gets short shrift. Unions aren't mentioned. Neither are corporations, not even in high school.

What's the point of learning a poorly written song such as "You're a Grand Old Flag" when no one even sings it anymore.

Some other suggestions.

- * Get real on the early grades. Try economics children understand. ,
- * There's too much on the Civil War.
- * Reduce the standards to two or three a semester. Einstein said "Imagination is more important than knowledge."
- * Talk more about now, and link history together.
- * Get LBJ in there, and Kennedy, Humphrey and Carter, and presidents with which children can talk about with their parents and grandparents. Reagan did not free Eastern Europe and remove that link.
- * Get deeper into institutions such as the Supreme Court and its impact on American life. Courts are important yet the standards don't really address them in any significant way that I found.

Book publishers do not have materials that cover the world history information

Even if materials could be found at the appropriate levels for all the expectations, too costly. No district has this kind of money. In order to WRITE curricular materials, it would also take more time and money than any district has. Developmentally, children are not ready for the world history concepts, let alone the benchmarks. Information is disconnected, random, fact-based. The substrands, standards, & benchmarks don't match or make sense. No horizontal or vertical alignment. Specific example: 5th grade U.S. history benchmark: "know and understand how the issues of states' rights and slavery increased sectional tensions" leading to the Civil War. 5th grade world history benchmark: "describe the importance of Islamic occupation of Spain and Eastern Europe, including Russia" between 1000 A.D. and 1500 A.D. No thematic or chronological connections to each other. Also no connections to benchmarks in the other strands. Too much information. Research: mile-wide/inch-deep instruction does not lead to student achievement. Not enough time to spend creating situations where the children will connect to information, enhancing meaning and retention. Another problem: teachers, especially elementary, do not have social studies knowledge in all areas required, especially world history. Tested standards in reading, writing, and math already take priority. Not enough TIME for this much social studies content. Example: Number of benchmarks per grade: K:25, 1:41, 2:47, 3:66, 4:57, 5:66, 6:65 Total for Elementary: 367 benchmarks for social studies ALONE.

As a second grade teacher I am concerned with the amount of benchmarks that I would need to get to and whether these concepts are too difficult for a 7 or 8 year old child to understand. Many we already cover but there are quite a few new ones as well. Perhaps the number of benchmarks could be cut down to a more reasonable number? I do not see how I could cover what students need to know for the benchmarks and also have enough time to make sure all of my students are making good progress in math, writing and most importantly reading! Getting a good solid reading base is more important than reaching over 100 social studies benchmarks. PLEASE cut down the number!!!

How are alternative options provided for students to obtain the standards if standards are linked to a specific course for credit? Many of the proposed Economic standards are actually components of Business and Marketing Programs. So, does allow for Business and Marketing Instructors to issue credit for economics? Or, is there a licensure issue?

Please leave only U.S. History in 7th grade. Geography, government, economics can be better covered in greater detail at a later grade level. Some of the basics (in those subjects) should already be embedded into U.S. History.

Some schools offer history in 7th with Geography in 8th. Others offer geography in 7th and U.S. History in 8th. Leave that up to local control and create standards that are 6-8, much like you 9-12 Social Studies.

I don't have too many problems with the individual standards, but you've got MN History, Geography, U.S. History, and other classes mixed into each grade. I taught that type of class before, and it was an injustice to the students. So many varied topics that you couldn't do justice to any of them. Let each grade focus on one subject, and work from there, Allow students to master the information, concepts and ideas before taking them into another different topic.

It is all nice and good that history from the beginnings til 1760 are taught in 3rd grade, but shouldn't it be included in 7th grade, rather than giving students a three year break before resuming American History at 1760? Students mature a lot between 3rd and 7th grades, and are more ready for a deeper study of American prehistory.. Also, it may be more appropriate to carry American History in 7th grade up to 1900. There's gotten to be quite a volume of history since 1900. Carrying 7th grade up to 1900, would allow for a more in depth coverage of the 20th Century in 8th, or a later grade.

Minnesota History belongs in the 6th grade.

I am wondering if we have considered enough the developmental levels of the children we are expecting to achieve these standards. From what I have learned, primary age students can conceptualize only their immediate community and time. Only after a certain developmental level can they even conceptualize history or their state or country. I believe that there needs to be more connection among the grades and among the standards within each grade. For example, maybe first grade focuses primarily on family structure and their immediate surroundings (ie -their classroom). As they progress to 2nd grade, they focus on communities and map the community where they live and the history of that place. As they get older they focus on their state's geography, history etc. Let's make sure there is a progression from the year before.

I am disappointed with the traditional nature of the standards, focusing so much on American ideals, when our country has so much diversity. Why are we focusing on so many American holidays when students should be learning about several holidays celebrated throughout cultures. We need our students to see how different people celebrate in different ways. There is way too much emphasis on American traditions and the material is way too advanced for elementary students. Let's make sure we look more at developmental levels of the students. Also, I think the verbs used should be much more specific. Instead of "understand" say "student will be able to explain" or "differentiate." Look at Wisconsin standards for samples. The terms need to be more specific so that we know exactly what we are expecting from each level.

I support the idea of requiring our youth to attend educational institutions until they reach adulthood. I also support the idea of mandating curricula within those institutions that require the students to actively research and study the founding documents of the United States of America, both nationally and locally, so that they will be prepared to make decisions for themselves on the important issues they will face as adults.

Third Grade covers citizenship and community. We have approximately 2 hours a week of classroom time for social studies. There is no way that we are able to cover Precolonial America, prehistory to 1000 BC. We do not discuss Classical civilizations 1000BC to 500 AD. We are able to locate our community on a map as well as our state and continent. We know our rights, privileges and responsibilities of citizens. We know about patriotism, and essential map and globe skills. These are third graders learning how to read, this working draft is the most ridiculous draft I've ever seen. There isn't a book in the country that is published to teach all of these strands in one year.

I find the proposed standards to contain so much detail as to make them unworkable. Teachers asked to teach to the benchmarks will have their hands tied with respect to choice of curriculum. They necessarily will focus their teaching on breadth of coverage of topics and material at the expense of depth of study. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate thinking into a curriculum that is overburdened with detail.

The study of history and the social sciences is best done when young people recognize these disciplines for what they are; hotbeds of controversy about knowledge and how we

understand our world. Young people can and should be engaged in that controversy as they develop skills of understanding value of evidence, logical argument, etc. However, the way the standards are written with specific content selected as benchmarks will leave little time or inclination for students to do that. The benchmarks are presented as factual when in many cases there is controversy surrounding the identified event and people (i.e. the role of Pres. Reagan in the end of the Cold War). We don't want our young people to only accept information as fact but to analyze situations, synthesize diverse views and evaluate information to come to reasoned conclusions.

Nowhere do these standards suggest that students and teachers engage themselves as social scientists or historians. The National Standards for United States History (1994) called for students to think like historians in terms of 1) chronological thinking, 2) historical comprehension, 3) historical analysis and interpretation, 4) historical research, and 5) historical issues analysis and decision making. Where do the proposed Minnesota standards challenge students to that type of high level thinking?

I suggest that the benchmarks be dropped and emphasis given to the standards themselves. This would make the presentation less ominous to students and teachers. It would give teaching professionals the necessary flexibility to create learning opportunities that they will best be able to determine will meet the standards. It would allow the professional teacher to act like a professional, as they make curricular choices while at the same time adhering to a set of content standards. I think it would release sufficient time for in-depth study.

The proposed standards seem to ignore the value of active learning and performance assessment. Most, indeed almost all, of the standards and benchmarks use the verbs understand or know. Where are students challenged to identify patterns, analyze systems, classify, compare, solve problems, investigate, make decisions, identify values and engage in other complex reasoning processes. No, the approach is to know or understand a proscribed set of facts and topics. We can do better.

Having expressed my concern about the proposed standards involving too much detail, I likewise am concerned about what is left out. The economics standards (high school) go into great depth into the discipline of economics. Yet, there is no discussion of unemployment (beyond the unemployment rate) nor poverty. We know that many of our students and their families live in poverty and many face unemployment or underemployment. To ignore this reality in the study of economics marginalizes the real challenges that many of our students face.

In looking at the middle school social studies standards, I found many of them to be way too advanced for even the brightest students.

Example- "Students will know and understand the relationship between the religious, social, and political ideas of the Great Awakening and the development of revolutionary fervor in western political thought." That example alone will set Minnesota's children up for failure. How many people from the committee would have trouble answering that? I would!

The most troublesome aspect of the middle school social studies standards is that it dictates what must be taught at each grade level, regardless of how well a school is doing with its current curriculum. At the very least, these standards should be broader standards that cover grades 6-8, not tied to a particular grade level.

To sum up my thoughts, the standards are too hard for middle school students. They should not dictate what must be taught at each grade level, rather what must be accomplished by the time they leave middle school. Lastly, if these standards dictate what must be taught and when, my days as a public education teacher will be numbered.

I would also like to comment on the locations of these Public Meetings on the standards. Why are there no meeting in the west-metro area? There are very few meetings scheduled in any twin cities metro area? Do you really want teacher feedback? Go to the schools!

I am confused by what is expected in the middle grades. Am I to understand that economics is to be taught in each of middle grades along with geography and history? If so, again teachers will be faced with trying to teach an overwhelming amount of concepts and ideas leaving inadequate time and energy to address thoughtful in-depth consideration

We live in a world marked by diversity and change. Students in social studies need to graduate from high school with a clear and comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of our diversity, global interdependence, increasing pace of change, persistent problems at home and abroad, and tolerance for difference and compassion for the condition of all people on the planet. When I look at the proposed Minnesota standards I can find detail here and there that addresses these dynamics. However, I can find much that only tangentially helps students come to a better understanding of the dynamics of the world around them.

Where in the standards do we challenge students to become active citizens, to actually participate in the democratic process? I suggest that you look back to the profile standards of Diverse Perspectives, US Citizenship, and Community Interaction to find ways to better engage our young people as part of the community. The proposed standard in US Government and Citizenship, "The student will understand the American political system and be prepared to participate" is far better addressed by the profile standards I identified than by the benchmarks associated with that standard, none of which actually prepare students for citizen action.

I challenge you to think bigger and at the same time think more concisely. Please write standards that will challenge our students to think reflectively, challenge claims of truth, and act to build stronger communities. Please give teaching professionals the opportunity to make curricular choices that will prepare our young people to leave school ready, able and willing to be engaged in our democracy. Please allow for in-depth study of controversy instead of broad coverage of facts. Let students become better aware of the human condition and help them find ways to improve it. Finally, please rewrite the document so that it is closer to five pages instead of 55 pages. In doing so you will allow your stakeholders (teachers, families, students, the public) to genuinely understand what is expected of our young learners and to set in motion the possibility that they may be met in a way that students demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to complete complex tasks.

Middle school standards:

The most troublesome aspect of the middle school social studies standards is that it dictates what must be taught at each grade level, regardless of how well a school is doing with its current curriculum. At the very least, these standards should be broader standards that cover grades 6-8, not tied to a particular grade level.

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Minnesota History standards are written well, but should not be limited to a particular grade level. Minnesota history is usually taught in one grade level, not a bit here and there in every level. Give middle school some more flexibility in when things can be taught. Also, Minnesota text books written by the history center, do not differentiate between Minnesota's Dakotah and Lakotah tribes

World history and geography are taught in 7th and 8th grade in my district. Why is there a little bit of everything at each grade level?

"Please focus on more limited areas in grades 6-8. We want a survey of U.S. History in grades 5-6 and a focus on geography in 7th and 8th grade.

I am a teacher and hold high expectations for my students, but the sixth grade government and citizenship standards are way out of grasp for the average sixth grader. I do not know many college graduates that could meet these standards. In addition, we don't teach civics at all in sixth grade. Sixth grade is Minnesota history and US history, Reconstruction to the Cold War in our district.

Geography and cultures are taught in seventh and eighth in our district.

Minnesota history is taught as a full course in 6th grade. Please don't spread it throughout all middle grades.

These do not read like seventh grade standards. They are very complex. They sound like objectives for a college class.

These standards are incomprehensible. So, now the state is going to dictate what subjects need to be taught and at what level? What happened flexibility and need to vary curriculums depending on population needs. Will we all have to buy the same textbook too? Is it true that Harcore press has already contacted to write the standards test? Guess we will all be teaching a canned curriculum if we accept this. This is unacceptable to me. More time needs to be spent developing these standards and getting classroom teachers input.

Middle school standards should be written like the high school standards (6-8). Standards should be met by the time they leave middle school, not mandated at each gradelevel. Please don't make each middle level grade teach a bit of everything.

I am, to say the least, EXTREMELY disturbed by the draft standards. The scope of these stards is SO unreasonable that I have to ask myself if the state is really serious or if this is some kind of joke. There are roughly 180 days in the school year. I counted up the number of benchmarks in US History and World History. I came up with 190. Lets assume that I have a semester class of US History and World History. Lets assume that I can bundle several of the benchmarks together. There is still NO way that all the benchmarks will be discussed in any real depth. I only have 180 days of school. That is assuming that I have EVERY class EVERY day with NO interuptions. This is not going to happen. There is no way to cover the benchmarks in anything less then a superficial manner. For example, how can the Department of Education expect me to discuss the benchmark located on page 48, third bullet down in the first box in any real depth? To discuss the leaders in Vietnam, China and the conflicts and revolutionary movements with any depth at all would require at LEAST a month. I had a whole class in college on this subject and that was simply brushing the surface. Lastly, the standards are totally flawed in the area of appropriateness for the age. For example, in kindergarten, according to the proposed benchmark on page one, first box, bullet one a kindergartener is suppose to know how diverse natives and immigrant people have contributed to American History. Has no one in Saint Paul been around a kindergartener? They can hardly grasp the concept that they live in a town and that there are other people around who are NOT their mom, dad and siblings. Most of my high school students would struggle with this benchmark. These proposed standards need to be thrown out and we need to start over again. I can not stress how strongly I feel in that these standards are totally unrealistic.

You must either think that all Minnesota children are WAY above average, or you haven't visited a school lately and your own memory of the capabilities of 4th and 5th graders are distorted. As an elementary teacher with over 30 years experience, our current 4th grade social studies areas of study are mainly geography and the regions of the United States. In 5th grade we study American History. Because of reading, math, spelling, science, handwriting(remember that?) phy ed., music, art, computer skills, library/research study, character education, health(drug education), we're lucky if we get through the whole U.S. in 4th, and past the Contitution in American History. These are way, way too many standards, and are awfully specific. When you "raise the bar" that much, you will cause people to have to lie. It just isn't possible to cover that much information in a way that kids really learn something. Let's be realistic so the whole thing doesn't go the way of the Profiles, or that people will have to lie.

1. As a social studies teacher, I appreciate some of the clear guidance given as to what should be taught and at what level.
2. As a teacher, parent, and proud American, I am quite satisfied with the content of the history and civics standards. We really do need to look at this great nation in a positive light. The emphasis on patriotism is very appreciated. We have an opportunity in Minnesota to really teach our next generation of the greatness of America. Let's do that instead of teaching the same old negative anti American attitudes that we have seen come and go since the 1960s.
3. I have some concerns about geography standards, especially those standards that seem to replace US Sovereignty with a "planet Earth" mindset. Regions seem to be a dominant theme, at the expense of national boundaries.
4. As a resident of northwestern Minnesota, I am slightly troubled that the nearest hearing for us was in Bemidji. Bemidji is a two hour drive for us, and to expect teachers to come out on a school night for a hearing two hours away is asking a lot.

Advanced Placement courses in social studies (U.S. History, European History, MicroEconomics, MacroEconomics, Government and Politics, US Government and Politics, Geography) need to be recognized as meeting the standards. The rigor provided in these college level courses surpasses the expected standard level of achievement. Where is the provision for this to occur in the new standards? Our brightest students need to make yearly growth in school too.

The social studies standards look like something out of the 1940s and 1950s. They need to be organized under themes and need a major overhaul to include multicultural perspectives.

In general, the proposed standards will do more harm than good. There is too much emphasis on rote memorization. The Profile seemed complex may have needed fine-tuning, but it was preferable. It taught thinking and process. There is little in the proposed standards that will prepare our children to think and work with new facts, and enable them to compete globally for jobs. Also, there is a political bias in the factoids that are listed in the proposed standards.

Middle school standards need to be lumped together to allow flexibility. This one size fits all curriculum will not meet the specific needs of individual districts. Please don't turn this state into a "Texas School", where everyone uses the same textbook and same curriculum at the same time. Allow middle school some flexibility in deciding at which grade level certain standards should be taught

The amount of content proposed for the World History standard is proportional to that of the United States Standard. With a credit of American History required, how can a good, effective teacher teach all of the World History content in the same amount of time? The World History credit requirement must be set at 1 credit, not 1/2 credit.

9-12 World History Standard

Although I have large concerns with many of the standards, the World History standard is amazingly unrealistic and couldn't be properly done in a full year let alone one semester. Of the 24 proposed areas to be covered, our school covers 5 in the semester allowed. Current AP and IB curriculum would only cover a quarter of the material you are asking for in a one semester time frame. Please take your time and get this right. I was not a fan of the old standards and was ecstatic to see them go but these will be far worse unless some major revisions take place.

The GRADE 6 Standards include about 6 YEARS worth of material. Current educational research proves that "less is more" and that students should participate in hands-on, in-depth, & meaningful instructional activities. The sixth grade standards should focus on either Ancient Civilizations or MN history (depending on what is done in other grades).

The overall middle level standards seem way to broad to cover in a single course. The funds that schools have are inadequate to cover the costs of all the new curriculum that would need to be purchased for the new standards.

It is ridiculous to think that all of this could be covered in one year.

Language should be "will be introduced to" rather than "will understand" for both standards. Benchmark requiring students to be able to define "scarcity" as stated inappropriate.

Requiring first graders to be able to locate and name the continents and oceans on a map and on a globe is developmentally inappropriate.

Please REMOVE from the standards pg. 8 teaching of major world religions. Also REMOVE from the standards pg. 11 the teaching of Islam.

4th grade, pg 11, C.Era 3. Student will locate & identify major cultures such as Axum, Kush, Mali and Songhai - please REMOVE not age appropriate

Thank you for having a focus on American history & government. It is very important for our children to know about the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, Federalist Papers, and the people who founded our Country. It is also very important for children to know what/how our government works in a positive, prideful way. Thank you.

The choices made for social studies standards on specific topics and people are out of place. Inappropriate selection of important events... whose agenda is this anyway. I enjoy the local control very much, thank you.

I think the Geography standards are acceptable. The World History standards mirror National Standards for the most part and are doable. My concern is that with World History at the HS level- the standards proposed would need to be implemented in a year long course- which at this point is proposed to be a semester requirement. I believe a year long course at the HS level is more appropriate than a year long course of World History-- so can we at the local level make such a decision? What then happens to all the World History standards? As I look at the middle school level standards- too much- too many benchmarks. Please adjust elementary standards as well- some are simply inappropriate for the grade levels. I also find it quite funny the specific references made to Ronald Reagan in some of the benchmarks and yet no references to other individual presidents, come on- give us a break-- we already have an airport, battleship etc... named after the man- I think educational standards can be spared. Again- please be conscience of the time needed to require these benchmarks and adjust accordingly.

I do not like the history standard for the 5th grade---we have a brand new curriculum and we want to study US history with the American Revolution and Civil Wars. The history

listed currently for the MN Academic Standards is not appropriate for 5th graders. Social Studies

Standard D. Interconnections. Language of the standard far above first grade level. This should be introductory at most. Benchmark #4, same comment.

The emphasis on memorization of facts is a kickback to an era in education that has long since passed. I attempt to teach my students the importance of a knowledge of history, geography, economics, etc. so that they have the awareness and skills to formulate their own opinions and play an active part in the political life of this great nation. I believe in as diverse a presentation of world and national history as possible so as to give students an understanding of our position as a member of a global community, not the narrowly focussed, ethnocentric vantagepoint evidenced by these standards.

I am sensitive to the sensitive nature of this task the committee has undertaken. Still, I am quite disappointed in how the conservative bent or perspective plays out in the standards. The problem: the standards are apparently the creation of right thinking citizens; they are not fair and balanced. If I were in charge of this project, I would have worked hard to find a committee that could have approached this with balance and fairness. Historical opinion or interpretation must not be considered fact, as it does several times.

students will know anddefending freedom.....in Korea and Vietnam... (page 31) That's highly disputed. Freedom wasn't, as seen in the LBJ tapes, (Beschlos) his primary or particular objective in Vietnam. What of post-colonialism? What of cold war domestic politics? This standard teaches as fact a highly suspect opinion; it is an opinion apparently based in current ideology. It is a disservice to the education of our children. They need to understand history as analysis, reasoned perspective. History is fact, data, and interpretation. Interpretations vary from person to person. This standard teaches the opposite and it is dishonest and anti-educational.

I am a teacher at Cambridge-Isanti High School. I am commenting in general about the new Social Studies standards. In particular, I am commenting on the omission of the behavioral sciences(anthropology, psychology, and sociology) in the standards. These particular disciplines are all about relationships and the study of human behavior as well as cultural customs. These disciplines provide students with a broad perspective of human behavior across the age groups and cultures. The exclusion of these disciplines in the updated standards is very unfortunate. Psychology is a broad and popular topic among students entering college(not to mention a general education requirement) and an introduction to the behavioral sciences in high school is important. Additionally, the standards in general seem to have a lot of benchmarks for students to master, particularly in World History. I hope careful consideration will be taken to revise these standards.

I believe that the breadth and content of the 4th grade social standards are misdirected, almost unattainable, and developmentally inappropriate. The vast majority of the standards deal with the memorization of facts about history from a predominately eurocentric white male perspective. What about the daily lives of the women, minorities, children, and common citizens. We are emphasizing the powerful people instead of the cultures and climates from which they arose.

The amount and breadth of information required will limit instruction to shallow fact finding instruction with little time for developing deeper understanding through experiential learning.

Finally the cost and time that will be required to develop and acquire resources to achieve these standards cannot be underestimated. This will be a costly and time consuming endeavor in a time of very tight budgets.

If the goal of these standards is to improve learning for our children, I believe these standards will not achieve that goal.

Please do not consider placing high school geography requirements in the Jr. High, it would be like asking 8th graders to do calculus. There is a sequence of learning in geography, it is very much a science as it is a study of cultures. To say Jr. High students can do the high school requirements is unfounded. We need to keep the progression of geography as is written k-12, they are grounded in the National Standards and many of the other subjects (such as the history strand) fit into geography.

Middle School students are best served by social studies standards that provide a coherent piece in a k-12 scope and sequence. The new standards should provide the basis for student exploration of the main themes of history, geography and government, their inter-relationships, and the changes through time - should provide opportunities for students to develop problem solving, decision making, research skills as they investigate the issues of each content strand. Strict emphasis on names and dates will not contribute to a students transfer of knowledge to the issues of citizenship in the state, nation, world.

Several teachers around the state are being told that the high school geography course required in the legislation is not necessary if middle schools offer a year of geography at the 8th grade. I think is a very dangerous idea. The high school course standards were developed on the assumption that students will be prepared by taking geography in the middle school. It would be a great dilution of the standards to argue that a high school course is the same as a middle school course. While I am certain some 8th grade students could do well in the high school course I equally certain that most 8th grade students would not do well and be frustrated with their experience. We need more rigorous standards not weaker ones.

I am dismayed at many of the newly proposed Social Studies Standards. Students will be forced back into memorizing facts, details, many of which they may never encounter again. For example, how do I explain the real-life relevancy of Robert LaFollette (U.S. History, substrand F) to a 9th grade classroom? I admire the attempt at college-bound rigor, which many of these standards promote, but where do our Special Education students fall in this new proposed plan? What about my students who will be entering the job marked immediately or for those going into a trade profession, which many do and become quite successful? I do not see many of these children succeeding under the new Standards. We are going backwards to rote memorization which current brain research DOES NOT support as the best way for our kids to learn!

In addition to the relevancy of some of the key dates and figures in History students are to know, I am dismayed that two important subjects are ignored, Psychology and Sociology. The majority of students going on to four-year colleges are required to take introductory courses in these fields. Students introduce to these concepts during high school are able to have even more success later on. I've attached several emails I've received within the past few years from students who have taken Psychology and Sociology as seniors and have gone on to do well in college. There are so many relevant topics in these two curriculum areas. Not just for college bound students, but for all students. For example, my senior classes just finished studying Memory. My students were engaged in the Memory process, learned how their memories worked and ways they can improve their memory. Now that is what I call relevant to real-life learning! I had some of my special education students using memory aids they learned in my class to help them pass their vocabulary tests in English. This is only one example of practical application of a class concept. Soon we will be studying Mental Illness. Do you know over a million teenagers suffer from depression? In my classroom I have six students (that I know of) on anti-depressants. Wouldn't you agree mental health topics for adolescents would be a worthwhile topic to include in your newly proposed Academic Standards? I attempt to educate students about the causes and symptoms of depression in hopes of alleviating the stigma of a mental illness. To our school district and me this is a valuable course!

Another core curriculum area ignored is that of Sociology. Why do you not want students to learn about society? There are so many practical applications to topics in society. What about social classes? My high school is not a very racially diverse school. However, when we talk about discrimination my students overwhelmingly tell me they have experienced this on the basis of where they live, what type of clothes they wear or by how much money their parents make. I attempt to address these issues of social structure in my class to break down barrier for these children, as they grow older. For students to understand others from their perspective, rather than just using their own is a valuable tool we can teach our kids. This, I believe, will have more of an impact on their lives than knowing about the Mughal Empire (World History, grades 9-12, sub-strand E).

I am alarmed at the amount of rote memorization we are going to ask of our students and lack of practical real-world knowledge that may come out of our newly proposed Standards. I agree with a prior statement in regards to the newly proposed standards. They truly are "a mile wide and an inch deep".

During the 2001-2002 school year we went through our district-wide Curriculum Review Cycle for Social Studies. Our local district is committed to the importance of Psychology and Sociology in our curriculum they are required classes for all seniors. We spent time researching and gathering information as to why these are important courses for all of our students to take. I ask you to do the same. Please go back and do some research as to why these two subjects should also be included in the newly proposed standards. Or, do you want all of our students to be able to recite facts in World History, U.S. History, Economics and Geography? Oh wait, since they won't have taken a Psychology course they won't be able to understand how their memory works. Then how will our state look when our students can't recall the facts?

So can I plan on my child being an expert in History, Geography and Economics? How will she know how to interact with society if she does not study and Psychology or Sociology during her High School career? Apparently the Social Studies Committee are not experts in Human Behavior, otherwise they would have created the Social Studies standards to be more well-rounded to include relevant topics to human behavior. Please consider revisiting the standards to include these relevant concepts. Thank you!

9-12 Economics Market Economy

"The student will understand risks and opportunities associated with entrepreneurship". I believe this belongs, along with some others, in our Business Education curriculum. In our school we have a Business Ed class on this exact topic where the students are in charge of our school store. Great experience! But a better fit in Business Education rather than Social Studies. We have enough already!

I am very concerned about the composition of the groups that were asked to come up with the new standards, I live on the East Side of Saint Paul and my children, I have two boys, attend a school that reflects the student population in most urban schools. I would say that about two-thirds of the students are of Hmong heritage and the other one third is very diverse also. In contrast, the people who are in charge of putting together the new standards seem to be mainly white, Anglo-Saxon. I am appalled that no Hmong, Hispanic, Native American educators have been invited to participate. How can you expect standards that were put together by a group that was so little representative of our student population to be fair and balanced? I am white and of German heritage, but I understand that our schools are changing with the rest of society. Your standards do not

seem to take that into account.

I hope that you will rethink them with the help of the people who represent the new faces of this country. Otherwise, you will have failed to make our education system any better, because only when we can see ourselves in what we learn, especially in Social Studies, can we really understand its significance. I will be a teacher soon, and I plan on making sure my students always see themselves in what I teach, no matter what your standards say.

I am concerned about the censoring of Christian fact from the general public in the way of education. The wisdom of the Declaration of Independence, the Equal Rights Amendment, and many other documents were inspired not by human intellect but by biblical wisdom. This is not a communist country, why are we censoring history in the name of separation of church and state? 80% of Americans are Christians. Why are the 20% who are opposed to it being allowed to dictate to our children their biased view of our government? This leaves children ignorant of the foundation of this great country.

I served as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Young people don't even know what patriotism is thanks to your censorship. Why would I die to keep America free if I don't understand why freedom is so precious? Why is the freedom of 80% of Americans being robbed starting at the age of 5 years old? Can't we include the facts as we teach history and Social Studies.

I am a concerned parent. I read about the standards and don't think that it is important that children remember dates and facts. They can look that information up on the internet or in a Library. What is important is how to interpret the facts. Also, history is interpreted differently by different people. Some of the standards talk about the Vietnam War which can be interpreted in many different ways.

Parent of 2 teenage girls

The social studies standards are much too advanced for a 4th grade child. They are inappropriate. We currently study the U.S. by region which is appropriate. When I first saw the standards I thought they were a web joke.....sorry! That is how ludicrous they are. They are far too advanced; not age appropriate.

Quick, write about "the conflict and cooperation between the Papacy and European monarchs (eg. Charlemagne, Gregory VII, Emperor Henry IV, Henry VIII)." If that stumps you, write on "the Ancient Hebrew civilization, its belief in a divinely revealed moral code and monotheism." Both of these benchmarks are on the 6th grade proposed standards. There are 11 benchmarks dealing with the Romans, 10 linked to the Greeks, and 4 each relating to Jewish and Christian history. Minnesota history deals with Native Americans. There is no mention of Blacks or immigrants.

The proposed curriculum is significantly flawed. Sixth graders are beginning to understand broad concepts related to American history and democracy. An educational understanding of how the brain functions indicates that relevant and meaningful ideas are remembered. Materials that have no links to previous knowledge and are meaningless are quickly forgotten. Think of all the "learning" you did in college that you have forgotten because it wasn't relevant in your life. Our brains are not designed to keep meaningless learning. The proposed curriculum will lead to students' wasted time because they will forget it.

The 5th grade curriculum asks students to recognize the geography associated with the Mason-Dixon Line, the Battle of Antietam Creek, but doesn't mention the geography of the South that favored plantations and the North's factories.

Our children deserve better than this proposed document.

Thirty-eight years ago, America opened its doors to my mother and her family, refugees fleeing from the newly Communist Cuba. My family left behind a lot of wealth and position, because we valued the freedom America provides. After coming to America, our family was relatively poor. My parents could not offer me much of monetary value. However, they equipped me with a desire to learn and an excellent high school education. They couldn't pay for my college education, but I was motivated to pursue knowledge and to pay for my own schooling. Similarly, my cousins, inspired by a good foundation of knowledge, are now doctors, lawyers, engineers, and politicians.

I have been surprised to hear complaints that the current academic standards are too rigorous. If we want our children to succeed in life, no amount of knowledge should be too much.

So often, I hear people criticizing America and I am saddened. America does have its faults, but it is also a great country. As a Cuban American, I am proud of my Cuban heritage, but I am also proud to be an American. I am proud of America's history. I owe America more than I could ever repay for the freedom and endless opportunities it offers.

Some within academia claim that we should pattern schools more after Cuba. However, it is the Cubans who risk their come to America, not the Americans who want to live in Cuba. If we are so bad, why do refugees risk their lives to make it to American shores?

While America did not come to the Cuban's aid as expected in the Bay of Pigs, we do not resent America. My uncle fought in the Bay of Pigs and was taken prisoner. Another was killed. Yet, we are Americans and thankful for the many opportunities and acts of kindness America has shown to us.

As you write Minnesota's new standards, please remember that America is a great country. Please teach our children knowledge.

The requirements for K-6 seem much more intensive than children that age can be expected to learn. Was there an expert on child development consulted to help set the standards? It doesn't appear this was considered. Were classrooms observed? Where was the expertise when this was developed, besides borrowing for other states?

There is way too much material for 5th grade social studies. We don't have enough time to begin to complete those requirements. The World History and Economic components are not appropriate for 5th grade.

We just purchased curriculum materials for the Grad Standard guidelines and want to follow those for social studies. There is plenty of material without bringing in World History and Economics. Thank you--

In general, the first grade benchmarks are very age inappropriate. Children may be introduced to some of these concepts but anything more is not possible for your normal 6-7 year old. The primary focus in first grade is teaching the children to read. It is not feasible to spend the extra time that would be required to attempt to meet these standards. It is a waste of time to try to adapt the ones that have been given. You need to start from scratch with a new committee that has had a class in child development.

The standards for second grade are too difficult and include too much.

The standards as proposed do not appear to be inclusive enough of the contributions of non-white individuals and groups. What is glaringly left out are those contributions by American Indians and women. Greater inclusiveness needs to be required in the standards in order to compensate for the lack of inclusion in most textbooks.

I reviewed several, but not all of the standards. In general I found them way too ambitious and not age appropriate. If teachers are to teach to these standards they will need to take an extremely general and shallow approach. I'm afraid that educationally we would be taking 30 giant steps backwards, kids will return to rote and repetition which unfortunately leads to boredom and bad attitudes. In order to encourage critical thinking we need to take a focused and in depth approach to learning. Remember that teachers have other critical areas to teach and allow them the time necessary to cover curriculum areas in depth. Pay attention to areas that can be connected, example: history, social structure, geography, economy, etc. of one particular place and limited time (instead of several).

In reference to the 6th grade standards, frankly, I was aghast. The standards include ancient civilization in the Middle East 1000BC, Ancient Greek, the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, comparative Roman political systems, The birth of Islam, the split in Western and Eastern Christianity, Fuedal Systems in Mideval Europe and Ancient Hebrew Civilization just to name a few of the subject areas. Just how many years are you suggesting that 6th grade take to complete? All admirable areas of study, but impossible to do justice to or digest in one 9 month period. Please, let's be realistic.

Please!!! Revisit the Social Studies standards again. I have been teaching for 31 years. Most of those years at the 4th grade level. Many of the topics included in the new standards for 4th grade are not really appropriate for their age. The standards have them jumping all over the world and in areas of history, geography, and economics. I don't think most 4th graders are ready for all of that. It would also be impossible to find materials to teach all of these different areas of the world at the appropriate reading level. We surely would not find it in one text. School districts are at a financial crisis already. This would completely bury us. Make sure your team includes people who are very familiar with teaching Social Studies at ALL levels.

These so-called standards are so out of touch with the realities of student intellectual development and scholarly information as to be hopeless.

From the beginning of the Kindergarten requirement that kids know about the Pilgrims and Squanto (which is mostly as fictional as the story of Washington and the cherry tree) to the 8th grade suggestion that "Students will know and understand th development of Minnesota's role in the world according to...Charles Lindbergh..." who supported Hitler's attempts to dominate Europe and kill off useless people.

There are so many flaws, inaccuracies, and misconceptions in these standards that they are useless. Better we go back to the circus of the Profile than adopt these as marks of educated adolescents.

There has been a lot of good feedback regarding the new proposed standards. The way it is beginning to look to me, our public schools will become schools that strictly teach social studies and nothing else (which is fine with me). I hope that people are listening and paying attention to what people in the classrooms are saying. This is too much information and will be potentially expensive for districts already strapped for cash. Textbooks will have to be purchased, materials gathered, and just like the Profiles and other fads in education, it too shall be left dead along the roadside. I hope people are listening.

As an educator in Minnesota I feel it is my responsibility to register my fear that the proposed science and social studies standards are adopted. I teach at a five star school, wherin our focus is not on a list of facts but rather on the learning process. Since one of the goals of these standards is to raise the quality of education and my school stands at five stars, I feel the displeasure I and my peers here hold some weight.

To teach to the process of learning is to inspire students to care, investigate and own their education. To teach a list of facts satisfies only the political agenda of whomever holds office. I will not throw stones, forward my own political ethos, or denounce the work done by the state thus far because that doesn't achieve my goal as an educator. The only thing I want is for the students in the schools to have a legitimate learning experience that allows them to succeed as human beings in the future.

I cannot see a way in which the proposed standards do that.

Please revisit these standards with the good of the students in mind.

I think it is important to present the standards in grade level clumps. K-2 grade/ 3-5th grade in the elementary standards. If this were done, schools could look at integrating into their reading, math, and current local social studies units within a range of grades.

World History Strand, substrand C. Era 3

Postclassical Civilizations 500-1000AD

These three substrands relating to Byzantine Empire, rise of islam and camel caravans is so developmentally inappropriate. We are just beginning to understand our place in our American History time and geography of the western hemisphere. The Colonial Days is enough world history for 9 year olds to begin to connect with.

As a fourth grade teacher I want to make these general comments on the social studies standards:

There are too many bench marks/grade level.

There is simply not enough time to develop any background knowledge to cover that many benchmarks in any integrated or connected manner.

The substrands are not developmentally appropriate in many areas.

There is not enough allowance of local social studies units that have been developed and are appropriate to a community: for example the influence of the Ojibwe Indians and the immigrants of our community.

Where is the study of our state history!

Where is the building of our story through family, neighborhood, city, state, country, world....can't do it all in 4th grade.

There's way too many minute facts...no framework to hold them on to.

Where's the social standards curriculum to support the standards, with budget cuts and large class sizes, how will teachers be prepared to teach this material. Will the state be providing state mandated curriculum and materials for all teachers?

Where's the time to teach these standards...in an elementary classroom with an emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic, there is simply 35 minutes left for specific content study which includes social studies, science and health!

My issues with the standards regard both their content and form. Overall, I believe that they emphasize rote memorization of a large body of facts without sufficient attention to historical context and process. With the current trend toward standardized, statewide testing, I fear that teachers will devote significant class time to preparing students for tests rather than educating them in a more well-rounded fashion. I do not believe that such a trend makes our schools more "accountable."

Currently, I am participating in a three-year U.S. Department of Education-funded grant that brings together university history professors from Minnesota and Wisconsin with a select group of history and social studies K-8 teachers from those states. At our recent meeting in St. Paul, teachers voiced concerns that the new standards would undermine their ability to engage students in American history. As teachers work to educate the "whole child" I fear they will be undermined if they need to revise their curricula to address all

the proposed standards.

In terms of content, I see deficiencies in the standards based on my background as a professor of American history. I see first hand the products of our public schools and know there is a great range in the preparedness of these students. In recent years, I have taught large introductory-level survey courses on American Indian history and American Women's history. Time and again, students question why these areas of history were so neglected in their earlier schooling. After reviewing the proposed standards, I do not believe they will address this lack. Students should not need to wait until college to be exposed to an inclusive historical narrative, especially since many children will not get the opportunity to study history at a university level.

I am a Minnesota public school educator and I am appalled at the inappropriate focus of these standards on content facts rather than the processes of acquiring knowledge in an ongoing manner. This backward step disregards all of the reputable scholarship of the past two decades in terms of producing competent learners and citizens capable of participating fully in the democratic process of this country. Minnesota has always been a leader nationally in promoting exceptional education. By adopting this simple list of facts for students to memorize and calling them "standards," the Department of Education in Minnesota is making a mockery of true, research-supported standards of quality educational practices.

The standards give primacy to political and military leaders; women and minorities of both sexes have been underrepresented in these realms and as a result, far of them are discussed in the standard. But even in terms of highlighting presidents and wars, the standards seem inconsistent and rather politicized. Ronald Reagan is mentioned three times but Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Jimmy Carter are omitted.

I counted individuals identified by name in the "benchmarks" of the standards 184 times; 170 of the 184 were men. Moreover, Harriet Tubman was named three separate times, which brings the total number of women to 11. The list is: Pocahontas, Sacagawea, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ida Tarbell, Abigail Adams, Sojourner Truth, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bridwell, Narcissa Whitman, and Georgia O'Keefe. Certainly, this list includes laudable individuals but not all the eleven on the list seem historically significant. Some of the individuals named have acquired almost mythological significance and their historical legacy becomes obscure. What is unclear is how these eleven women were selected and why other notable women --such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jane Addams, Amelia Earhart, Clara Barton, Fannie Lou Hamer, Jeannette Rankin, Ida B. Wells Barnett, the Grimke sisters, and many others who made important contributions, were left out.

Maybe a focus on real persons whose experience is easier to relate to would be more effective. For instance, I believe Minnesota teachers and students could enjoy looking at the life Harriet Bishop, the first public school teacher in St. Paul. She moved to the Territory in 1847 from Vermont, taught students of all grades whom she came to love, and then went on to promote temperance and woman suffrage for most of her life. She also helped establish the First Baptist Church in St. Paul, and it still exists. This is someone whose life was part of a pattern of settlement to this area and she exemplifies the ways women contributed to the building of their communities.

In terms of form, again, I see shortcomings in the proposed standards. On the first day of all my classes, I ask my university students to describe what they like and dislike about studying history. Without fail, they say they don't like to memorize and repeat names and dates. What they enjoy are the narratives of history and being able to better understand the world we live in today. I think their younger siblings would agree, and I doubt the proposed standards will foster such a learning environment. Also, with an emphasis on rote memorization, it's not apparent that students will develop critical thinking skills regarding the historical record. The ability to evaluate primary and secondary source materials and to research a historical topic seem more germane to fostering life-long learners, and preparing those Minnesota students who are college bound. On a similar note, there are no apparent connections between your group and the Minnesota History Society, National History Day Organization or the National Council of History Education. All these institutions could offer important support to our state as it works to fashion learning standards in history and social studies.

I have four sets of concerns related to the standards. First, the standards seem, especially at the lower grade levels, too extensive to be realistically achieved given the many other important subjects to be taught and learned. Second, a number of the standards for the lower grade levels seem too difficult based on the developmental level of the students. Third, especially at the higher grade levels, there is not enough emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills and analysis on the part of the students. Fourth, there seems to be an implicit bias of a politically conservative nature that permeates many of the standards. A few examples of that bias include the characterization of the Viet Nam war as defending freedom, the multiple mentions of Ronald Reagan with none of other recent presidents, the characterization of the selected sentence of the Declaration of Independence as referring to "God" four times and the particular patriotic songs chosen. It is vital that public education standards not be used or even appear to be used as a

vehicle to promote or appease a particular political agenda or religion.

I want my children to learn to THINK and to QUESTION because I think these skills are essential to both intelligence, good citizenship, and a healthy democracy. The proposed standards place too much emphasis on facts about who fought in what battle when and not enough on searching inquiry re WHY historically important milestones or trends happened or are happening; what factors influence history and culture and political trends and economic trends. I searched the guidelines for "think" and found a reference only with respect to chronological thinking in geography. I searched for "question" and found again found references only in a very superficial context -- again, I think, with respect to geography. Bottom-line: I want our children to learn to think critically, ask hard questions, weigh complex factors, see the social fabric of our world in shades other than black and white, understand that it is a responsibility of citizenship to do so and then to vote the convictions that come from careful thought and debate. These guidelines must be modified to include these expectations in order to ensure that we are raising a generation of thoughtful citizens.

P.S. I happened to note that Islam was not present among the world religions being taught to students. WHY???

I only looked at the standards proposed for primary children in social studies, but many of the standards proposed do not even seem developmentally appropriate. It is important for elementary students to understand the Roman Empire and its rulers? Are 5 year olds able to put into practice the concept of wants and needs as they are expected to understand in kindergarten based on the proposed standeards? Where I am sure that teachers are introducing many of the concepts proposed, I find it hard to believe that a children of such young ages should be expected to understand and give examples of such high-level concepts. Introduction is one thing, but measuring levels of understanding is another.

I am deeply disappointed in the low level of expectations for the middle and high school developmental period. These students are capable of higher levels of abstraction. They can draw comparisons from current world events, use metaphors to understand patterns cross culturally, develop analogies to highlight the significance of major historical events, categorize and compare, project their own lives into the lives of anonymous and famous people of the past in different cultures. Most of those abstract thinking skills are overlooked. Is social studies a mere composite and compilation of data? Or is it a skill that will continue to expand through their life, igniting curiosiuty and inquiry, helping them analyze these stressful current events (since 9.11), pushing them towards as broad an understanding as possible. Can they ask questions of the media? Dive through the deluge of information and not drown, or is learning textbook bound, linear lists of events, people rather than a process, a love of questioning, a push towards public dialogue. There is no commitment towards becoming an informed and credulous citizen, who votes with informed pride. Trust the students abilities to think and expand their voice, so they are part of the community of well-read and reflective citizens. Such memorization tasks just go in the short term memory bank. Go listen to some of the top debate students. You forget about the higher levels of integrating material.

Strand II. Substrand A - civilizations of ancient world is too abstract; first graders need to focus on familiar and move out to world issues when foundations of what civilizations entail are mastered

Strand I. Substrand A - Not necessary to know who Wlliam Bradford is at this grade level

Strand II. Substrand B - concentrate on U.S. - not world history at this time

Strand I. Substrand B - only a brief exposure to Declaration of Independance and Constitution are necessary at this level

Strand II. Substrand B - only North and South American continents and surrouding oceans at this grade level

Strand III. Substrand A. - leave out the word "barter"

Strand I. Substrand A. - I don't think it is important to know names of individuals unless something significant is named for that person in the school area

I understand and appreciate the push for more content knowledge in the social studies standards. Many of us in the trenches opposed the Profile for exactly that reason -- there was no expectation of kids to LEARN anything. We hung onto the content when it was not popular to do so.

But now you've gone the other direction and thrown out the critical thinking. Why is it so hard for politicians to see that we need both? Our kids need to learn history -- AND they need to learn critical thinking skills so they can evaluate and question what they've learned about history and learn to think for themselves about current events in a valuable context of world and U.S. history.

Districts need flexibility in meeting the academic standards and the new high school course credit requirements. For example...the cultural geography standards and benchmarks could be met in a world history with the physcial geography standards and benchmarks in an earth science course. We would not need to create a separate year long geography course to met the standards in this case. If the concern is that standards are not being addressed administer a state test. The results would show up in a hurry if the standards are not being addressed through the curriculum. Don't penalize districts that want flexibility and can deliver desired results.

Grade level 5 World History, Sub-Strand D.

The standards are too large for any understanding to take place. It is more appropriate for students at this age level to understand what America is about and how it was formed, once they understand where "we" came from maybe then they can have an appreciation and understanding of other cultures and how they interact. Until we have a good grasp on American history and culture, how are we supposed to understand other far away places.

I am a proponent of teaching as much social studies as possible in elementary school. Unfortunately, there is so little time once the reading, math, gym and arts, and writing standards are fulfilled. Each grade level would be better served if they were responsible for a segment of US History, etc. and spend quality time making the content interesting.

U.S. History, substrand B

Much too specific for 3rd grade.

II U.S. History, sub-strand A

totally inappropriate material for 3rd grade

II World History, sub-strand B

Again - totally inappropriate for 3rd grade

Our standard for 3rd grade is communities.

Standard A This is too specific. We should be able to set our own dist. benchmarks. Standard B. The benchmarks are not developmentally appropriate for first grade

Students at this age level need to have a strong background in first of all the history and makeup of their own communities.

They need to know what a community is and how it is unique.

There can be historical concepts that are brought in to to this but the benchmarks you are suggesting are much to broad and widespread for a child of this age to understand appropriately. It is definitely not age appropriate.

Where do you expect to get appropriate materials to teach this type of information? To much factual knowledge and not enough inquiry and student driven projects.

"will know" in three US History Benchmarks is developmentally inappropriate

General comments:

How in the world are we supposed to cover all of these topics. Has anyone who wrote up this set of standards stepped into a classroom and taught a group of 25+ students how to read and write? There is way too much for students to grasp, there will be absolutely no understanding of any of this information. Students would be plowing through information without absorbing any of it.

Where in the world would the money come from and what curriculum is going to support all of these specifics? How much time is expected in our day to teach Social Studies, because in reality, about 3 hours a week is max.

I think we need to be extremely careful about teaching certain beliefs, we don't have the right to press Christian values onto students. (I am a Christian...but don't think we should force people of all walks of life to believe in this WASP set of standards.)

When do students have a chance

Standard A Benchmarks are developmentally inappropriate. We are trying to expand their horizons to their neighborhood... They don't understand "ancient civilizations"... they don't even understand civilization Standard B Developmentally inappropriate... Students don't understand "world history"

world history-grade 4· These benchmarks are too broad and fourth grade students need some basic US history before learning about concepts and cultures that are foreign to

them. I have nothing against learning about many cultures and people, but 9 and 10 year olds have no concept of postclassical eras, let alone do we have time to fit in to our already crammed curriculum

In reviewing the standards and benchmarks for science and social studies it seems very clear that the people who are proposing that these are to be taught are not thinking of what is developmentally appropriate for children. These standards do not take in what age appropriate topics are being done and the volume and number of benchmarks is not physically possible to teach!

I am a 3rd grade teacher. The 3rd grade social studies standards are developmentally inappropriate, encourage rote memory only, and would be impossible to fit into our teaching day. Best teacher practices, promote hands-on learning. There is so much material in these standards, there would be no time for experiential learning, let alone our other subjects. Kids would hate social studies, school, and consequently would be shut down for the rest of their school experience. Remember these are 8 year olds.

With the increased demands on reading, math and writing (due to MCA testing, I have a half hour, every other day to teach social studies. Do not make children's education an inch deep and a mile wide, that will soon be forgotten. It's a waste of their time and mine.

We are trying to teach creating a timeline... First graders do not understand the concept of world history....we are trying to make them aware that there is a world outside of "Cloquet" and some of the things happening currently in the world...HOWEVER...many current events and their consequences are not appropriate for first graders...with all the "scary" things going on in the world they don't need to be worried about this! Finally, their concept of time is not developed enough to describe how things have changed

To me this document was done without thinking of what is real for kids. How could anyone possibly think that a third grader needs to know the benchmarks in the ancient civilization standards or the three levels of the government?

This is definitely coming from one set of ideas and agendas.

America is a melting pot. These standards do not express the views that would show this.

substrand A. The study of past civilizations is developmentally inappropriate for second grade students.

I agree with government and citizenship knowledge but many of these strands have gone way to far.....Discussing the concepts of "You're a Grand Old Flag" does not seem to have merit compared to discussing with 4th graders the character traits of being a good citizen that are often left out in many families upbringing. I think we need to focus on "sculpting" future Americans rather than understanding the lawmaking process at 10 years old.

Who in the world wrote these standards? It was obviously not anyone who had any knowledge of children. Expecting 9 year olds, for instance, to US History, C. Era 3 #2 "students will know and understand how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement in America and led to the Declaration of Independence with emphasis on the ideas of John Locke. " Shouldn't we be helping children understand our (the American colonies) ideas about the Declaration of Independence?

I think teaching citizenship is very important. However, in standard A, I'm not sure I understand what you mean by loyalty, membership, and self-gov. Examples of courage? Standard B We are trying to teach responsibility and its meaning, but recognizing the difference between rights, privileges, and responsibilities is tough for 6 year olds! First graders don't understand what government is, let alone documents that it is based on.

Sub-Strand B: Developmentally inappropriate benchmark

Sub-Strand B:

Time spent on memorization of symbols and songs is a waste of curr. time.

These standards are ridiculously thought out and written. If it didn't affect the children of this state so tremendously, I wouldn't even take the time to respond to them. Not much quality for the money that we spent on this!

Benchmark 1: "including" certain names creates a state curriculum--districts should define their own historical figures to study that can be integrated into the reading and writing series.

The social studies standards as they currently exist are a disaster. While I realize that the committee no doubt put in many hours in their development, they appear to be a document that is heavily skewed in to right wing agenda, have numerous aspects which are age inappropriate, exhibit political connections of geography overload, shortchanges citizenship education by allotting a 1/2 credit requirement and establish a state agenda for social studies when it should be left to local school boards to decide. I noted with interest the general nature of other state standards for academic disciplines such as language arts and science. Why such mandated specificity for social studies? The social studies standards are nothing more than a list of facts to be regurgitated, not a reflection of social studies education.

Is there a curriculum anywhere that matches these standards or does someone from the state department of education plan on writing one? Way too much to even respond to!

Benchmark 3: Holidays should be talked about when they occur--not Independence Day during Kindergarten. They need to talk about days as they happen, not some day in July.

Benchmark 1: Kindergarten students are not able to "compare and contrast" such sophisticated areas. They need practice in comparing and contrasting simple, known quantities. How can they have the background of earlier times in order to do this? What does the Kindergarten test for this benchmark look like--a 3-page typed paper?

Standard A. addresses are important and we try to work on maps, but this is too specific Standard B We introduce continents and oceans, but don't master Standard C we spend a lot of time talking about landforms and climates Standard D these are more reasonable, but where are we going to find the time?

The Standards in World History for Kindergarten are developmentally inappropriate. Please delete all World History Standards and benchmarks for Kindergarten.

Some students struggle with the concepts of time through second grade. All students cannot master the terms "past, present, and future.

I am proud of the fact that Minnesota has always had outstanding schools. I want this to continue, and know that we must be constantly striving to improve our instruction. However, these standards are pushing us away from research based instructional methods. If you study research you will find that students learn best when they have a chance to participate in indepth, hands on projects. With the number and variety of benchmarks it will be impossible to have an indepth study on any area. There is too much to try to cover, and many of the benchmarks are not age appropriate. Our focus is on reading and math in early elementary. I spend 2 hours and 45 minutes each day on reading and approximately an hour a day on math. By the time we add P.E., music, Library, lunch, and a bathroom break or two there is not much time left in the day. Spend a day or two in a first grade class and find out what reality is. THESE ARE 6 YEAR OLDS!

Careful with the Patriotic Standard! This can be mis-used to isolate and punish dissenters. Our country was built by dissenters. Is this Nation Building?

One president!!!!

Why? What is so important about the current president's name?

How about the office of president through Washington, Lincoln, etc.

Kindergarten students do not know if "a location or place on the earth's surface" is human-made or physical unless specifically told in reference to each thing. We even have human-made lakes. Unrealistic standard.

Delete the benchmarks and some of the standards. Visit a half-day kindergarten class and come back to reality.

Benchmark 1: Using the term "including" followed by specific names creates a state curriculum. Perhaps William Bradford and Pocahontas are not the two Americans our community wants the students to "recognize as people who contributed to US history."

Benchmarks 1 and 2: Instead of turning humans into saints, couldn't students study WHY certain people contributed to US history? Perhaps the historical figures were forced into a reactionary stance by ridiculous social studies standards such as these!

Benchmark 3--Why is it important for first grade students to know how "migration and colonization influenced American history"?

Benchmark 4: Which "events" are you referring to? What are first grade students to understand about this "interaction among American Indians and settlers"?

Benchmark 1--developmentally inappropriate. Why should our first grade students have to know the highlights of ancient civilizations such as Greece and Egypt. These are six and seven year old children!!

World History is not developmentally appropriate for grade one. Please remove these two standards.

Benchmark 4--let's wait until they have significant exposure to life to expect them to "give examples of events that have influenced history."

I think this is wrong. It focuses on memorizing facts and not higher level thinking.

As a Minnesota business owner, I need employees who can predict, infer and think things through, not just regurgitate facts which is what this program encourages teachers to teach.

It's misguided and short sighted. I am very against it.

As a fifth grade teacher, I have reviewed the proposed Social Studies standards for grades K-7. Although I am impressed by the work people have done to put these together, I am overwhelmed by the quantity of expected standards at each grade level. I also find that the proposed standards seem inappropriate to the developmental stages of learning. Children seem to build their world view first through their families and closer communities (the perspectives they experience and understand). Specifically, I have found that in fifth grade, we have worked very hard to focus our work on United States History since we cannot do justice to this topic in one year. However, in the proposed standards, fifth grade students are additionally expected to have very specific knowledge in World History and Economics. Both of these areas seem to need a strong background in U.S. History and a sense of community. It seems appropriate to integrate discussion of these topics in fifth grade, but to assess them elsewhere.

I strongly propose that the Strands of World History and Economics be removed from the fifth grade proposed standards in order to do justice to a strong background in U.S. History, Geography and Government / Citizenship. These strands are critical and easily integrated. Thank you for considering these comments.

I reviewed the Standards most pertinent to my kids (grades 9-12).

I am very disappointed that what we expect of those students is about the same as we expect of the kindergarteners: understanding and describing were the verbs most noted and relied upon as a way to learn. I was hoping to see more of other ways of learning: synthesizing, analyzing, critiquing, relating, discerning relevance, and antecedents as well as precedents to ideas and historical events, political currents. This list obviously is not an exhaustive list about ways students could think other than "describing" or "discussing". I so hope that we will move beyond the types of activities that basically ask students to memorize and recite what they just read.

Many of the Social Studies Standards as they are presented are not developmentally appropriate for Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade. Memorizing names and details are not important for these age groups. They need to be involved in "Hands-On" learning that involves them at their level, which is very centered on themselves or something they can relate to in their lives.

Social Studies Standards

The social studies standards need to be changed to include inquiry, comparison, analysis and research. For example, the number of benchmarks in the world history course (120) is unrealistic, and would result in students simply memorizing data, rather than utilizing the events of the past, as an opportunity to reflect on circumstances and society's response to those circumstances (e.g. decisionmaking, leadership, and policy development). Our young people will thrive in an academic environment that provides a challenging, rigorous curriculum that makes social studies education exciting and stimulating.

I feel that overall the standards are very rigorous and numerous in nature for Kindergarten students.

In US History, I.A., there are too many people listed for them to know. I can understand about 5, but there were many more than that listed.

With Gov. and Citizenship, I.C., I am concerned with the students recognizing and naming the president of the U.S. I don't feel that Kdg. students can do both.

In Geography, II, having children locate their state on a map may make more sense. I don't feel they are ready to identify their town, water, landmarks and places in their school or community on the map. Who is going to make these detailed maps of our communities for us to use??? Too many map skills for kids of this age too soon!!

The Qocial Qtudies standards need to be changed to include inquiry, comparison, analysis and research. The number of benchmarks need to be reduced and additional WWII and Holocaust studies need to be introduced to show not only the short and longterm effects on the UQ but also on Europe as a whole as well as the individual stories.

I was at the Willmar session. The lady on the Standards panel from Willmar made a comment after several concerns were voiced from guests about the amount of memorization on the part of elementary students. Her comment was that she had a 3 year old grandson that could memorize a whole bunch of stuff, I forgot her exact words. Anyway, if my education serves me correctly, it is not at all surprising that a 3 year old can memorize what appears to be a great deal for their age. However, once a child has gone through the developmental stage at approximately 5 years old, where the body shuts down and the brain goes through a major developmental period, a child loses that ability, in most cases, to remember like it had. The child is storing more and more long term and loses that remarkable short term memory that we as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and older siblings find so fascinating. If a 3 year old's memory is the reason for putting such an unrealistic amount of information at the elementary years, I would highly recommend it be reconsidered.

Both of the World History Strands /Standards for 2nd grade are far above the scope and understanding of 8 year olds and would have no relevance to their lives. Ancient civilizations such as Persia, India, etc. is a fitting study for high school age. What resources could you possibly find that are written at 2nd grade level? The World History Sub-Strand Famous Events in World History is too vague. It does not specify what important events should be studied and which past events have shaped the world. Would each teacher pick and choose which events they felt was important. I feel that at 2nd grade the only appropriate concepts should be current world events. The Strands for Government and Citizenship should be developing an understanding of local and state government and laws and the responsibilities that people have for living peaceful productive lives. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are written at a level more appropriate for study at 5th grade and above. Even 5th graders have difficulty with understanding the 3 branches of government. Second graders should understand who our president is and some of his/her jobs and they should understand that their parents elect lawmakers, but the justice branch has no relevance because the Supreme Court and its decisions are not discussed in most homes. At 2nd grade only local judges and courts have meaning for them.

In general, the elementary social studies standards are seriously and definitely developmentally inappropriate.

Is there a mandated state curriculum? If so, can our school be reimbursed for the money we spent on a new social studies curriculum this year?

Where would one find books to teach the civilization and empires of the Eastern Hemisphere to elementary students? This topic doesn't belong in grades 3,4, and 5. Schools can not afford that many textbooks for all the strands. Reconsider some of your choices! Some are NOT age appropriate.

I was at the open forum in Willmar. The format was not one that was conducive to good teacher input. The meeting opened with the statement by our commissioner that if teachers want to talk they need to address specific strands and standards with page numbers. No teacher was notified of such a thing before the meeting. It appeared that the committee didn't want to hear the specifics at the meeting. The public was allowed to express their concerns of which most was religious based. Oh yes, the non teachers got many applauses with their opinions which they are entitled too. The teachers concerns were not as warmly received by those in attendance. Who is responsible for all the standards? Teachers of course. My staff wrote pages about their concerns with the standards. Not necessarily specifics, but general overall feelings. The standards are too in depth and demand too much time which teachers seem to have less and less of. After the meeting while talking with some of the committee members I felt that they too were wondering how much input teachers had in the development of the standards. Quite a task in such a short amount of time. It appears that teachers were the minority on these committees. Not the majority. If that is true, then these standards do not represent what classroom teachers are capable of achieving, but the "utopia" of standards that everyone wishes each student to have. My fear is that teachers are not going to be able to afford the time to comment on each and every standard. It's too time consuming and won't happen. You need to listen to the general comments that teachers have been expressing and that's that these standards are too lengthy and too demanding. Pare down the standards especially in the elementary grades.

Hmmm... roughly 300 benchmarks for grades 9-12, with 3.5 required credits, 175 student contact days, one 50 minute class period of social studies per day for 3.5 years, equals 2 class periods per benchmark. Welcome to the world of the \$100,000 per year teacher!

I am wondering why Social Studies is covering so much of the Business Education in Economics and other courses?

Critical thinking is missing and ingesting facts is over emphasized. I chuckled when I saw the 5th grade benchmark of "tell difference between relevant and irrelevant information". How can a set of standards lead a student to do this when it is packed full of irrelevant information such as memorizing songs? The number of facts needs to be reduced and critical thinking on all sides of key issues increased.

I want my child, and the children of this country to receive an education that is not biased by either liberalism or conservatism. These standards contain blatant and inappropriate conservative bias.

a.Liberal concepts are mostly excluded. I did not see dissent or protest mentioned once. Under interrelation with environment, I did not see adequate mention of pollution.

Where is the peace movement?

b.Women are given too small of a role.

c.The “Patriotic Songs, Symbols and Events” sounds like a Republican rally. Having children understand themes in “God Bless America” is objectionable on many levels.

d.I did not see inclusion of the things the U.S. has done that many of us are not so proud of. Internment of Japanese is of equal importance to many items on the list. Where is the role of the U.S. in establishing cruel dictatorships?

History and social studies is too U.S. focused. These standards seemed aimed at developing flag waving Americans and the expense of well-educated world citizens. More is needed on how the U.S. and the rest of the world related is needed as is more on the struggles of people throughout the world and less is detailed is needed on U.S. history and government.

Under interrelation with environment, I did not see adequate mention of pollution and environmental degradation.

Where is the peace movement? Is it diminished to the mention of “counter culture”?

In the Grade 9-12 bench mark for the rise of anti-communism where the equally important understanding the impact of McCarthyism on Americans?

In over 20 mentions of democratic process, I did not see dissent or protest mentioned once.

In grade 5, I would think highlighting 5 Minnesotan could include one woman.

The “Patriotic Songs, Symbols and Events” category is objectionable in its bias. Having children understand themes in “God Bless America” is objectionable on many levels. The Christian God is not the universal God of our school children and many of us think that God blesses all the countries in the world as much as America. If themes of Patriotic songs are analyzed, so should themes of war protest songs.

I did not see inclusion of the things the U.S. has done that many of us are not so proud of. Internment of Japanese is of equal importance to many items on the list as is U.S. sponsored oppressive dictators in Central America

The only recent President I saw mentioned was Ronald Reagan, and he was mentioned twice.

More is needed on how the U.S. and the rest of the world related is needed as is more on the struggles of people throughout the world and less detail is needed on U.S. history and government. These standards seemed aimed at developing narrow-thinking Americans not well-educated world citizens.

The number of facts needs to be reduced and critical thinking on all sides of key issues increased.

As an 8th grade teacher of social studies, I must state that these proposed standards are going to be too costly to implement as far as text book and materials purchasing, and they are going to be too scattered and intensive for the average 8th grader to handle. We will have roughly one and a half weeks to cover such topics as world economics, global geography, Minnesota history, and US history. There is no way to cover each of these subjects in any meaningful depth -- we would need to gloss over each major subject within one or two weeks. We cannot -- as teachers -- teach problem solving or the understanding of movements and ideas as processes when we are basically "skipping rocks" over major curricular ideas. I see more success with kids when I teach them the reasons for certain movements and events, not when I drill a name and a date into their heads. The proposed standards appear to be a means of teaching towards a test -- they will be reshaping our curriculum and I wonder about the value of them.

As a career social studies educator, I would like to offer my comments on the recently proposed academic standards for social studies. My greatest concerns lay not so much with what is in the standards as with what is conspicuously absent. I agree wholeheartedly with those who have commented that much of the content is developmentally inappropriately placed. I also agree that the standards reflect a conservative political bias which is antithetical to what ought to be an unbiased approach to the teaching of social studies in a democratic society. Both of these observations concern me.

My gravest concern however, is a philosophical one. What is apparent to me is that the philosophical tenets underlying the proposed standards run counter to my beliefs and practices regarding what social studies education is and ought to be. For example, the proposed standards do not include any content strands in anthropology, sociology or psychology, all of which are essential components of the comprehensive social studies curriculum advocated by the National Council for the Social Studies.

The National Council also articulates a purpose for social studies education that runs counter to what is presented in the Minnesota Standards. According to the Council, "The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." What are blatantly lacking in the proposed standards are multiple perspectives and higher order thinking skills, both of which are essential in helping young people to make the "informed and reasoned decisions" described by the National Council. The benchmarks do not demand that students develop an in-depth understanding of social studies concepts, mastery of inquiry or critical thinking skills so essential for civic competency in an increasingly complex world.

Social Studies Changes - what classes will be offered next year?

October 8, 2003

Social Studies teachers in Elk River are being asked to decide what courses we should offer next year right now!

... some questions and thoughts...

How can we decide classes before the state decides what the curriculum will be ?

Meetings are currently being held around the state to determine that social studies curriculum.

If we don't get any new money - how will we do major changes?

If we get these new state implemented standards - how will we know or the state know if we are doing the standards or accomplishing them without testing them?

Assessments are very difficult to create and time consuming. Does the state expect us to create new tests/assessments for all the benchmarks and standards they are creating?

Why is the state testing science, math, english, reading but not social studies?

The state should create assessments for us to use to help us determine whether we are meeting the standards even if they don't give the tests on a state wide basis.

If each individual teacher creates their own tests/assessments we will have chaos and no way to determine if standards are actually being met.

If grade level curriculum offerings change dramatically? Will teachers follow curriculum or grade levels ?

Minneapolis Star Tribune Opinion and Commentary of October 5, 2003

How will Minnesota kids see the world? by Jim Davnie

His analysis is very insightful and critical of the proposals for social studies curriculum that the state is presenting. His assertion is the standards are "politically skewed, educational unsound and poorly thought out" and should be replaced. He is a state legislator and a social studies teacher .

Remember the Profiles of Learning - teachers were led to believe they would be here forever and change education. Millions and millions of dollars were spent on the whole system until it collapsed. Before that was the Outcome Based Education methodology which frustrated educators and wasted millions of dollars.

The Minnesota state legislature created the Profiles of Learning and then dropped them after a change in political party took place . Why won't the same thing happen again once we change the political party in power ? When politics enters the education field we get a mess. Teachers are tired of being manipulated and having millions of dollars wasted.

US History: Famous Americans, Famous American Events, Famous People in World History, Famous Events in World History - These benchmarks are not developmentally

appropriate for second grade.

Concepts of Time, Government and Citizenship (A and C) -These are developmentally appropriate for 2nd grade. B is not.

Geography - These are all developmentally appropriate for 2nd grade, except II D (why people have moved or migrated to different places in the world).

Economics - A- is developmentally appropriate. B- The concept of needs and wants, earning, spending and saving money is appropriate. We are not sure what is meant by "opportunity costs".

From reading the comments already received, it looks like the standards need to be written keeping existing resources in mind. Some of the standards are so inappropriate for grade level that no curriculum exists. It would probably be easier to scrap the draft and start over, with more contributions from current classroom teachers. But your real problem is the obvious bias of trying to turn the students into business majors and rote nationalists. There is way too much emphasis on entrepreneurship. The market economy and government's role standards are heavily biased. A kindergartner learning "producer and consumer" is laughable. The income distribution statement is strictly opinion or at the least, only one way of looking at things. What's with the Reagan obsession? The balance is just not there. Very little cultural history regarding arts, music. No Thomas Edison. I especially love the decline and fall of the Roman Empire standard. Is that a test question or a term paper? I loved history, social studies and civics in school. This would make me hate it. It's a mess.

In my opinion, the standards in U.S. History are so specific that I'm afraid the "big picture" could be left out. Personally, I think it is more important for students to walk away from high school with an understanding of the major themes from American History. Let's do all we can to focus our standards on themes and lessons learned from history and not the rudimentary specifics.

Geography

It seems to me that the standards downplay the importance of nations and nation-states in favor or regions. This amounts to an attempt to engineer thought instead of educating.

Woefully lacking is an emphasis on the importance of nations, in particular, the reasons for forming nations, specifically the United States. What is missing is that the Founders believed the formation of the nation was essential to protecting individual freedom and private property rights.

It also seems that there is no longer a place in geography for teaching where nations are located. Why is no longer important that students know where China is located?

Gen - Rights & Responsibilities; we need to emphasize that no student or group of few students have the "right" to interfere with the learning of other students. Too often the one with the mouth who disagrees takes over - this violates the rights of the students who want to learn.

Role of the Electoral College needs to be covered b/4 HS. The most votes (ie popular vote) does not determine the president and VP. After the 2002 election, this misunderstanding was very clear. The reason for the Elec. Col. was that the Founding Fathers (Founders if you must) realized that the 'most votes' approach could result in bullying, anarchy, etc., hence the Elec. Col.

2nd - It is critical that we make sure students understand why people came to America. We know the Indians came across the Bering Strait - we don't know why b/c they had no written language. Every other group (minus the slaves) came here for religious or political freedom. Today, African immigrants from Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Nigeria and Uganda come for the same reason. We MUST get this across. Asians came to find work and avoid starvation. We are a safe haven, in spite of our problems. It is important to get this across to students.

On the negative side - do you have the cross-section of materials to cover all these topics on a particular grade level - esp. the elem. levels - there is a lot of material and I don't recall any text having such a cross-section of information (from the local to state to country to world) - unless you have material for all the areas to be covered, I'd group topics by grade level: begin with local, city state; move to country; then world.

As a teacher of both United States and World History, I find it difficult to believe that the benchmarks incorporated have any real merit beyond fulfilling an area of topical, if fragmented, interest. As written, there is no focus, no continuity, and no depth of inquiry or understanding. This is a hodge-podge approach to education. As an example, in Sub-strand D, specific mention is made of the Hanseatic League as a vital component of a high school education. Why? How many Minnesotans even know of the existence of the Hanseatic League, and so what if they don't. While it is interesting and meritorious to the scholar, most can survive with its omission. This is not the only example of this seemingly

frivolous inclusion of points of historic trivia. What is the purpose of historic inquiry if it to be thus trivialized? This answer will obviously fit well into a multiple-choice test format. Is this the best way to design valuable curriculum goals? I argue that it is not!

Grade 2 - III - Econ. Choices - do you really believe 2nd graders can grasp the concept of "opportunity cost"?

Grade 4 - World History, C Era 3 - If you're going to cover the Barbarians and the fear they instilled in Europe, you need to also indicate the fear the Europeans felt from the Arabs when they were on their military expansion of Islam. Yes it was a "convert or die" for a lot of the Arabian Peninsula. Eventually they calmed down and when they were able to get along with Jews and Christians, they experienced their hey day - that's when they made their great contributions to math and science. Once they went back to the "old" puritanical Islam (in the 1700's I think) they lost their ability to get along with others and that has resulted in the problems the planet is facing today.

Grade 7 - II US. Hist. - B, Era 4, Civil War - sorry I forgot to code US History - anyway, ...role that Lincoln's assination played in the North's attitudes - remove the word "hardening" b/c it's simply too subjective.

Grades 9-12 - II World History - C: Era 3 -you 'benchmark' the 5 religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jewdaism) but earlier on, you have the 5 as: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism and Jewdaism). I think you need to change the number to 6 and include Confuscianism.

Overall I think the standards are terrific. I am a bit concerned about the depth at the lower elem. grades but if the material is available it will work. This is quite an impressive result of a very (what I suspect was) painful effort. You are to be commended for your work. I actually required the memorization of the Preamble when I taught 5th grade - in my district, that was US History.

My major fear is without proper materials, the curriculum will be difficult to implement b/c no text I know of covers such a broad range of sujet matter and material. Good luck. Overall, looks good - with the above considerations.

We are training the younger generation to be better global citizens. They need to KNOW other parts of the world. For our political, economic, and cultural interactions with others in the world we need to be familiar with parts of Africa, Asia, Europe, Americas, Australia and other regions. Students should have a detailed full year of the USA and World Regional Geography course during high school.

I would hope the standards be more representational of ALL Americans. 12 women & 10 Af Am men are mentioned by name. Only 3 Native Am.- @ 70 white men are named and recommended worthy of study.

This by itself is bad enough. When added to the near absence of the Afr. Am. and Native Am. exp. it becomes unjust and bad scholarship.

The near genocide and continued racism against the Native Am. is left out.

Whenever there is mention of the A. Am. experience the people are mostly unnamed. Even the discussion of the civil rights movement is devoid of heroes, other than MLK. It seems like a systematical choice. ie: Why would Shays & the Whiskey Rebellion be chosen to demonstrate domestic resistance and not even 1 of the nearly 200 slave revolts that occurred betw. 1663 & 1865 be mentioned? Where's the Trail of Tears, a triumphant ex. of passive resistance? The "constraints" & "challenges" -KKK, Jim Crow and segregation - faced by A. Am. are not called terroristic or unjust, or even racist. Evidently, only the Irish & Chinese experienced racism in America. The "historical reasons" for the rise of the KKK is listed, but not the lasting effects of its terror . Wilson's adm is listed often, but not his segregating the fed govt, or the agonizing explosion of lynchings that occurred.

Instead of studying racism and its crippling effects our children will study the lyrics of Battle Hymn of the Republic and God Bless America. Our children will know the "significance" of the Founders' 4 references to god in the Dec of Inde, but not the importance of separation of church & state.

This shows why there is such an achievement gap. The curriculum ignores more than half the pop.

Why Wales , and not Mexico, Laos and Canada ? Have you checked your census lately?

I believe the correct time standard is BCE not BC. Let's try not to be too christocentric here. Remember that government is not to endorse any religion; perhaps some people should review the bill of rights.

While I see other issues with the standards, this shows a lack of knowledge or at least carelessness on the part of the preparers.

I have a couple of comments:

1. Why is there a section on understanding the "Rise of Islam" in 4th grade and "understanding of Islam" in 9-12, but no comparable sections on Christianity?

With respect to US History and citizenship sections, I see referrals to the history of suffrage and slavery, but no sections on how the United States led the world in eliminating slavery and dramatically reducing suffrage to women such that blacks and women have the highest standard of living in the United States relative to anywhere else in the world?

In looking over the social studies standards I find them overwhelming. There is no way that that amount of material can be taught and still have time for the basics. Also, the content is questionable. 9 and 10 year olds need to have an understanding of where they live before being turned loose on the world. It appears to me that the standard was driven by "Core Curriculum."

1. In a mainstream American History class, having the students know all the cultural aspects of all the major American Indian tribes as well as their traditions, customs, beliefs and scientific and cultural contributions is too much to expect.
2. Analyzing (which implies reading) the Magna Carta, Locke, and Montesquieu is better suited to World History or an A.P. class.
3. Discussing all the provisions of the Bill of Rights is a duplication from our government class.
4. The changing role of art, literature and music in the 1920's and 1930's is better suited for an American Literature class. There just isn't time.

BE REAL!!!! Do you have ANY knowledge of child development? Most of you 4th grade Social Studies Standards are inappropriate for this age child. PRIORITIZE!!!! Many of this stuff is irrelevant for future success as contributing adults in society. Let's teach them how to look up specific dates, places, and people. Why clutter their brains with useless facts????? How about we teach them 10 REALLY important benchmarks, that are beneficial to understanding. Standards 1C, IIc (US & World History) are not appropriate for the average 9-10 year old. This is college level materials, not elementary! Standard IB (Rights & Privileges) is also not developmentally appropriate for this age. Standard 1C needs a lot of work to be realistically understood by MOST 4th graders.. Standards II & III are most appropriate and in themselves make for a full year of Social studies. BR REAL PEOPLE....these standards are NOT!

Grade 1, Geography, Sub-strand B.

Benchmarks for first graders to identify North America and Minnesota on the globe, but not the U.S.A?

I have a few comments about the standards after WWII. I am concerned that nearly 60 years of history is being ignored. There appears to be nothing that addresses the 50's (for example the Joe McCarthy era looking for Communists should be discussed) the space race, the feminist movement should be discussed with some readings on the subject, Korea, Vietnam and the antiwar movement--this is huge and has important ripple effects in today's policies. Nixon resignation, Nixon reapproachment with China.

In this regard I am offended by the "current" history standard that specifically mentions the role of Ronald Reagan in the fall of communism. Beyond the fact that this is debatable, why mention him and not mention the contributions of numerous other Presidents in their time. eg Wilson and the rise of the League of Nations, Johnson and the Civil Rights Legislation and the "Great Society", Kennedy and the Peace Corps, Jimmy Carter and the Camp David accords--

There should be more on the 50's 60's and 70's, and less reference to individual presidents or if that seems important then be more comprehensive.

Finally although knowing what happened when is an important starting point older high school students should be expected to know alternative theories and interpretations of history --this is what true education and reasoning is about and will prepare students for the challenges of college curriculum. I think the concept of historical interpretation should be introduced early--even in the late primary grades.

I am the parent of a 1st grader and 4th grader. On top of that I am a middle school social studies teacher. I am concerned about the volume of content for each grade. It is unreasonable especially if you want children to study other content areas as well. I think the standards are not developmentally appropriate. Where is the research for teaching some of this world history in the elementary grades? There is far too much curriculum for the middle school grades. How is a student supposed to fit in their band, choir, or world language? Don't forget that the fine arts and elective classes are a vital part of education as well.

Thank you, Commissioner Yecke, for making Moorhead your first stop of the open forums. We appreciate the opportunity to share our questions and concerns.

NCLB allows standardized testing to negatively impact the lower percentile, struggling children. Teachers have already identified these children facing inequities for a myriad of

reasons: special education, socio/economic hardships and English as a second language to name a few. Certainly, students and schools will demonstrate statistical gains by teaching to the tests, but at what educational cost to the student? Are we focused upon the student as a statistic or a well-rounded, contributing member of the community?

Instead of choosing punitive solutions, why not channel the money used to implement yet another government program to more productive options? Let's provide alternatives to the educators. Use the money to offer grant programs targeted for the lower percentile, the failing or faltering students who will benefit from the use of multiple instructional and assessment practices. These techniques require additional time and resources in order to successfully teach and reach those students. Punitive reactions damage rather than encourage success in schools. If anything, those punitive responses hurt students, not systems.

Look at this common scenario. A student's former school is obligated to pay for the transportation to a different, non-failing school. Isn't this a fateful twist on the "rich get richer; the poor get poorer" as it relates to children's futures? Further, successful schools are not able to take in the students of the failing schools. In Time Magazine's 9-18-03 article, "Struggle of the Classes," by Perry Bacon, Kenia Olivero from New York felt forced to send her son to live with his uncle in order for her son to attend a school in suburban Greenwich, Conn. "I wish he could have stayed in the Bronx and just walked to school," Olivero says, "but there was nothing else I could do. The transfer system is hopeless." Certainly, the Bush administration would not advocate the separation of children from their families for the sake of a reasonable education?

While schools are told there is funding, previous reductions in funding negate any dollars that may be available. For example: Special Education is a federally mandated program which is currently not fully funded. If costly and underfunded requirements are not met, either through copious reporting methods or unavailable monies, schools face ramifications. These ramifications, again, affect children much more than the system. The end result: the wealthiest schools thrive, gaining more wealth. Poor schools will become defunct. What will happen to those students left behind? We cannot separate our schools from our children. Our schools are our children.

Further, we were not satisfied with Commissioner Yecke's answer to Mr. Dunn's question concerning assessments through the use of alternative learning capabilities such as multiple intelligences and portfolios. Ms. Yecke said that all through our lives we have tests and need to know how to be successful at test taking. Actually, tests are not that common after graduation. Schools test. Life--well, maybe, but not in multiple choice. If students are unable to pass standardized tests, are they then unable to live as successful members of our educated communities?

We, too, follow the belief of "no child left behind". This begs the question of what do we do when a student falls between the standardized test and graduation? Punitive responses to noncompliance do not create support and guidance for our schools nor our students.

The State of MN and the federal government needs to provide more money so teachers have the time and resources to find alternative learning and assessment methods to identify that small percentage of students who face the educational hardships, whether they be physical, emotional, societal or

In order to follow social studies best practice, it is necessary to be able to go into depth rather than surface "covering" of facts and memorization without understanding. To address this concern of not being able to do into depth with topics, I am submitting feedback from K-5 teachers in my district regarding those benchmarks deemed not developmentally appropriate in hopes that at least these can be eliminated:

Kindergarten - US History A. 2nd benchmark; World History A. 2nd benchmark; B; Concepts of Time, 2nd benchmark and 3rd benchmark; Geography B. 2nd benchmark; Economics A. 1st benchmark, B 1st benchmark. Please also keep in mind that kindergarten is 1/2 day and we are requiring much in the way of reading, writing, and math.

I am embarrassed to teach in a State that considers standards like these acceptable. Every shred of research and theory about education supports asking students to move to higher levels of thinking skills whereas these standards emphasize memorization and rote learning. These standards are divisive and do not represent our values as a state. A rich and varied knowledge of content is crucial for successful learning, but these standards do not begin to address the important abstract concepts crucial to Social Studies, nor do they teach students the important analytical skills they will need in life. Further, these standards are so prescriptive they leave little time for responsible teachers to add the skill based components in their own. These standards are not acceptable.

In order to follow social studies best practice, it is necessary to be able to go into depth rather than surface "covering" of facts and memorization without understanding. To address this concern of not being able to do into depth with topics, I am submitting feedback from K-5 teachers in my district regarding those benchmarks deemed not developmentally appropriate in hopes that at least these can be eliminated: Grade 1: US History B 1st and 3rd benchmarks; World History A both benchmarks B 2nd

benchmark; Concepts of Time 2nd and 3rd benchmarks; Govt and Citiz. A. 1st, 2nd benchmarks; Geography A. 2nd benchmark; B. 1st and 3rd benchmarks, C. 1st, 3rd, 4th benchmarks; D. 1st, 2nd, 4th benchmarks; none of the econ benchmarks are appropriate. Again, first graders are deeply involved in learning to read.

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Grade 2: US History A. only the early settlers part of the 2nd benchmark, B. only the 3rd benchmark IS appropriate; World History A. neither benchmark, B. 1st benchmark; Govt Citiz B. 3rd benchmark; Geography B. 1st benchmark; Econ A. 1st benchmark, B 1st,2nd benchmarks.

In order to follow social studies best practice, it is necessary to be able to go into depth rather than surface "covering" of facts and memorization without understanding. To address this concern of not being able to do into depth with topics, I am submitting feedback from K-5 teachers in my district regarding those benchmarks deemed not developmentally appropriate in hopes that at least these can be eliminated:Grade 3: US History A-1. 1st benchmark; A-2 neither, B - none are appropriate. World History A and B - none; Essential Skills - no; Govt Citiz. B-1. 1st benchmark, B-2 neither, C 1st,3rd, 4th, 5th benchmarks;Geography D 2nd and 3rd benchmarks; Econ A. 2nd and 3rd benchmarks, B. 1st benchmark

In order to follow social studies best practice, it is necessary to be able to go into depth rather than surface "covering" of facts and memorization without understanding. To address this concern of not being able to do into depth with topics, I am submitting feedback from K-5 teachers in my district regarding those benchmarks deemed not developmentally appropriate in hopes that at least these can be eliminated:

Grade 4: None of the History benchmarks except the one in essential skills are appropriate. In Govt Citiz B-1. 1st benchmark. B-2 neither; B-3 neither; B-4 first; C none are appropriate; Geography B 7th, 8th benchmarks, C 1st, 3rd benchmark, D 5th and 6th benchmarks; Econ A none.

In order to follow social studies best practice, it is necessary to be able to go into depth rather than surface "covering" of facts and memorization without understanding. To address this concern of not being able to do into depth with topics, I am submitting feedback from K-5 teachers in my district regarding those benchmarks deemed not developmentally appropriate in hopes that at least these can be eliminated:

Grade 5: World History D-1 1st benchmark, D-3 2nd, 3rd, 4th benchmarks, D-4 none; Govt Citiz B 1st, 2nd, 5th, C 1st benchmark; Geography B BEenchmarks 2-7, D Benchmarks 2-4; Econ. none.

Please do NOT integrate social studies beyond 5th grade. STudents need a concentrated study to have understanding. There are TOO MANY benchmarks; memorization will be forgotten. REsearch tells us to limit topics and teach in depth. Middle school teachers in our district feel the proposed standards are "Euro-centric" and too focused on MN, US & Europe. WE need to affirm and appreciate the diversity in our midst. Please be sure the standards do not have either a liberal or conservative slant. Making the standards leveled rather than grade level specific would greatly help limit the number of topics and allow teaching for understanding. A suggestion is K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Please review the research on best practice in social studies before the final document is drafted. See the book, Best Practice, New STandards for TEaching and Learning in America's Schools, Heinemann Publishers. Thank you.

I attended the hearing at Coon Rapids High School. Where were the Social Studies Committee members (only one was in attendance). Since there is no complete recording of the testimony, how do you expect to make changes based on the input from the people at these hearings if you do not attend? There was competition for membership on the committee. It is your obligation to attend. If you can't then you should resign and let someone who can attend take your place.

page 8 Grade 3 Government includes: identify the functions of legislative, executive and judicial branches.

page 12 Grade 4 Government includes: the relationship between the branches of government, and lawmaking.

These functions and processes are major components of the standard high school level course in American Government. With high school students the complexity of these functions and the relationship between the branches can be explored with in depth. They are capable of understanding the difficulty of making a law, the tradeoffs, the nuances. Expecting 9 or 10 year olds to really "explain" these processes with any degree of understanding is unreasonable. All that could be understood by most students at this age would be the simple flow chart version without any resemblance to reality.

page 11 Grade 4 U.S. History includes: understand the conflicts that resulted in the emergence of two political parties represented by Hamilton and Jefferson. For a 10 year old this is a much too difficult set of conflicts, as would be the resulting permanence of the two party system in America through its entire history and the occasional impact of third parties. Yet these are not found elsewhere in the standards leading to the likelihood that they would receive only limited instruction at this elementary level and be overlooked later when students have the capability to grasp much better what really happened.

page 12 Grade 4 Government includes: describe the organization, role and constituencies of political parties; and the nomination and election process.

page 16 Grade 5 Government includes: describe the distribution of governmental power. "...compare the extent of participation in the political process" (sic)

Again, these are far more complex than typical elementary age students can either understand or be motivated to learn. Certainly some degree of knowledge about political parties and the election process can be learned at the age of 10 -12. However, These processes are far more complex and should be included in the high school standards. By the time students reach high school where these are more typically taught with some detail, students are more likely to see the connection to their own lives and be able to develop insight into these issues. As a side note, the last line above is grammatically incorrect as printed in the Benchmark and is not a complete thought.

page 32 Grade 8 Government includes: understands the arguments and concepts set forth in the Federalist Papers especially checks and balances (Papers 9 and 48), federalism (Papers 10 and 45), and representation (Paper 10) and how government has the same foundation as it did at the time of its founding, and how our government has changed within that foundation over time.

Important concepts, no doubt, but to what degree will a 13 year old student "understand" them? If it is just the simple concepts of checks and balances, etc. it seems reference to the Federalist Papers, especially by number, is not needed. If the student is to be expected to delve into these papers, then it is an unreasonable expectation at this grade level. The Federalist Papers are very challenging reading for the most talented students in high school. They would challenge most adults. They would certainly overwhelm most 8th grade students. Likewise, the change of our government over time within the original foundation is a basic idea, but it is ripe with rich and varied complexities. Do we wish to have our citizens know this only at a basic level of understanding that would be reasonable at 8th grade, or do we want a higher degree of comprehension?

When one backs away from the details of each benchmark and just considers the outline of the major areas to be assessed, there appears to be very significant gaps in the proposal. These major gaps are often overlooked in the details of what is omitted. Other gaps exists at the most likely grade level placement for them, while the missing concepts are included at another level, but in a simplified form that significantly waters-down their complexity. Thus, the richness of these concepts as they should be learned is missed.

Missing from the Grades 9 - 12 Government and U.S. History Benchmarks are the three branches of our U.S. government — their current structure, function and interrelationship. These can only be found in the early grades (mostly grades 3, 4 and 5. some at grade 8) where the complexity, nuances and true nature of these branches could not be learned. At the high school level – the stepping off point for voters — they are absent from the proposed standards. The historical foundation and Constitutional principles of these branches (separation of powers, and checks and balances) are listed on page 49. However, there seems to be no point where an understanding of the actual functioning of our current government is expected.

The process for writing legislation is likewise left to grade 4 (page 12) where only a rudimentary version of the process could be learned by most students. If taught at the high school level, students can learn about the tradeoffs, the compromise process, the influences of lobbying, the power of standing committees, the importance of conference committees and the influence of the President.

The Judicial Branch, which has been so vital to the maintenance of American rights, is not mentioned in the high school standards. The Bill of Rights is only as strong as the will of the people to act upon them and the courts to oversee their application by the legislative and executive branch. If not included in the high school standards, these will fade from the educational experience of students and be replace with an emphasis on the other areas of knowledge that are included.

Missing entirely from the high school U.S. History standards is the period of the late 1960's through the mid-1970's when there was tremendous social uncertainty and change. This period included the turning of America against the Viet Nam War; the assassinations of leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and Robert Kennedy; the counter culture, the rise of violent protests groups in both the Civil Rights Movement and the Anti-War Movement; the withdrawal of President Johnson from contention for reelection; Nixon's detente with the U.S.S.R. and his trip to China; the Watergate scandal and the fall of Nixon; the end of U.S. involvement in the Viet Nam War; and many other significant events. This decade still influences our culture and political climate today. It should be included in a rich U.S. History program at the high school level.

page 23 Grade 7 U.S. History includes: understand the significance of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and the Mayflower Compact page 48 Grade 9-12 Government

includes: analyze the influence of leading western thinkers . . . Locke, Montesquieu, and Blackstone and of religion (such as the Puritans). and of ancient Greek and Roman governments.

If the work of Montesquieu and Blackstone, Puritans, Greeks and Romans are so important that they must be assessed, then what about the Iroquois Confederation, much admired by Benjamin Franklin and others of that time. Also, couldn't the Petition of Right, New England Confederation, the Albany Plan of Union be equally valued? Certainly some of these need to be included in the standards and benchmarks, but not so many. Only the most significant should be included – those that stand out as key to a citizen's understanding of our history, culture and government. Key concepts found in these works are often woven into the students' learning. The names of each is of less importance in most cases.

There is enough detail in the standards as proposed to choke most teachers and the students. There are two dangers in including this amount of detail. One is that it will overwhelm all else that is good and necessary in our social studies programs. These include the rich stories of history, government and culture; the personal tales that show how events on a national or world scale influenced the lives of ordinary people; the processes of research; the interaction of simulation; the presentation skills often demonstrated by students. Secondly, this level of detail in the standards encourages a fight to include all the other details that could be equally important but have so far been left out. The end result would be a monstrous document two or three times as large as this one if those details are accepted, or a flawed document that has many gaps and political opposition from those whose favorite details are excluded. Instead the standards need to be less detailed. They should focus instead on major areas of knowledge, with only those key facts and concepts that are agreed upon. Other key areas of learning can be described in broader terms so that they can be taught and assessed with some local control and flexibility.

page 11 Grade 4 U.S. History includes: understand key factors and events contributing to the colonial's defeat of the British, including an account of the Battle of Trenton, and understand the accomplishments of the first five presidents. While the key factors contributing to the defeat of the British matter, is it necessary for the benchmarks to be so specific as to name one battle of which the students must give an account. Also, if the first five Presidents are so important to 4th grade students then perhaps numbers 6 and 7 (John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson) should also be understood. If 6 and 7 are important, what about all of the rest? Certainly key presidents must be known by students, but there must be more care and economy in selecting what is detailed in the standards.

page 50 Grade 9-12 Government includes: the difference between inalienable rights as described in the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights, versus limited rights as described in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These documents describe several rights that would be recognizable to most residents, including high school students, in the United States. In fact, many are commonly recognized or sought throughout the world. The distinction stated in the benchmark between "inalienable rights" and "limited rights" is another matter. What that distinction is and whether it is a key understanding may occupy may academic philosophers, but is it truly a distinction for all high school students in Minnesota to ponder and demonstrate an understanding of?

I don't think that 5th graders can "develop a chronological sequence of persons, events, and concepts in each historical era studied in this grade" with Westward Growth and Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction in U.S. history AND with Era 4 of World History . . . the Silk Road, Marco Polo, Ghengis Khan, Mongol Conquest . . . major contributions of the Mayan, Aztek, and Incan civilizations, also describing Muslim control of earlier European trade routes . . . decline of European feudal system and the rebirth of cities . . . They're also expected to identify significance of the Gutenberg printing press, Bible translations . . . Protestant Reformation, Copernicus and Galileo . . . (pages 14-15) 5th graders need to be able to connect historical eras, and I can't see any connections among these events and eras. Along with the Government & Citizenship, Geography, and Economic benchmarks, there is way too much content and too many unrelated concepts.

K-3 Omit teaching "world history" in early grades. Start with community, state and U.S. history. Test results show U.S. students lack a basic knowledge of U.S. history, we have a lot of ground to make up

In the geography strand, the words "regions" and "boundaries" are used interchangeably, this is confusing. A state, country, continent, etc. has clear boundaries as indicated on a world map. Need to be consistent and clear in what you mean.

In the economics strand, wherever "market economy" is used, instead use the words "free-market economy" to describe the U.S. economy.

Rewrite the standard under sub-strand B to read, "The student will understand the rights of citizenship and the responsibility of government". As it is currently written, there seems to be no distinction between them. Need to correctly define the purpose of citizenship and the purpose of government. They are not the same.

Great history standards, THANK YOU!!

While we are not a Christian nation, we are a nation founded on Judeo-Christian principles. This is very clear if one can find original documents. Current textbooks edit out anything that indicates this. Even if it offends, true history with original writings must be taught or we do our students an injustice.

P3 1.I.C - need to define what state and national symbols are, what an anthem is and why it's important to have them.

All grades II.D. Omit this sub-strand (Interconnections) or balance the arguments equally. As written, these benchmarks are not objective and seem to focus on the negative. Recycling is not all it's cracked up to be. Ask any sanitary engineer what happens once this stuff is collected. I sense radical environmentalism creeping in this sub-strand.

P6, 2.II.A. Last benchmark too simple.

P6, 2.II.D. Instead of "explain how human activities impact the environment" (bad humans-negative) use, "explain how human activities such as irrigation systems improve the production of food, creates electrical power without using fossil fuels", for example.

P7, 3.I.B Second benchmark, why are we emphasizing "how people interacted with their environment"? Without being clear, this is subjective. Do we use today's understanding and try to apply it to the times of the colonial period? How can this be done objectively?

P8, 3.I.B First benchmark, use verbiage used in founding documents, such as "understand that all men are "endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights". Add, "Understand that protecting these rights are the primary focus of the U.S. government".

Third benchmark, minority rights should be changed to "equal" rights.

Are these benchmarks supposed to be examples of rights, privileges and responsibilities? I see no rights listed here. I may exercise my right as long as I do not violate the rights of another. (I.e. I have the right to swing my arms until they come into contact with your nose).

Fourth benchmark, Saying "compromise is a necessity" is an opinion. Replace with "choice" or "option" if you say anything at all.

P10, 3.III.A 2nd benchmark, recognize that human resources are unique from other resources. Human resources are not possessions we place a value on like we do with natural and capital resources.

P12, 4.I.B. 1st benchmark insert "using original documents".

P12, 4.I.B. 2nd benchmark, these three points do not line up with verbiage in founding documents, but are what we consider good things. Are we teaching true citizenship or what we believe citizenship should be? Big difference.

P16, 5.I.B. 3rd benchmark, add and judicial.

P16, 5.II.A. What is the concept of a region?

P17, 5.III.A insert in standard and benchmark "free" market economy.

P18, 6.I. This is not history. What is the relevance of "Students will know and understand the interaction among these groups with the environment and one another". What does the environment have to do with history?

p 26, 6.II.A. What are the "five fundamental themes of geography" and are they objective?

2nd benchmark, An essential skill is to use maps and pictures to analyze interactions between people and their environment? What map will show me this? This is sociology.

p 21, 6.II.C. Is regions or boundaries meant? Where are these regions found on a map?

p 21, 6.III.A Add "free" market economy. Add "student will understand that private property is the foundation of a free market economy.

p 22, 6.III.B. 2nd benchmark substitute the word "regulate" with "attempts to influence".

p 23, 7.II.A. Add, "Students will understand the Bill of Rights as intended by four founders applied only to the federal government. It was not until the 20th century that these provisions were extended to the states."

Last benchmark is wrong/misleading. Remove it or balance the statement to allow for critical thought. "Separation of Church and State" is found nowhere in the U.S. Constitution, and to imply it is so is wrong. The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was to allow freedom to worship or not to worship. The STATE, in this case Virginia, had no right to tax citizens to support any church or force citizens to worship. In Jefferson's time, the 1st Amendment applied to the federal government, not the state.

p 25, 7.II.B. replace "consequences" with "outcomes". Consequences sounds negative.

p 27, 7.II.C. What is meant in the standard, "human characteristics of places?" This is subjective cannot be measured and should be removed. Is this geography or earth worship?

p 27, 7.II.D. 3rd benchmark "Attitudes towards the environment" is subjective and should be deleted. This whole standard should be deleted.

p 27, 7.III.A. Add "free" market economy.

p 28, 7.III.D. Replace benchmark with "Compare and contrast different forms of government and the degree to which each influences their economy. Introduce the concept of the "invisible hand" in the free-market economy and its self managing qualities."

p 32, 8.II.A. Again, do not use the word "regions". 2nd benchmark, geographical locations do not have "human characteristics". 5th benchmark "impact of human activity" is political/controversial, subjective and not measurable unless your outcome is clear. This does not belong in geography.

p 36, 8.III.A. "free" market economy.

p 51, 9-12.II.A. Subjective benchmarks. Whose view will be pushed on the impact of international boundaries on human behavior and economic activities of America? This needs to be taught in the confines of U.S. laws and founding documents. Otherwise this is subject to political philosophies.

p 52, 9-12.II.C. The word "sustainable" means different things to different people and is political in nature. I sense radical environmentalism creeping in this sub-strand. This is not geography.

p 53, 9-12.III.A. Use "free" market economy. Add "Students will understand the advantages of a free market economy versus command and mixed economies."

p 55, 9-12.III.A. Add to this sentence, "Students will recognize that many government policies attempt to redistribute income; however it is not the role of government in a free market economy."

U.S.History - A In this benchmark who determines who is valued enough to remember?

In the first benchmark colonization and early settlement are very broad areas. Are these areas age appropriate enough to spend the amount of time required to truly understand?

U.S. History B - Migration and colonization influencing American history is a tremendously broad concept. Are there grade level materials (textbooks, etc.) with this type of focus for 6 year olds? With a large focus in first grade on reading, will there be sufficient time to cover all these areas in U.S. History? Would a focus closer to their own experience (urban, suburban, rural) be more age appropriate to understand deeply before moving to a more distant focus?

World History A - Who will determine which civilizations are studied? Would studying history from history of their own family or school or more concrete area for 6 year olds be more appropriate for their level of thinking so they can begin to understand history in a deep way?

World History B - Which events would be chosen and why?

Creating a timeline uses higher level thinking skills. Good idea.

Gov't & Citizenship B - Change to introduced to. . .

Gov't & Citizenship C - Low level thinking skills throughout all the benchmarks in this section. What real, deep learning will students take from this?

Geography A & B - Actually mapping their own classroom would involve higher level skills rather than the low level rote in these benchmarks.

Geography C - This is a huge area. When will students have time to learn to read? I am a first grade teacher and I know how much time this takes.

Geography D - Why would we do some of this in first grade?

Economics A - Goods and services is another huge area for grade 1 and who came up with "Barter" as important?

Economics B - The big idea of needs and wants (which looks like is in Kindergarten) is more appropriate for 6 year olds and is in grade 1 Social Study texts. Are most of the benchmarks you have in this grade level in the texts being produced?

Who will pay for the textbooks and other curricular materials necessary for these standards to be implemented? The state and federal governments are good at mandating and then not provided districts with the funds to do that which they mandate. Where has the idea of local control of schools gone?

Are there grade level materials being produced that match these benchmarks and outcomes?

The benchmarks in grade one are very low level thinking in nature as a whole. There are a few that require some deeper thinking.

Grade one needs to spend a considerable amount of time on reading. The requirements in the benchmarks for grade one would involve a great deal of time.

Most of the new social studies standards for first grade are developmentally inappropriate. Students are not yet ready to perform the high order and critical thinking demands required by some of these standards.

The history and social studies standards are age or developmentally appropriate for children in the elementary. Younger children are learning about their life and the community they live in, not how to compare and contrast what it was like as a Pioneer. Exposure to items are one thing but discuss, describe, associate, distinguish between and etc. are not developmentally appropriate for primary students.

One question, I have, is where are we going to find a text that has all of information in that we need to teach? Are the teachers to find and/or write their own text? If yes, is there extra money for curriculum development being planned in the state budget for curriculum/text book writing?

The standards are pedagogically unsound and extremely narrowly focused with a libertarian slant that does not reflect Minnesota values.

1. These standards do not appear to have been drafted by people with a good understanding of the age-appropriateness of certain concepts for children at various ages. These standards set forth someone's IDEAL of what children should know and understand at various ages. While we might wish it, nature has decreed certain limits in understanding and thinking while development takes place.
2. These standards assume that every child in every Minnesota public school classroom has as her primary learning style the rote memorization of facts, dates, names, places, etc. This does not describe every student; in fact, some of the brightest, most promising students in our systems have problems with this type of learning because their brains are structured differently. If a child's thinking style is more creative than is allowed for in the pure pursuit of facts, that student will be lost with these standards. Our system will hamper the learning and lose the gifts of these students if such concrete, fact-based standards form the heart of our social studies curriculum.
3. I find gaping holes in these standards. They embody a world-view that was in place when I was in school over 40 years ago - before women became recognizable contributors to our society in large, significant and visible ways, for example. Where in this curriculum is there any in-depth consideration of women's contributions and the struggle to gain the right to have those contributions recognized? 4. My largest concern is that there appears to be no concern in these standards for teaching our students to think critically, to ask the questions rather than simply answering them. While facts can form the basis for understanding, with no process for evaluating and critiquing the information we glean from facts, the facts themselves are empty and of little use beyond recitation. We must prepare our children to take their places equipped with facts plus thinking and processing skills.

As a parent and a public school principal, I have some serious concerns over the content of some of the proposed Academic Standards for History and Social Studies, especially as they relate to elementary school students. My concerns center around three specific content areas and their potential impact:

1. The forced inclusion of "Core Knowledge" style curriculum in public schools with its emphasis on Greek and Roman History beginning in grade 1 and found especially in grades 3-6 is of little relevance or necessity in a public elementary school where our time is better served focusing on the "Three R's" and American History.
2. The comparison study of world religions in third grade where the students are at such an impressionable, yet intellectually immature age that a balanced understanding of such a complex topic is difficult at best. This is an excellent topic, but probably could be much better served in a middle or high school comparative religion class.
3. The overemphasis of the study of Islamic culture in grades 5 and 6. While small pockets of our major cities within the state have a fairly significant number of Islamic students, to the vast majority of this state's population, this smacks of an over-reaction to the events following 9/11 and of questionable value at the elementary school level.

Finally, if the inclusion of the above noted academic standards is approved:

1. Where do we find teachers who are fully qualified (as required by the No Child Left Behind Act) to teach such subjects as Greek, Roman, and Islamic histories and comparative religions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Christianity?
2. Where do we find the textbooks to teach these non-traditional subjects and the money to pay for them...aside from asking us to discard our current, perfectly good social studies materials?
3. Where do we find the time to teach these new standards in a school day that already focusing on reading, writing and arithmetic standards?

With resources limited, the integrated standards found K-8 would be a drain on resources and appropriate materials would be difficult to get.

After reading through the standards, it would appear that we are trying to get our kids ready for a game of trivial pursuit at the next meeting of the Republican Party. The standards are a mile wide and an inch deep, and obviously influenced by the conservative viewpoint of our current leaders.

The US History standard is way too long. Two teachers teach it at our HS in a half year block schedule. We have enough trouble going from the Civil War through the present day. Now the new standards require pre-colonial times to be covered thru the War on Terror. If you have taught US history before, you can realize this is an impossible task. I strongly urge you to cut down this standard, not include names and so many benchmarks. No person can get through these benchmarks with an average class of 10th graders.

Currently teaching a World Geography course that has been very successful for a number of years. Returning students have told us they have found great success in college geography after taking our classes. The following concerns regarding the new standards/would like to offer some recommendations: Focus of a HS geography course should be a world focus rather than U.S. focus. 8th Gr Geography is and should be U.S. focus. We are criticized nationally for a lack of global knowledge, not a lack of U.S. knowledge; World Concepts/issues are better understood at the senior high level. The local/national issues are more suited to 8th grade; We don't believe distance decay, Von Thunen,

Webber are necessary at the HS level-commonly taught in upper level college courses or AP courses.

3. Minnesota geography is currently covered in the 6th grade curriculum and therefore is not necessary at the high school level where the time could be better spent on global issues. 4. Voting districts are covered in government and thus would be duplication.

5. Tectonic forces and soil types are currently covered in Earth Science and would cause unnecessary duplication. The time could be better spent on global issues.

6. It isn't realistic to expect high schools to teach GPS and GIS technology because we don't have the necessary equipment or training in order to properly teach these technologies. Additional funding and training would be required and with already strapped budgets, it is unlikely that districts could afford such technology. 7. Students being able to locate and analyze physical, economic and cultural characteristics of world regions should be in the senior high geography curriculum. Because the world no longer centers on the United States, it is imperative that our senior high students have extensive knowledge of all the varied regions of the world.

As I read through the standards as an educator and a parent, I was concerned about the amount of things that the students are supposed to know. How is it possible to get through all of the material that is 'listed' in the amount of time that kids are in school? I want my child and my student to know the 'story' of history not dull dry lists! Students that understand the 'story' become more interested in the event and therefore learn the particulars of the event through the story! The new standards don't give the opportunity to do that in the depth in which students would need to find the passion of the story.

I am not interested in having my kids memorize dates in history. They need to understand how events in history and politics and geography all fit together. They need to be able to analyze and compare using critical thinking , knowledge and understanding. I have a child who has memory processing problems. Memorizing huge pieces of information is very difficult for her. I would appreciate the other approach for her style of learning. As a history and social science major the facts were not always as important as the significant historical meaning. In our ever changing world having critical thinkers is very important.

Concepts of time: insert the word "simple" before timeline in benchmark one.

The benchmarks are too specific. Leave the benchmarks off and let each individual school district set the curriculum.

First Benchmark--Sometimes a good citizen stands for the people against the government.

Second benchmark--patriotism cannot be forced and civil disobedience may be a very patriotic act although others may not see it that way at the time.

Students will know and understand key roles of individuals...promotes white male elitism.

Patriotic Symbols, Songs, Events--Too much emphasis on national symbols--icons are not what makes a great nation--high standard of national behavior does that.

What is the purpose of knowing about midieval Europe?

Why name the current governor? To prove they can memorize a name?

Patriotic symbols, songs, and events standard elevates symbols, songs, and places to a level of veneration similar to religious icons and shrines.

Axum, Kush, Mali, and Songhi? In 4th grade?

These are major cultures?

Geography is at an introductory level in first grade--perhaps "compare and contrast various landforms" should be moved to fifth grade.

These standards would be appropriate for a High School Senior or beginning 2 years of college as a survey in Social Studies/History/Gov't. etc. This is way to all inclusive for 4th grade. We would have to have 5 text books to cover this amount of material. There is very limited time in a day 30-45 minutes at most for social studies. These standards as they are would never be able to be covered in 1 year.

Geography interconnections -- These benchmarks are very sophisticated for most students. We know as educators that proper learning will not happen if the student doesn't have enough background knowledge. This standard and the benchmarks that go with it are a good example of NOT ENOUGH BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE. Be more realistic in your expectations of students.

The educational back lash from these standards will be tremendous. They will not be taught. No teacher could cover this in one year. Ridiculous.

How often do you go to the grocery store, fill a cart, and then say, "I'm ready to barter now." What era are we living in?

"including" makes a state curriculum--leave out the names of individuals

Benchmark 2 in Famous People in World History is developmentally inappropriate. Also, why these civilizations and not others?

Character Traits of Good Citizens--let teachers and students pick their own heroes.

Second graders will not get a lot out of the study of the Declaration of Independence--little bit above their heads.

I do not have enough quality instructional time to promote tourist attractions in my classroom. Let the states advertise Mount Rushmore, etc. These are THINGS, not our country.

Studying Flag Day etc. does not promote citizenship. Why are we trying to personify artificial days of the year? Is Hallmark cards paying for this standard?

Geography--Physical Features--gets a little sophisticated here. An 8 year old is supposed to "examine and be able to describe places they read and study about in terms of both physical and human features." We're grateful if they understand setting and can describe something about setting. I don't delve into the physical and human features of most of the things I read.

Did anyone bother to see what book companies are publishing for various grade levels? We have just spent over \$50,000 in our district on a new American History curriculum for fifth grade. According to the new standards, one of our big focuses will be on World History from 1000-1500. Just what are we supposed to do with the new textbooks that we purchased?! Fifth graders are NOT developmentally ready to study world history. They are just getting their bearings on themselves and their relationship to their state and country. Do we know go to our school board and tell them we need more money for new textbook? Hey, we don't have any money!! What were the writers thinking?! In reading other grade level benchmarks, I realize that NO one was looking at what each grade level is ready to handle!! I have been teaching for 31 years and these standards are not well written and not well thought out! I have been at the fifth grade level for 20 years and our social studies curriculum has ALWAYS focused on American history.

In my second grade class, we discuss "opportunity cost" everyday--get real!!! Even if this obtuse term was in the Profile of Learning, that is not a good reason to include it in 2nd grade social studies.

B. Are these the only world religions? Why do they have to identify key figures in this field. Sneaking in a little church here?

After reading many of the comments, it is clear that a number of concerns are coming up over and over again. Here are the ones I notice most:

1)These standards are NOT appropriate for the age of the students in many cases.

2)We are teaching students to MEMORIZE or RECITE for Jeopardy instead of THINKING or UNDERSTANDING for life.

3)There is a pretty obvious POLITICAL bias in many of the strands (one example: 3 very positive mentions of Reagan and other recent presidents ignored). It seems as though the conservatives that worked on this committee and the conservative administration (and commissioner) may have had MUCH more pull than the moderate or progressive participants did. This is truly a shame and will hurt students and teachers alike.

4)Does it make sense to teach a little of everything each year instead of focusing on a particular subject matter each year? HOW WILL DISTRICTS BE ABLE TO PURCHASE NEW TEXTBOOKS FOR HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMICS, AND CIVICS FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL?? What will we do with the old ones that are meant for a particular age level (Northern Lights for 6th grade for example) and intended to be used for a full term??

I truly hope that the committee (ALL members) can come together in a more MODERATE fashion and deal with these repeated concerns. I also hope they can do it in a way that is NOT POLITICAL and takes into consideration the concerns of all who will have to deal with these new standards.

I am concerned that these standards appear to have a conservative political bias to them. This has been noted both in the media and also at the feedback meetings and on

numerous comments made to this webpage. My real concern is the make-up of this committee. The only member of the committee that I know personally is a very active member of the Republican Party at the local, state and national levels, reportedly works for Sen. Coleman and is even the founder and chairman of a "Greater Minnesota Victory Fund", the only purpose of which is to raise money for Republican candidates in rural Minnesota. Of course, this does not make him unable to serve on the committee, but there would be no way for the general public to know his strong ideological viewpoints. My concern is that many of the members of this committee may also be very conservative or active in the Republican Party and that is perhaps the reason why they are on the committee and also why we have right-of-center proposed standards. I hope that my concerns are not reality.

In what areas are standards being developed (in addition to Science and Social Studies?)

Keep the standards and even add more important themes to each era. Include strands of politics and controversial issues, the trends & consequences of decisions & changes, foreign policy, immigration and race relations, major social issues and cultural trends.

Remove the phrase "demonstrate knowledge of" from the standards and replace it with higher level thinking skills (Bloom's taxonomy).

It is critical that the committee uses a criteria for including a theme based on what every Minnesota high school student needs to understand from U.S. History, not just a list which appears to be copied from a textbook table of contents. While it would be nice for every student to have an encyclopedic knowledge of U.S. History, it is unrealistic. State standards should focus on the core concepts.

At a minimum, remove the benchmark lists of "including but not limited to" because of silly inclusions and glaring omissions. Assume that in covering the theme, the teacher will highlight the important people, places, events and terms. These would only be necessary to give direction to a testing company to create a standardized multiple choice test, but that would be a test of memorized trivia rather than a true understanding of the theme.

Try to remove the study of history from the battles between liberals and conservatives by emphasizing the balanced study of events and issues rather than the inclusion of obvious buzzwords and emphasis which promotes a political agenda.

"We will post your comments into the public draft on our Web site a few days after you submit them using this form." Delay gives public perception of possible "screening." Why not use same technology as PUPS/MAPSSS at www.PetitionOnline.com, at least for general comments? The key would be to draft the opening pieces to be NONpetition-like for general public comment. Realize standard-specific comments may have to be managed using database software, but surely could be set up direct without delay. Wondering why DoE isn't making better use of available technology.

Mandate that each student in Minnesota has a course of study in western history and at least one course in non-western history (area study) to provide more depth than a "mile wide and an inch deep" survey of World History which could only lead to a exercise in trivia.

Revisit the standards and benchmarks to focus on concepts the students need to know and understand from the vast expanse of World History eras & places. The current benchmarks appear to have been copied from the table of contents from a World History textbook. If there is a specific time and place that every Minnesota high school student needs to know and understand, then specifically mention it. Otherwise, list general themes as standards and let schools use western and non-western history to illustrate that concept or theme.

The geography standards and benchmarks appear to have been copied from a geography textbook or a college intro. to geography course. It is unnecessary for Minnesota high school students to become geographers, demographers or urban planners, but it is critical that they understand the role of "place" and human geography in learning about events & concepts in history and current events. Therefore, "place" should be integrated into the study of history as part of the context and then students will become more geographically literate than by either rote memorization or a stand alone subject.

The world history section of this standard is NOT age appropriate for 9 year olds. They have difficulty understanding the basic concepts of time during the 200+ years of American history. How can we possibly expect them to understand the Barbarian invasions on Europe, the Byzantine Empire following the Dark Ages, the origin of Islam (most 4th graders don't realize Lutherans, Catholics and Methodists are Christians), plus major cultures in Africa. This sounds like a course for high school or college students. Plus there are no materials availabe and most teachers are too busy teaching reading and math to write their own units. In my 25+ years of teaching primarily 4th grade we have

studied regions of America including geography, history, and economy of each region, plus a country elsewhere in the world with similar geographic features. Please make these standards age appropriate and give us more time to teach reading and math. Thank you.

Too conservative, too much attention paid to religion especially in the lower elem. Gr 3--- major world religions Kids can't comprehend these things at this age.

I am concerned about the initial draft of the standards. The social studies teachers at my son's middle school gave me examples of facts (which it apparently emphasizes) that seem to be from a conservative point of view and Jim Davnie's opinion piece, printed on October 5 in the Star and Tribune, also spoke about the emphasis on facts and a large proportion supporting a conservative point of view as well as not developing skills of higher level problem solving or thinking. Why weren't the standards already in place used to to build on and refine. It seems to be such a waste of time, money and resources to completely throw out what we had in place and start all over, especially if it is promoting a conservative point of view and also not prompting higher level thinking. I am very concerned and disheartened.

"Students will know individuals and groups associated with exploration and expansion within the United States, including, but not limited to, Daniel Boone, Davy Crocket, Lewis and Clark, and Sacajawea."

The examples given will shape students' understanding of the subject. Why was Sacajawea the only American Indian named? This seems to be tokenism in order to represent both women and Indians. Using Sacajawea as an example overemphasizes the cooperation of some Indians in White expansion. (I also note that Squanto is mentioned in the very first Kindergarten benchmark.) The examples should include Sitting Bull or Geronimo or others representing Indians who resisted White expansion.

"Students will compare and contrast characteristics of ancient cultures such as Persia, Egypt, China, India with Greece."

The classical age of Greece did not begin until after 1000 B.C.E. Why should students compare and contrast the other civilizations with Greece, rather than examining them on their own terms?

Two suggestions: replace Persia with Mesopotamia. The term Persia is anachronistic here. Also, replace the Christian-specific abbreviations B.C. and A.D. with B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era). This terminology is not a matter of political correctness. It is simply culturally neutral and inclusive. I use B.C.E. and C.E. at this Lutheran college, and it should be used in public schools.

"The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Rome in terms of its impact on Western civilization."

It is strange that Greece is emphasized in the period before 1000 B.C.E. but ignored in its classical age of Plato, Aristotle, Athens, and Sparta. Without Greece, there would have been no Roman civilization. This standard should be rewritten to encompass both Greece and Rome.

"Students will locate on a map the site of origin for Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Judaism, and Hinduism."

"Students will identify key figures associated with major world religions."

Two concerns about this standard. First, Confucianism is a social and political philosophy, not a religion, although it addressed religious questions. Second, students are asked to identify key figures associated with major world religions, but are not expected to know anything about the key beliefs. Even at grade 3 a very basic introduction to those beliefs is possible.

"Students will know the origin of the Pledge of Allegiance, its history and why Americans recite it."

This is opening a can of worms. Will students be taught that a socialist wrote the pledge? Will they be taught that it had no official status at first? Will they know about the controversy about Congress adding the words "under God" in 1954? Will the history of the Pledge include discussion of the controversial 2002 decision of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that reciting the Pledge in public schools is unconstitutional? Will students be told why some Americans oppose the Pledge? Are third graders ready for this?

"Students will identify key figures associated with the rise of Islam."

Once again students are asked to know about the leaders and founders of a religion, but nothing about their beliefs.

Why is "You're a Grand Old Flag" specifically mentioned as a patriotic song? It is much less significant than several other patriotic songs.

"Students will know and understand the main ideas of the abolitionist movement . . ."

This is a worthwhile benchmark. Nevertheless, it does not make sense unless students have already been asked to know and understand the institution of slavery itself. No prior benchmark requires this. Slavery was a central social and economic institution in American history before the Civil War and its omission from these academic standards has to

be corrected.

"Students will describe rivalry of England, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands in Africa, East Indies and the Western Hemisphere."

This benchmark is placed in Era 4: Regional Interactions, 1000-1500 A.D. Portugal and Spain had just begun their voyages of exploration in 1500; England and France were not yet involved and the Netherlands did not yet exist as an independent country in 1500. This benchmark should be placed in a later period.

"Students will describe the importance of Islamic occupation of Spain and Eastern Europe, including Russia."

Both teachers and students should know that there was no Islamic occupation of Russia. Never. This benchmark is mistaken. After this period, in the nineteenth century, however, Russia conquered Muslim areas in the Caucuses and Central Asia. Perhaps that's what confused whoever wrote this benchmark. In any case, it's inexcusable.

"Students will describe Russian isolation from Western civilization."

This benchmark makes sense only if you define Western civilization in such a way as to exclude Russia, and also assumes that the isolation was only on one side. Russia was an heir to the Byzantine Empire and shared with it Eastern Orthodox Christianity. It certainly followed a different trajectory from that of Western Europe, but was certainly part of Western civilization that grew out of Greek and Christian traditions.

"Students will identify and be able to discuss the concepts expressed in songs such as 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic' and 'God Bless America.'"

These are both great songs. They are also both explicitly religious in content. Is that why this benchmark was included? This benchmark suggests a religious agenda.

"The student will study the geography, religions, and politics of Ancient Greece."

I am pleased that ancient Greece is finally getting its due. But the benchmarks do not include the society of ancient Greece. Despite the value of Greek democracy as a model, only a minority of Greeks were citizens. Slavery was an important institution in Greece, and should be included.

"Students will describe the rise and expansion of Islam."

Two concerns - first, here again, students are not expected to know anything about the beliefs of Islam. Second, the standards include the expansion of Islam, but not its retreat over the last 500 years, beginning with the Spanish Reconquista and culminating in the European domination of the Muslim world by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Almost all of the Muslim world, with the exception of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan, was directly ruled or indirectly controlled by Christian Europeans by the end of World War I. As Bernard Lewis, author of Islam and the West, points out, one can't understand contemporary relations between Islam and the West without realizing that Islam has been in retreat for centuries. These standards treat Islam in a simplistic and stereotyped way.

"Students will know and understand the reason for the rise of, and the main ideas and figures behind, the abolitionist movement."

Once again, students are asked to study the abolitionist movement - a worthwhile subject - but not the institution of slavery itself.

"Students will recognize the significance of the Founder's four references to God in the Declaration of Independence."

I wonder if Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration, would approve of this benchmark. He strongly believed in the separation of church and state. In any case, when he thought of God, he thought of Him as a Deist God, whom one knows through reason and natural theology. Jefferson rejected revealed religion. If students recognize the significance of the four references to God in the Declaration of Independence, they should recognize that Jefferson's God may not be the one they believe in.

Grade 8 I. Minnesota History 1900-1968

The benchmarks omit important social and political movements: the Non-Partisan League, Populism, the I.W.W., the Farmer-Labor Party, and the labor movement. Also there should be some mention of Robert La Follette and Floyd Olson.

"Students will know and understand the major events and turning points in the war in Europe and the Pacific (e.g. the battle for Midway; Normandy, Battle of the Bulge)

Admittedly, this is a standard for U.S. History. But American history cannot be studied in isolation. The U.S. role in the war must be studied in the context of the roles of our allies, as well as our enemies. The major events and turning points in the war should include the Battle of Britain and the Battle of Stalingrad.

"Students will know and understand the impact of World War II on the home front and on American culture, specifically on new opportunities for women and minorities."

This should read "American culture and society" Also the war brought new challenges as well as opportunities for minorities The internment of Japanese-Americans two-thirds

of whom were American citizens, must be explicitly included in the benchmarks.

"Students will know and understand the rebuilding of Europe and Japan after World War II through the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, the U.S. victory during the Berlin Blockade, as well as MacArthur's occupation of Japan."

First, a couple of small points. The U.S. was not alone in resisting the Berlin Blockade. West Berlin was divided into American, British, and French occupation zones, and Britain and France -as well as the residents of West Berlin - were among the victors. Second, it was not "MacArthur's occupation of Japan." For one thing, he spelled it MacArthur. In any case, it would be more accurate to call it the American occupation of Japan. MacArthur left Japan to command U.S. forces in Korea before the occupation ended.

I would add this benchmark: "Students should know and understand the similarities and differences between the allied occupation of Germany and the American occupation of Japan."

"Students will know and understand the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam, the Cuban missile crisis, and the collapse of communism in Europe."

First, an editorial point. It's redundant to mention veterans, since they had been part of America's military when they made their contribution. But more importantly, this benchmark, specifically the phrase "in defending freedom," implies some assumptions that should be challenged. South Korea, while not as repressive as the North, was not a democracy under Syngman Rhee's regime. Nor was South Vietnam. The Communist movement in Vietnam enjoyed widespread popular support. U.S. foreign policy in the 1950s included the undermining of popularly elected governments in Guatemala and Iran. This benchmark would be less tendentious if the words "in defending freedom" were dropped. Sometimes we were defending freedom; sometimes we were pursuing our geopolitical interests. These benchmarks, incidentally, should include the civil rights, antiwar, and women's movements as part of the "economic, social, and political transformation of the United States."

"Students will identify the causes of the fall of the Soviet Union, including the significance of the role of Ronald Reagan."

Including this benchmark in U.S. History overemphasizes the role of the United States in the fall of the Soviet Union. Internal factors were much more significant. There is a blatant political agenda in specifically mentioning Ronald Reagan but none of the other presidents since World War II. In any case, Reagan's role was insignificant compared to the roles of Mikhael Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Lech Walensa, and Vaclav Havel.

"Students will know and understand the new clash of civilizations in a post-communist world and the challenges it presents to the United States."

This benchmark reflects an uncritical acceptance of Samuel Huntington's thesis on the clash of civilizations, which has been widely criticized. This benchmark risks giving students a simplistic view of the world, exaggerating differences between civilizations and regarding such civilizations as monolithic. This benchmark should be dropped and replaced with something else.

"Students will be able to describe the factors leading the growth of sectional crisis including the Compromise of 1850, the Fugitive Slave Act, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the formation of the Republican Party, the Dred Scott Decision, and John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry."

Once again, no specific examination of slavery as an institution.

There should be a benchmark on the creation of an American overseas empire in Hawaii, the Philippines, Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, as well as informal control in Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua.

Once again, there seems to be no attention paid to American allies in the war. The role of Britain and the U.S.S.R. should be included, and students should know the importance of the Battle of Britain and the Battle of Stalingrad.

See my comments above under Grade 8, II. U.S. History, G. Era 9, 1989-present. This benchmark again suggests that U.S. policy under Reagan, rather than internal factors in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, ended the Cold War. This is simplistic and politically biased.

"Students will describe China, with emphasis on the development of empires and the construction of the Great Wall."

As a specialist in Chinese history I find this benchmark objectionable. First of all, I am not sure what is meant by "the development of empires." This isn't very clear. Also, the Great Wall did not exist in this period. There were some short regional walls built out of compressed dirt as early as the Qin dynasty (221-206 BCE), but it is a myth that the first emperor of the Qin built the Great Wall. The Great Wall that exists now dates only back to the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). More importantly, it's disturbing that the 3000-year

history of one of the most important civilizations in the world is dealt with only in this one benchmark. At the minimum, I recommend a benchmark for this period that would read as follows: "Students will know and understand the creation of a centralized empire in China during the Han dynasty, the interaction of China and the peoples of the steppe, and the introduction and assimilation of Buddhism." I'd add benchmarks on China for later periods (see below).

East Asia should be included among the standards for this era. I suggest a standard as follows: "The student will demonstrate knowledge of East Asian civilizations from about 500 to 1000 C.E. [not A.D.]" And I recommend these benchmarks:

- Students will describe the reunification of China under the Sui and Tang dynasties
- Students will describe the role of Tang China as a model for Japan, Korea, and Vietnam
- Students will be able to explain the role of Confucianism and Buddhism in East Asian civilization

I would add these benchmarks:

- Students will describe the Mongol conquests and their effects on Europe, China, and the Middle East.
- Students will identify Chinese contributions to science and technology, including printing, paper, gunpowder, and the compass.
- Students will describe Chinese naval expeditions to India and the east coast of Africa in the fifteenth century.

I would add Benito Mussolini and Chiang Kai-shek to the list of leaders of the war. George Marshall, incidentally, was more important after the war than during it.

"Students will describe the struggle for self-rule, including Gandhi's leadership in India."

Students should also know about the link between nationalism and communism in such places as China and Vietnam. I'd add "the role of the Viet Minh in Vietnam" to this benchmark.

"Students will explain that real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita is a measure that permits comparisons of material living standards over time and among people in different nations."

Students should know about the inadequacies of GDP as an index. (It grossly understates the contribution of women's labor, for example, since it does not include household work.) Students should learn about such alternatives as the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, the World Bank Human Development Index, and the Genuine Progress Indicator.

My concerns about the proposed Minnesota Academic Standards in History and Social Studies arise from being the father of a high school student as well as being a college history professor. I am also a citizen concerned about how all our children are educated. I would like to see all of our children have a strong foundation in history. Those who continue their education in college, of course, should be prepared to study history at the college level. All of our students should have an education that prepares them to be knowledgeable and thoughtful citizens. We should offer them a history and social studies curriculum that emphasizes analysis and critical thinking as well as a command of basic factual knowledge. Students should learn about the strengths and accomplishments of our country, but they should also know about the parts of American history that challenge us, the parts that we cannot be proud of. An uncritical feel-good approach to our history is a disservice to our students and our society.

I would like our children to have a strong foundation of knowledge about the tradition of Western civilization, going back to the ancient Middle East, Greece, and Rome. But I also want them to understand that much of the human experience took place outside of that tradition. In her 1997 book, *Creating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Martha Nussbaum includes a chapter on the importance of studying non-Western cultures. She quotes John Searle, professor of Philosophy at the University of California, who writes, "One of the most liberating effects of liberal education is in coming to see one's own culture as one possible form of life and sensibility among others." Studying another culture, or even the past of one's own culture, encourages us to develop a sympathetic imagination, to try to understand the ways of living and thinking of people very different from ourselves. It also gives us another perspective to look at ourselves, our own ways of thinking and living.

The proposed standards have many flaws. I would like to address particularly those in world history. They could be more accurately be described as standards in European history with token attention paid to the rest of the world. Certainly some emphasis on European history is appropriate, given Europe's role in transforming the world in the last five hundred years, and Europe's role in settling North America. Nonetheless, the proposed standards pay far too little attention to Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. (There are over a hundred benchmarks specifically dealing with Europe, for example, and only two concerning Latin America. There are five times as many standards for ancient Rome than there are for 3500 years of Chinese history.) To the extent that the standards deal with the rest of the world, they are superficial and simplistic, designed to promote rather than challenge stereotypes. Some of the benchmarks are even factually wrong. They were drafted by people with little competence in world history.

If these standards are adopted, we can only hope that teachers will work around them to give their students the education they deserve. Otherwise our children will be poorly prepared for higher education in history and social studies. More seriously, they will be unprepared to be knowledgeable and thoughtful citizens in a complex and challenging world.

There are 65 Grade 6 benchmarks. That gives a teacher less than 3 classdays per benchmark. It is less than 3 hours per benchmark. Impossible!

Studies of classical civilizations do not belong in gr 6. Current events do.

These standards will drastically change the way we teach social studies. In our school, we have worked hard to develop a well-rounded, diverse curriculum that we are proud of, and these standards will completely destroy it. While we do believe in high standards, we believe that these are a "mile wide and and inch deep" and in the long run, will hurt our students. One cannot expect to know everything about everything. We also believe that history should be taught from ALL perspectives, and these standards do everything but that. U.S. History has seen a positive change in the past 20 years concerning that, but these standards are a definite step backwards. Please seriously consider all of the public comments and make appropriate changes.

Absolutely incredible. Shocking. Profoundly arrogant. A disgusting, despicable powerplay. No way, under any circumstance or condition. The world according to the Republican ideologues. Take the Republican political platform and ram it into a school curriculum and you have this document. I hope that you partisan ideologues know that this will never, ever happen.

In general, I feel that there are way too many Social Studies Academic Standards for First Grade and most of them are not developmentally appropriate for six and seven year olds. As a 27 year, first grade teacher, veteran, I find the majority of my day is spent on reading and math, priority subjects for primary classrooms. The churches in my district exercise their rights to have students released 140 minutes a week for religious instruction. I just do not have time in my day to dedicate the time necessary to teach Social Studies Standards the way they are currently written PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE make standards less vigorous and more developmentally appropriate for first graders!!!!

Integration of Strands at the Middle Level are not feasible with current budgets and resources. Subject specific at each middle level grade level is appropriate and necessary for effective student learning.

Dear Social Studies standards committee members:

I have a few general observations before I detail concerns with specific U.S. history and other standards. I am a licensed 7-12 social studies educator who has taught geography, civics, world and U.S. history in rural, suburban and inner city districts in Minnesota (both public and private). Because the geography and U.S. history standards will most directly impact students and curriculum in the school and district where I currently teach (Eagle Ridge Junior High School in the Burnsville-Eagan-Savage district), I will confine most of my observations to them.

In particular, I am deeply concerned that the geography standards overall seem to have come from an entirely different and more rigorous source than the U.S. history standards. Bloom's Taxonomy seems much in evidence for the geography standards, where students will be expected to compare and contrast, discuss, illustrate, construct, describe, and otherwise show evidence of higher order learning and thinking. This is, I believe, far preferable to the generally low level standards found in the U.S. history category, where students overwhelmingly are only expected to "know and understand." Two resources I suggest looking at are the National Social Studies Standards active learning strategies from the National Council for the Social Studies. This 2001 Incentive Publication was put together by Sandra Schurr and Imogene Forte and contains ten standards and best practice ideas for delivering and assessing the standards (ISBN 0-86530-497-1). A second publication for well written U.S. (and world) history standards is the book National Standards for History (basic edition), put out by the National Center for History in the Schools at the University of California, Los Angeles (ISBN 09633218-4-6). I urge the committee to consult a variety of sources before making final decisions on standards which will impact students, educators and school districts for years to come, and to build in opportunities for learners to develop and practice the higher order thinking skills our citizens need to develop more of.

I have reservations about the excessive and unrealistic number of geography standards for middle level learners, but their quality and the thoughtfulness of their design is undeniably higher than that of the proposed U.S. history standards. Please keep in mind the developmental levels of 7th and 8th graders when considering standards. These learners do best when able to construct meaning and relevance at a reasonable pace. The curriculum for this age should not be "an inch deep and a mile wide" but rather should give these emerging young adults the opportunity to explore topics more in-depth and concentrate on "big" ideas and themes.

As to specific U.S. history (as well as Minnesota, Government and Citizenship) standards:

p.23, gr. 7, Strand II and other standards which discuss influences on the origins of the United States and the U.S. Constitution- -Students will know and understand the significance of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and the Mayflower Compact, etc.

**** Please include reference to the likely influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the founders' thinking. I refer you to Native American History , by Judith Nies (ISBN 0-345-39350-3), p.184-185 for a look at this influence.

p. 25, standards regarding the westward expansion of the U.S.:

****I would like to see the 1840s concept of "Manifest Destiny" a required standard.

also p. 25, regarding the standard referring to the "roles of Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Sojourner Truth in events leading to and during the war:"

*** Here and elsewhere in the proposed standards exist seemingly arbitrarily determined "laundry lists" of select individuals involved in historic events and movements in our nation's history. Invariably the lists include mention of one or two token African Americans or women

Don't you feel that there is a great deal of overlap with 5th and 7th grade U.S. History Era 4? It seems as if 5th grade goes way too indepth at times.

Do you really think that it is possible to get through all the standards and benchmarks? I know you are not done yet so please to a lot of chopping so I can teach the material without feeling a great deal of anxiety.

When the standards are approved; will all the schools in the state have to adjust their curriculum to match the state mandated standards? What about \$ for districts that will have to change curriculum? In my district World Geography is taught in 8th grade. According to the state standards 8th grade is Reconstruction-20th Century. I think standards are a great idea. I just wish millions of dollars were not wasted of the Profiles of Learning.

Congratulations to the committee, I found the standards to be complete and balanced. However I question where the teachers qualified to teach to the standards will come from, given the woeful state of higher indoctrination excuse me, higher education.

I strongly urge a second look at these standards. I don't believe people understand the tremendous task (using human and financial resources) it is going to be to replace our existing curriculum.

This is simply and utterly unpractical. Research tells us to be more concerned with understanding than the "covering" of material. With these standards it will be simply impossible. The idea that every three days a new benchmark must be met will eliminate creative, student driven curriculum, in favor of factoid analysis of the social sciences. Creating guidelines for curriculum similar to English and Math standards would allow for local and state control in what our students learn. It also concerns me to see such an emphasis on geography in the high school, when it seems to disregard what local districts are doing now. With budget dilemmas, how can we expect districts to spend millions on a brand new curriculum when they are required to cut teachers, decrease bussing and increase activity fees. It simply does not seem like a fair time to begin!!!

I much appreciate the hard work that went into creating these new standards. I think they are a good start and can be improved as it develops. I would like to encourage more lecture and discussion on the constitution. The difference between Provide and Promote, the living breathing constitution versus the written constitution, and finally the idea of favoring various classes of people. In economics could more emphasis be placed on economic cycles, booms and busts and what drives them such as irrational exuberance, speculation, excess debt, etc. What is money, how has that changed? What is the Federal Reserve system and how many other federal banking systems have there been? These new benchmarks are important, they are basic knowledge, and necessary for the future success of this country.

These seem a little extreme. Not sure why kids need to have standards on this type of knowledge. I like the idea of some benchmarks but this is overkill.

My comments are in reference to the entire 8th grade proposed standards.

I am responsible for developing curriculum in a large district. We do an excellent job of preparing our students in Social Studies and require 4 years for graduation. After a VERY careful review of the proposed standards, this is the approximate cost of funding this curriculum for our 8th grade programs alone:

MN History--there isn't one text that covers the material so a variety of texts, videos, etc. are needed

US History--We'd use a book like A Call to Freedom (Holt); units 6-11 cover the 8th grade standards

Government & Citizenship--American Government (Holt), units 1-5

Geography--Geography Today, units 1-10

Economics--teacher produced materials

Our School Board wants every child to have a text for the core subject areas. Since there are 2,250 8th grade students, the breakdown on costs is as follows:

MN History--classroom sets of materials, teacher-produced materials (15 teachers X \$2,100/classroom materials + \$23 hour X 18 hours/materials development + \$500 copying = \$37,520

US History--texts for each student (2,250 students X \$58.20/text + \$9,166 S/H = \$140,116

Government & Citizenship--texts for each student (2,250 students X \$57.90/text + \$9,119 S/H = \$139,394

Geography--texts for each student (2,250 students X \$59.50/text + \$9,371 S/H = \$143,246

Economics--classroom sets of materials, teacher-produced materials (15 teachers X \$2,100/classroom materials + \$23 hour X 18 hours/materials development + \$500 copying = \$37,520

Total funding (without exaggeration) needed to be able to implement the 8th grade curriculum alone for our district is \$497,796.00. This does not include globes & maps or teacher professional development. For middle school alone, it will cost us approximately \$1,493,388.00!

These standards, if left as they are, will certainly negatively change what we are offering our students.

I would like to know and understand where the standards are for higher learning. Knowing and Understanding does not mean assimilation of information.

These standards include good know and understand, yet there doing process is missing. It will continue to be missing when we ask them to become active citizens in our world. Will they have forgotten their "know and understand" because they never assimilated the knowledge and learned to "do".

It is sad to be entering into the profession of education under standards as incomplete as these. I hope that someone realizes how important the "do" is and brings it into the fold before this process is complete.

The standards in history, economics, and citizenship are extremely challenging - our 11th grader is an honors student in math, English, science, and Spanish with 1 to 3 hours of homework each night, these standards would add at least 2 classes to her high school schedule and another hour of homework daily. The state could save money though, there would be no need for lower division history and economics classes in the state colleges and universities.

Also, the whole of the government and citizenship standards, and some of the history standards have a conservative political bent - teach the Constitution, let students, as they

develop intellectually, decide for themselves the Founders intent.

Some of the grade school citizenship standards are nothing more than political indoctrination. First graders don't need to know about obeying laws and being good citizens, they need to know about obeying classroom and playground rules and being good neighbors to their classmates...

Grade 8, US history - McCarthyism should be held up as an example of abuse of power, analogous to the Salem witch trials.

Grade 8, US History - if any special significance is attached to Ronald Reagan it should be for accumulating the highest national debt and the subversive actions in Iran and Central America in secrecy of US citizens.

Grade 5 citizenship - teach the role of civil disobedience to change unjust laws, recognize that a role of government is to provide for and protect those unable to do so for themselves.

All grades, government - reinforce the American ideal that our government promotes the ideal of equal opportunity

Students are asked to discuss the concepts expressed in the song, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". The central concept in the song is that soldiers believe that God is on their side and that they are fighting in His name. The song is not useful for reinforcing the principles of American government, knowledge of U.S. geography, or any other discipline except for religion. Also, the song's lyrics contain many words that 5th graders will not be familiar with, such as "ramparts", and "grapes of wrath". I believe that any attempt to get fifth graders to understand the concepts in this song will be futile, except that they might pick up the idea that the soldiers believed in God.

I suggest substituting the Battle Hymn with "This Land is Your Land". It incorporates geography, the language is simple to understand, and the theme of the song promotes citizenship. I also think that 5th grade kids would find it more enjoyable to learn about a clap-along type song than the heavy march of the Battle Hymn.

General:

In general, I am glad we are teaching the values of character and citizenship. This is exactly as it should be. Do not dilute or gloss over these sections!

Some will criticize these standards for being too specific and "too much, too soon." These people do not realize how much our children have been cheated by not knowing these facts and concepts, and how much they can really learn when challenged to do so. I applaud the committee for a generally fine job of putting the education back into our education system.

You will get a lot of comments about the standards being "too specific" and about those specifics either being "the wrong ones" or that "the right ones" have been excluded. But if these specifics are the sum total of what is to be taught, they are woefully inadequate. The answer to all of these criticisms is to simply point out that these are the specific items that will be placed in a much more comprehensive context in the classroom.

2-I-A says students will identify basic human rights. How are you going to teach that? Do we all agree on what they are?

3-I-A introduces American Indian cultures, which is a fine thing to study, but students should first study their own culture or they become confused. There is a distinct American culture which is our common heritage and needs to be reinforced before developing the wider appreciation of the many cultures which make it up.

Typos in 3-I-A include the use of the word "with" where "and" should be, and "and" where "an" should be.

3-I-B, as well as 4-I-B and 5-I-B speak about "public service" as a duty of the citizen. Since "community service" is now a punishment for criminal behavior, it needs to be completely clear that there is no involuntary servitude involved in these classes. That is, students may NOT be required to do any community service.

4-I-C puts "emphasis on the ideas of John Locke." I see no reason to single out this particular philosopher in a U.S. History context. I would prefer De Tocqueville, or The Federalist Papers, or all of them together.

4-II-C considers only the history of Islam, to the exclusion of other religions. Why?

4-I-B talks about the “relationship among federal, state, and local governments.” Is that the Constitutional relationship (federalism) or the de facto relationship? I think it is marvelous that the information and facts are being introduced, but if it is controversial or conceptually difficult, it should be delayed to a more “age-appropriate” time.

4-I-B refers to “the constituencies of political parties.” What does that mean? Are you going to generalize and say “rich Republicans” or “black people are Democrats?” How many parties will we discuss? Green? Libertarian? Are we going to inquire about parents’ political affiliations?

5-I-B is marvelous. I suggest that the Star Tribune “newspapers in the classroom” program would be helpful.

6-III-C says “freedom of worship as a natural right government should secure.” That is simply wrong. Government should not encroach on a natural right, but the right exists completely independent of government. They are “inalienable.”

6-III-B is also wrong stated as an absolute. The US government does NOT “regulate the economy.” There are things government may do to affect the economy but it is NOT regulated in the conventional sense. It should also be pointed out that when government borrows money, they have to raise taxes to repay it.

7-II-A strays into very controversial First Amendment issues, with the possibility of teaching something contrary to what students and parents believe.

7-III-D should mention the “regulated free market” which is what we are supposed to have in the US.

9-I-E should be clear that segregation and discrimination were not unique to the South, it was simply more open. It is common among Northern liberals to look down on the South when Northern cities were no more hospitable, and in some ways far worse, than conditions in the South. You are teaching hatred for Southerners.

9-I-C may I suggest the use of the term “groups with common interest” rather than the term “special interest” which has become so corrupted.

Social Studies Standards

I feel what I have right now in 6th grade social studies is appropriate and meets the needs/level of understanding for my students. We have a new book what are we to do with this book? Where is the book for your standards? how much will it cost to get books for all of 6th grade? who will pay for this? When will we have time to learn all this new info that hasn't been in sixth grade curriculum. I can't even finish the curriculum I have now and you want to change it and add even more. Please have real teachers have more say into this - listen to us we are in the field we know the students

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Regarding "Will be introduced to..." vs "Will demonstrate..." the first seems to be more about MY doing as an educator where as the latter is about STUDENT competency.

II. World History A. and B. -These should be taken out of kindergarten. They have a hard time relating to events that happened long ago. Long ago to a kindergartner is yesterday.

They can relate to holidays and celebrations only by relating it to themselves or peers. Kindergarten is a foundation year for learning. We can not assume that every child has had access to prior knowledge. If we use terms, concepts, and ideas that will be taught in other grades we lay the foundation for future knowledge.

III. Concepts of Time- identify and order the days of the week, months, and seasons. This is an unrealistic goal for rote memory especially if the children are going to school for 2 1/2 hours a day. Recognizing if it's a day of the week or month and know what season it is would be appropriate. Time is not concrete for kindergarten students. This also applies to the benchmark of recognizing current events shape history. Developmentally, they have a hard time grasping the concept of history.

I. Government and citizenship B. Privileges is not concrete enough for kindergarten students. They can say why we have rules and consequences.

II. Geography C. Physical systems-benchmark -finding places in their community, again they have a hard time relating to concepts that do not deal directly with them. How would this benchmark be measured? A field trip to find places in the community? Money is tight. They can find places in the school because that is where they are-it's important to find places in school. I know of no parent that would say to their 5 year old-go find the community center by yourself. However, it is appropriate to say-find the library in the school. If you can find the library-then you can check out a book. A valuable skill for attending school.

III. Economics A. Producers and consumers- Again it is appropriate to identify workers and their roles in the community, but to distinguish between producers, consumers, goods, and services different denominations of money?? This is not developmentally appropriate for kindergarten students to grasp. We are lucky to be able to identify pennies, dollars and try to understand what each is worth.

III. Economics B. Choices- Kindergarteners are egocentric. They believe that everything is a basic need. I have tried this kind of activity and very few understand the difference between need and want at this age level. If it was to be an introductory concept, that would be fine-then the follow through would be in first grade.

I have a question for the committee-Were there any active, current licensed kindergarten teachers involved in the creation of the standards? Speaking as a teacher who teaches two groups of kindergarten students for 2 1/2 hours I have great concern over these standards, when the emphasis had been on reading and math. If you don't have students who can read-then math, science, and social studies are not going to matter one needs to read for all of the above.

As a parent and former student of Minnesota public and private schools I feel that there are too many benchmarks to the new social studies standards and the benchmarks appear Eurocentric as I have not seen an emphasis on learning and understanding non-European American perspectives, particularly that of American Indians. People of color are marginalized (I noticed that on one benchmark, white women were named, but African-American women were simply categorized as slave women and not given names.) when in fact they have been and continue to be key shapers of our collective destiny. Many of the standards are not only too lengthy, but also very abstract and will most likely be meaningless to the children. They will at best be able to remember some key "heroes" from America's past, but they will most likely not comprehend the significance of events that produced these "heroes" and therefore only have a surface understanding of American History.

Grade Level 1- Social Studies

Strand I - Government and Citizenship

Sub-Strand B - Rights, Privileges, and Responsibilities

Standard: The student will understand the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen.

Benchmark: "Students will be able to recognize that the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution are the founding documents of our government and that they outline the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen."

COMMENT: This description blurs the distinction between the two documents. Students should understand that the Declaration of Independence did not establish a structure of government and should not be confused with either the Articles of Confederation or the U.S. Constitution whose Bill of Rights establishes all our nation's laws with respect to the rights of citizens.

Grade Level 2 - Social Studies

Strand I - Government and Citizenship

Sub-Strand B - Rights, Privileges, and Responsibilities

Standard: The student will understand the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a citizen.

Benchmark: "Students will recognize that the Declaration of Independence declares that individuals have rights including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

COMMENT: Students should understand that, while the Declaration declares the rights, they do not have the force of law. The U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights establishes all our nation's laws with respect to the rights of citizens.

Grade Level 3 - History

Strand II - World History

Sub-Strand B - B. Era 2: Classical Civilizations, 1000 B.C. to 500 A.D.

Standard: "The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Rome in terms of its impact on Western civilization."

COMMENT: Missing here is the classical civilization of Greece (1000 B.C. to 500 A.D), which had an even greater impact on Western civilization than that of Rome. Both civilizations of Greece and Rome are not addressed until Grade 6. Add the following standard:

Standard: The student should demonstrate knowledge of ancient Greece in terms of its impact on Western civilization [followed by appropriate Benchmarks].

Grade Level 7 - Social Studies

Strand I - Government and Citizenship

Sub-Strand - A - Foundations of the American Political System, B. America's Founding Documents, C. The Rights and Responsibilities Citizenship

Standard: The student will study the Declaration of Independence and understand its principles and civic importance.

Benchmark: "Students will recognize the significance of the Founders' four references to God in the Declaration of Independence."

COMMENT: Students should recognize the greater significance of the Founders' intention that our government be neutral with respect to religion by establishing in the U.S. Constitution all our nation's laws, including those regarding the rights of citizens, without reference to God.

Regarding 3rd grade world history - study of 5 major religions: This is not age appropriate. However, if this is to be discussed, it must include Islam.

Regarding 4th grade world history - study of Islam: Third grade studies other major religions either put them ALL together or eliminate them ALL.

I was shocked when I read through the standards . These are sixth graders, let's not turn them off to history by having them endure subject matter that is way beyond their developmental and/ or interest level. There are too many suggested standards .

I read History all the time. Generally speaking, it was always taught from the white male perspective and only give that outlook which leaves too much out.

I am a social studies teacher at the highschool level (10-12). I appreciate the huge task this committee is attempting to complete. Many of the standards and benchmarks in social studies are well written and appropriate for high school students. I do have a concern in regards to World History as 1/2 credit. There are 100+ benchmarks listed on the working draft. Our terms are 45 days long. It is unrealistic to cover prehistory to post World War II in one term. I currently teach a course in ancient civilization that covers Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome in one term. It seems to me that to cover world history in 9 weeks would not allow students to have a good learning experience. Perhaps making this course one credit would be more realistic. Best wishes on your difficult task.

This is my 13th year of teaching....I teach Sociology, Psychology, U.S. History, American Government, Social Issues, and a course on the Holocaust. The emphasis here is World History, U.S. History, and American Government/Economics.....There should be standards in Sociology and Psychology as well. There should, in my opinion, be some requirement in the standards to talk/teach about genocide and the Holocaust. Also.....these standards need to address how the U.S. acted less than appropriate. We as a country have made some mistakes, and they need to be addressed so they can be learned from. These benchmarks are too lengthy....I never thought I would say this, but I would rather have the old grad stds.....they were easier to reach than these! The ones in elementary are way too cumbersome.....rote memory is good for some things, but for the most part this will set us back decades. Thanks to the committee for wanting to keep our standards rigourous. Social Studies is a joy to teach, and each year history gets tougher because we have to add another year of history.....keep this in mind as you prepare the standards.

To the members of the committee. As a Social Studies educator for the past 28 years I am somewhat dismayed at the prescriptive direction the Standards and Benchmarks you have written, have taken. Clearly there is a political angle to what was included and what was not. The incredible detail of the benchmarks makes it nearly impossible to effectively teach any of these courses in the time we have allotted. One colleague indicated that he would have to "cover" 2 benchmarks a day; another colleague said it amounted to about 200 hundred years of history per day. No matter what, the volume of history, geography, and economics to be taught by teachers is too much, the material to reasonably be learned by students is too much. I strongly urge you to stay with the standards, but eliminate the benchmarks and leave the actual teaching to the professional teaching. Education in Minnesota is NOT broken but it does continue to need to be refined. Educators see that and know that and are continually working toward that. Please respect that and give us some flexibility in doing what we do best - teaching our kids.

My comments refer to the World History and the American History standards. When the profile was in effect I was horrified to think that so much content was supposed to be covered in so short of a time. I now see that the content that was so enormous at that time has now been accorded more specifics than before and that the state thinks that it should

be covered almost 3 times in a student's career. Most of these items have import, but cannot all possibly be covered in one course in the High School. Division of Labor has previously accounted for part of history in the elementary, part in Junior High and part in the High School. In order for any subject to be covered in its entirety, one must have the time as well as the inclination. Our students must not have their heads flooded with everything at once and do it 3 times in their public school careers. Whether it be American History or World History, the well planned curriculum is divided and emphasis on different things are placed in different grade levels. In the midst of this enormous World History curriculum there does not even seem to be regard for cultural diversity. Diversity education is much more important than knowing every detail of the early Greeks and Romans. Please reconsider the ways in which this information is to be transmitted.

I teach 7th grade American history and I'm very concerned about the proposed history standards for this age group. The textbook that I currently use (one that is written at a 7th grade reading level) does not even cover all of the extremely detailed topics required by the standards benchmarks. School districts would go broke trying to buy all new textbooks and materials just to cover the requirements of the new standards.

I am disappointed in the 5th grade standards. We spent thousands of dollars on a new social studies series and now it will not meet the 5th grade standards. American history and world history? What about language arts and math? When is the state going to stop experimenting with my students and let our district decide what is in the best interest of our children. There are some standards that may be offensive to students of a particular race or religion. Please stop the madness!

First of all, the benchmarks are not age appropriate. Second of all, as a student I feel we should be taught quality over quantity, and too many topics are covered. There isn't a Social Studies standard test given now, so why change the system without reason to believe it needs improvement? And by adding a Social Studies standard test, teachers are forced to teach for the test. The global view given by these standards will not be as clear to elementary students as a self or community view would. It's unrealistic and would leave most of my classmates behind.

There is way too much world history for grade 6!! Can't imagine they can cover all of that plus the MN history.

In economics, it is described as distributing scarcity among people, when in fact there are a variety of factors involved, including the ability of business to create resources and expand opportunities.

Supply and demand need to be clarified and identified as the basis for the free market system. Also the role of private property is not clearly identified as the foundation of the free market system. I would like to see human resources identified as unique from other resources, as it leads to dehumanizing people as only workers in the economy. "Free Market Economy" should be stated as such, not just market economy, which is too general.

I spoke at the Oct. 9 public hearing at Coon Rapids High School and was very disappointed so few social studies committee members were in attendance to hear. I hope this gets to each Social Studies committee person.

My comments address specifically the standards for government and citizenship at the Gr. 9-12 level since I have taught a ninth grade civics course and a 12th grade law course for most of my 25 years in the classroom.

1. Core knowledge of civics is not included in the standards.

The entire judicial branch - its function, role, landmark, and recent decisions - is not included in the proposed Minnesota civics standards. I do find two key concepts in the U.S. History standards:

Pg. 38 "Students will understand how the role of the Supreme Court emerged, including a discussion of judicial supremacy in analyzing the Constitution (especially Marbury v. Madison); and Pg. 38 "Students will be able to identify and discuss all provisions of the Bill of Rights"

These are major concepts taught in civics and law. Why aren't they there?

Other key concepts not included in Minnesota's proposed standards are due process (5th and 14th Amendments), equal protection of the law, and the rights of the accused. There is no standard here that teaches the structure and jurisdiction of the federal court system, the decision-making process of courts and exploring the balance between individual liberties and the public interest. Each of these concepts are included in the Virginia Standards for U.S. Government. In fact, other standards adopted by Kansas, Alabama and national civics standards benchmark these and other key judicial concepts that I hope could be included in revised Minnesota standards.

(See VA Standards @ <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml>)

Note: The standard quoted above, pg. 38, has a factual error when it identifies the concept of "judicial supremacy." No text refers to judicial supremacy. Rather the concept is judicial review, the power of the courts established in the Marbury v. Madison case that allows the judicial branch to review acts of the executive and legislative branch. It gave the Court the power to become an equal branch under the doctrine of checks and balances. It was not designed to elevate the status of the judicial branch at the expense of others.

No national ACT or SAT test speaks of judicial supremacy, MN students would be at a disadvantage if this is not changed.

Please review the standards for clarification on exactly what you want the students to be able to do in assessment that we districts are being asked to create in the social studies area.

I address three examples:

Pg. 49 Students will be able to analyze and define the fundamental principles of the Constitution.

Note: Analysis, is a level four on Bloom's taxonomy. Verbs could include categorize, classify, compare, contrast, diagram, etc. The verb DEFINE which follows analysis in the standards, is at the lowest level of recall. It is out of order with practical steps in learning.

Pg. 58 Students will discuss all provisions of the Bill of Rights. Are we being asked to develop an oral assessment? I thought they were to be pencil and paper tests?

Pg. 49 Students will describe the activities of civic life. Where are the skills of citizenship? Shouldn't students demonstrate such skills? Isn't our goal the contribution of students as future citizens in our democratic government?

3. Practical implications of standards to Anoka-Hennepin schools social studies curriculum and students.

Please consider the impact these standards place on our existing scope and sequence for courses and already developed curriculums. The specificity of these benchmarks are really mandating a STATEWIDE CURRICULUM without funding for new textbooks or resources. Our current government text is \$50.00 and we are a district of 40,000 students. There is no money at the local level for the curriculum writing teacms needed to develop courses taught at different grades and local assessments to be created for the entire social studies curriculum in the time allotted. In fact I have observed a loss of resources for social studies. We no longer have an instructional facilitator in social studies who could help us develop the writing teams needed to change our scope and sequence and create assessments.

I recognize the state role in setting standards and the importance of accountability. But the state must recognize the impracticality of asking districts to develop assessments for standards too detailed and overwhelming that it forces us to give up the excellent curriculums that have been developed locally for years. We have lost local control of what is taught in our classrooms.

As a parent of an Anoka-Hennepin student at Andover High School, I am aware of what my student will no longer be learning in our schools if these standards remain at this level of detail. My student will not longer do the good things we have been doing in civics and law classrooms throughout our district.

In conclusion, I believe students will lose out under these current proposed standards. They will not have been taught core knowledge of civics. They will not have experienced higher level learning. And they will have lost the excellent curriculums of government and law that have been developed in our district over the last 25 years.

1) Many of the standards and benchmarks are simply not developmentally appropriate. When reading the early elementary standards, in particular, I wondered if the committee had somehow missed learning about Piagetian concepts. Or perhaps they aren't teachers, because a teacher would know that concepts of time are simply incomprehensible to the first and second grader. If students are able to produce timelines, etc., it will be rote learning without understanding. That may have been acceptable in the 19th century, but not in today's world.

2) There are far too many topics being "covered" in any given grade. I think that one of the best skills we can teach children is how to make connections. However, there are so many topics that aren't closely related that it will be too confusing for students. They will be struggling to learn the "facts" in the allotted time, which will mean that there will be few opportunities to teach and model making connections.

3.) The costs of replacing textbooks would be prohibitive. With all of the cuts to education, how can this even be considered?

4.) If there are going to be specific songs, etc., in the standards, then there has to be a more comprehensive survey. To expect 5th graders to understand the concepts in "God Bless America" without also learning about Woody Guthrie's response to it, "This Land is Your Land" (all five verses) is to ignore an important part of Depression-era history.

5) This is my biggest fear . . . that students will come to hate anything related to social studies. The great drama of our past will be lost, because there will be no time to tell and learn the

STORIES . . . stories that illustrate why we have the greatest country on earth, stories that will hold children's interest and inspire them to learn so that they can become productive citizens.

I think the standards are age-inappropriate and are dense with facts and details that are not important for students to learn. I also think that the standards will place a financial burden on schools as they try to find textbooks and resources to cover the information requested. Additionally, as a 7th grade teacher, I think it is unrealistic to teach Minnesota history, US history, Minnesota geography, US geography, world geography, and economic principles in one year. The Standards themselves are fine , but the benchmarks are inappropriate, and take away all local control as they dictate every trivial piece of information teachers must teach.

A. Era 3: Founding of the Nation and Westward Expansion, 1775-1860: The student will know and understand the development of the US Constitutional form of government. The only political impact the Great Awakening had was to perhaps make people question authority. It would be incorrect to say that it led to "revolutionary fervor."

6th bullet - The Federalist Papers are age inappropriate for 7th graders.

7th bullet - Why is this a part of the standards?

It has always been my desire as a teacher to get students to like studying history, hoping that by sparking an interest, they would be more likely to want to learn history as they go on in life. These standards do not allow me the time to do the fun activities and teach the high interest topics that I currently do. When I read the 7th and 8th grade standards, I see my students sitting in their desks with their eyes glazed over because I have to teach a bunch of trivial facts that are not appropriate for the developmental level of the majority of my students. If the goal is to get students to learn more, these standards fail. Students will learn less as they become bored and overwhelmed.

The benchmarks listed for 6th grade world history are not developmentally appropriate for an 11 or 12 year old child. While the effort to educate our students in the broad sense is commendable, the sophistication and depth of the concepts is beyond the capabilities of the average, let alone the special needs or ESL student. The course of study for 6th grade is far to broad for the individual elements or benchmarks to be taught or understood in the time frame available. I worry that 17 standards and 65 benchmarks in 36 weeks will result in exposure rather than historical understanding and that knowledge will not be retained in the long term.

Please include more on the role of women and women's rights! Thanks.

My comments pertain to the Concepts of Time strand in Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2 and Essential Skills Strand in Grade 4. These skills should be included in benchmarks, not as standard items.

According to legislative language concerning educational expectations for Minnesota's students (HF 302, Chapter 120B.023, "benchmarks specify academic content and skills that schools must offer and students must achieve to complete a state standard. Benchmarks are published to inform and guide parents, teachers, school districts and other interested persons and for use in developing tests consistent with the benchmarks."

K recommendation: Replace the benchmarks with the statement "The student will be able to sequence events." Consider keeping Concepts of Time as a sub-strand of US and World History.

Grades 1 and 2 Concepts of Time: This is a substrand. Eliminate repetition of benchmark statements in Grades 1 and 2, such as "Students will describe how things change over time, such as forms of transportation and communication." This statement is perhaps better placed in Grade 2.

Change the fifth bullet to read "Students will give examples of stories that take place in the past, present, and future."

Grade 4, Strand III, Essential Skills: This strand appears for the first time in grade 4 and the benchmark could be incorporated in U.S. History and World History.

Why is developing a chronological sequence (timeline) the only essential skill mentioned in Grades 4 and 5? Where are research skills? Where are summarizing skills? Where are note-taking skills? Where are skills of documenting and citing research sources?

Is the goal of these new standards and benchmarks to merely expose students to history? The sheer volume is immense. I firmly believe these need to be drastically narrowed

down.

While the effort to educate our students in the broad sense is commendable, the sophistication and depth of the concepts listed for 8th grade History/Geography are beyond the capabilities of the average, let alone the special needs or ESL student. The course of study for 8th grade is far to broad for the individual elements or benchmarks to be taught or understood in the time frame available. I worry that 17 standards and 72 benchmarks in 36 weeks will result in exposure rather than historical/Geographical understanding and that knowledge will not be retained in the long term.

I have major concerns about the proposed Social Studies standards. They focus far too much on rote memorization of some fairly arbitrary facts, with little to no emphasis on overall themes. There are far too many benchmarks placed in each grade/subject area. With the proposed standards, a student is left with very little time for elective exploration, both within the discipline of Social Studies and in other areas. For example, the areas of Psychology, Sociology, Political Science and Philosophy are nowhere to be found. In order to meet each of the benchmarks/standards, a student would not be able to take any courses in the above-mentioned areas. I feel that does a great disservice to the field of Social Studies.

The number of benchmarks students must complete in grades K-6 is excessive, considering that the commissioner is currently prohibited, by state statute, from developing statewide assessments for academic standards in social studies. Academic standards ought to raise academic expectations, but I do not believe that more benchmarks correlates with higher expectations. Posted on the legislative revisor's web site is Section 8, Minnesota Statutes 2002, section 120B.30, Section 8, subd. 1a: "The commissioner must not develop statewide assessments for academic standards in social studies and the arts."

Academic standards in history, geography, economics, and government and citizenship are listed in 120B.021, Section 3,subd. 1, line 4. Additionally, "academic standards must be clear, concise, objective, measurable, and grade-level appropriate," as stated in Subd. 2. The requirement stated in 120B.021, Section 3, Subd. 1 states that the commissioner must submit proposed academic standards to the legislature by February 1, 2004. The legislation does not specifically require benchmarks during this period and I recommend that the proposed timeline may be too restrictive to allow for thoughtful input and revision of standards and related benchmarks by the content experts.

The number of benchmarks students must complete in grades K-6 is excessive, considering that the commissioner is currently prohibited, by state statute, from developing statewide assessments for academic standards in social studies. Academic standards ought to raise academic expectations, but I do not believe that more benchmarks correlates with higher expectations. Posted on the legislative revisor's web site is Section 8, Minnesota Statutes 2002, section 120B.30, Section 8, subd. 1a: "The commissioner must not develop statewide assessments for academic standards in social studies and the arts."

We would like to see the 6-8 standards be flexible enough that they could be taught at any grade level 6, 7 or 8. The extent of the benchmarks is unrealistic and too detailed. For example, in eighth grade there are four different strands that would be very difficult to integrate into one cohesive course. Therefore, one would need four textbooks to teach four mini-courses in one year. To truly "locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of world regions" would take at least one full year in itself, yet this considered one benchmark within one strand of the 8th grade content to be taught. Please consider these suggestions for the November 1st meeting. Also, consider postponing the implementation of these standards until the state has adequate input from teachers.

The new Minnesota standards for Social Studies are too narrow and represent a biased viewpoint of U.S. History that is not representative of the diverse groups of people who have built our nation. The emphasis in the new standards on recalling facts and bits of information rather than teaching children to be critical thinkers who know how to act as positive, proactive citizens in a democracy, is a step backward for our state, and will result in our children being less educated rather than educated in a world class manner. I urge the department and the commissioner to rethink these new standards. They need the input of people who know how to teach our students well and instill them with the kind of inspiration required to be excellent citizens and learners.

The State should require each core subject be taught at a specific grade level. Example: all 10 graders should be taking American History, all 12 graders should be taking economic, etc. The State should purchase the required textbooks for each subject area. This would save tax dollars for individual districts and help create the uniformity the standards suggest. The state should have an exit or graduation test required for all graduates in all core areas including social studies. If a passing grade is not attained the student may not get a diploma.

This is to reiterate the comments I made to the commissioner in Owatonna... As the standards are currently written our district would be forced to do a major overhaul of our SS scope and sequence. This would cost the district thousands in materials and curriculum writing/reworking. The crazy thing is that we teach almost all of what is contained in the

new standards but not at the same grade levels. I would hope that there could be a "window" say 5-8 in which the benchmarks could be delivered ala the 9-12 range. I realize that the legislature wants grade specific standards, but I really can't see financially strapped districts spending large sums of money to move curriculum a couple of grades.

These standards are not developmentally appropriate for first graders. Most children this age barely can name the city and state they live in let alone information about Egyptian and Greek history.

General Comment: It is unrealistic to impose 46 Social Studies benchmarks on a third grade student. Even if the benchmarks themselves were attainable, which they are not, Social Studies is not the only subject taught in a third grade classroom.

Specific Comments

U.S. History/World History: I feel that this entire section is inappropriate for a third grade student. They are not ready for the majority of this material. Not to mention the fact that most of the students have no background foundation to build this learning on. I realize that with the proposed standards the foundation would be laid prior to third grade. However, I still feel that it is too difficult for a child of eight or nine to comprehend this information. My question to the committee would be: What is the point of a third grader knowing this information? A child of eight/nine years still struggles to put together the logic of how city, state, country, and continent live and work together. Being able to identify and explain six different European empires is beyond reason.

Government and Citizenship: Regarding a third graders ability to totally understand and differentiate between the branches of the U.S. government my premise remains the same. It is unreasonable and too advanced for an eight year old child. Our focus should be the basics and getting a child to the point where they can read and think independently. Confusing them with information beyond their years serves no purpose. I am concerned that many adults can not fully explain the different branches and that it is important for an individual to be able to do so. It is not suitable to expect a third grader to be able to do so. Keeping in mind that Social Studies is one part of a well-rounded third grader. I know of no regular education third grade classroom teacher who teaches Social Studies exclusively. It would not be in the child's best interest. That is the bottom line in regard to many of the 46 Social Studies benchmarks. They do not serve the best educational interest of a third grade child. Again, note the word child. These are eight and nine year old students, not freshmen in high school.

Wow, these seem awfully specific in some areas of history, while totally ignoring other areas. I do believe Rosa Parks to be an important piece of US History.

The vast majority of the 1st grade standards are inappropriate. They either involve memorization of names, dates, places, or events that a 6 or 7 year old won't understand, or they're about a concept that is too abstract or not developmentally appropriate. Social Studies for students this age needs to clearly connect to their known world/experiences, or it will mean nothing. I want my students to really learn, not just spew factoids. I have high expectations for my students, but let's develop standards that are reasonable for the developmental stage of the children!

There is little in the civics standards that are "crucial." Instead, they are a repetitive mish mash of Natural Rights philosophy and Soviet -style jingoism.

In the Civics Standards:

The Declaration of Independence gets 14 Benchmarks

No mention of Civil rights

No mention of the fourteenth amendment

Various Flags and songs get 5 standards

And seventh graders are to "...discuss why the Founders identified "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" as natural rights, and differentiate "happiness" from "pursuit of happiness."

In the face of such absolute failure, the answer is clear. The panel that created these inadequate standards must resign. A new panel must be created and I call on the commissioner to also resign in the face of her failure to provide leadership to create world-class standards for Minnesota's children.

Academic excellence does not rely on memorized facts that please an academic committee and make these committee members pat themselves on the back at what these children have accomplished. In two weeks or two months or two years all of these facts will be forgotten and no true knowledge will ensue. True knowledge comes from understanding the concepts and being able to apply new knowledge to these concepts. Do you really think the average 5th grader will be able to understand the main ideas of the abolitionist

movement? I would be willing to bet there are members of your science committee that don't know the main ideas. Who is to determine the main ideas of the abolitionist movement? Is there one set of main ideas that every historian would agree on? Your standards are ridiculous! To instate these standards on our children is a waste of their time, their teachers' time, and their parents' time. You will be taking valuable time away from their real learning.

These standards do not make academic excellence. You will accomplish creating poor self esteem as many children will be unable to complete these tasks. You will create bigger "class" distinctions, as those children with greater parental support will be able to memorize these facts, and those children who do not have full support, or whose parents have several children, or two jobs, or... What about those children?

Rethink what you're doing and for whose benefit you are doing it!

Neglected to include the years 0-500 AD (standard starts at 500-100 AD).

Since Islam is mentioned, need to include that Christianity was founded in approx 33 AD by Jesus Christ.

I recently attended a public comment session. As a parent, I was appalled at the behavior of the teachers. They were rude and expressed little true concern for the children or respect for the process of developing these new standards. While parents, the community or the State might not have the expertise to know how to teach children, they have the right and responsibility to decide what the children are taught. The teachers are then responsible for teaching the children the material. If they aren't willing to do that, then they should not be teachers in public school.

I think standards are important. They give us a way to measure the progress of our children and the quality of their teachers. Standards must be accurate and build upon one another in a systematic manner.

Several teachers expressed the concern for not being able to teach children how to reason. The ability to apply reasoning or levels of abstraction takes time to develop. However, without a concrete foundation of facts to build from, there is nothing to reason with.

The following doesn't apply to these standards specifically. Children are capable of learning different things at different ages. For example 4-9 year old children learn languages very quickly, why do we wait until high school to start teaching languages when it is much harder to teach them? The same principle applies to all kinds of learning.

ps. Please make the text box for submitting comments on this page larger...

I teach hs on a 4 period day, and 82 B'marks (US History) essentially means 1 b'mark/day, which is absurd since some of the b'marks are so content-rich. Also, in my district (Forest Lake) we have long tried to avoid too much repetition of facts/material between Jr. High/H. School USHistory, and as such we've basically avoided pre-1840s material at the hs--yet we still have a hard time covering content up to the V'nam War. Now we'll have to cover all the way back to pre-Col'l, and still get up to the 1990s?! And much of the material from the 7th, 8th, and 9-12th grades are repetitive, which will simply reinforce the popular notion that history is simply a bunch of facts that need to be memorized, rather than a social science that is full of different interpretations of a myriad of facts. And since the current b'marks are selecting some "facts" at the expense of others, teachers will be forced to eliminate lots of content that enrich the debate of those "facts", since it's quite probable (given current trends) we'll be testing the students on the b'marks. For example, R. Reagan is mentioned 3X (2X in USHist., once in Gov't) in the same b'mark sentence as the "fall of communism and the end of the Cold War" (p. 42, p. 31), implying he is the primary factor in the fall of communism rather than discussing all of the factors involved (the historical verdict is still out on Reagan's specific role, but obviously the legislators' verdict is not!). Meanwhile, Populism, the Filipino War, and most of the 1960s(all of which include controversial topics) are almost completely ignored by the b'marks!! It would make much more sense to keep the Sub-strands and Standards to be left in, but up to individual districts to determine when they are covered in Jr/Sr. highs. And since so much material has to be left out, why not have all the possible b'marks (up to 200?!?) offered within the standards, with a reasonable number required to be covered by curriculum?

Sometimes I wonder if these standards aren't really a conspiracy to frustrate reasonable people, the end result being that they throw up their hands and send their kids to private schools. I have a friend in Virginia (the state where Yecke wrote standards before coming to Minnesota) and her emails, although good for a laugh, point out how outrageous the social studies standards are in there state. She has a third grade son. Here is an excerpt from her latest email:

"He had an economics test today (did you know what "opportunity cost" meant in 3rd grade?) Jon says he still doesn't get it at age 47, so how can they really teach it to 8 year olds. That's going to be on the SOLs this year."

The 47 year old she refers to is her husband, a PhD Physicist. My friend is a veteran teacher herself who is now an administrator in one of the largest school districts in Virginia.

I didn't know what "opportunity cost" was until I took Economics in college. In third grade my biggest economics experience was figuring out how to spend my allowance of ten cents a week. Eight year olds can't put economic concepts into any kind of meaningful context. I'm not a professional educator and even I can figure that one out.

As a social studies department we are concerned about the rationale and expectations in several of the subject areas. Some of the benchmarks in middle level are out of touch with the skill level of most 6th graders especially in economics. In 7th and 8th grade there is such a strong emphasis on U.S. history that trying to teach the other areas is not feasible. At the high school level, how can an instructor possibly teach from the earliest civilizations of the world through World War II in a World History class equivalent to .5 credit. It isn't humanly possible, yet we are expected to teach it at a level of expertise. Please revamp the benchmarks and use as your guiding notion what is feasible in a classroom, not what is grandiose or we will be right back to where the Profile of Learning was--a great idea in theory but in practice a completely different story.

The standards overall are very good! I think the standards are tough and they need to be! Our kids need to learn the truth and the facts too be well rounded, objective, and active citizens. These standards are closer to what was required of our parents. My father's books through the 8th grade were as tough or tougher than what I learned through 12th grade. Minnesota was once at the top in education. We can be again, with these standards. We shouldn't limit our kids! They are capable of learning a lot more than many give them credit for. Let's keep them interested and engaged in learning. They want to know about the world around them. By teaching these standards, they won't enter the world after they graduate feeling they have been cheated from a real education.

Many of the online comments say the standards are too tough. The standards and benchmarks were written (in my understanding) to be left open to the teachers to decide how to teach them. They can be simplified or made more difficult according to the needs of the students. I sat in on some of the S.S. standards committees. The committees were made up of men and women, white, black, Asian, grade level appropriate teachers, home school educators, liberals and conservatives. Yes, the standards were put together in a short time. The committees will take public comment into consideration before they are complete. Let's stand behind them to create the best standards in the nation!

More specifically, the geography standards need to emphasize learning the nations/countries of the world, national boundaries and how they were formed. We live in a world of countries and nations not just regions. (i.e. Grade 8 Geography Interconnections Bullet 6). National sovereignty needs to be recognized and emphasized. This country was formed as an independent nation of the world to protect our freedoms and basic rights of life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness.

My concern is through the Social Studies benchmark you incite repetitional knowledge that does not allow critical thinking. While the need to standardize content in the form of standards and subjects for roaming students and families, I disagree with standardizing benchmarks. Allow communities, teachers, and local administrators the opportunity to make these decisions. My other concern is not allowing enough elective classes for 9-12. Students should be allowed to become active learners. By allowing students to pick classes the student takes an active role in their education. Some examples are classes on the Holocaust, World Wars, Vietnam, or even Community Awareness. Currently, there is no room for these types of classes in the committee's standards.

WOW! Apparently we are only going to have time to teach social studies in first grade - forget about anything else... The sheer number of standards are ridiculous for a first grade level. Additionally, many of the concepts (I'll address them within the strands) are too abstracts for young children who barely realize how their behaviors affect events around them, let alone how things in history affect the present.

Way too hard for first graders. I've taught in the primary grades for ten years and I don't feel that MOST kids (let alone 80%) are able to learn and make sense of these facts. History to a first grader is anything that happened before they were born - that's OLD! Please consider what first graders are capable of understanding.

First graders can understand that there's a world around them and it's round. They can understand that there are different kinds of people, but we all have some things in common. They cannot understand different points of history - ancient versus American versus when the dinosaurs were alive. All that happened before they were born so it's old to them

That's it for them! They can memorize facts and dates to make people happy, but I don't know that that is the best use of our time. I think they need to work on functioning in their school society before worrying about ancient history.

These look good and are reasonable. These are more skill-based, specific, and manageable for young children. We can create timelines relating to the recent past to help them understand how they work, then work with some timelines of more distant past to help them begin to put the past into perspective - thanks to the visual cue.

Some things (like the role of citizenship) is too abstract and complex for young kids. Many adults still struggle with the complexity of this and teaching it to kids when they're younger won't help them understand it better. It's abstract and hard to understand. However, the respect and recognition of some national and state symbols is much more age-appropriate for first graders.

I like the concepts of location. This is appropriate for young children. Also, concepts of maps and globes are more age-appropriate.

Way too abstract for young kids to talk about "consumers" and "producers." At this age we can focus on wants and needs and the fact that there's not always as much of everything as we want, so we have to work out ways to make sure everyone who needs some gets some. Beyond this, they can't wrap their brains around it.

The standards are overwhelming in their numbers, at all levels. In order to learn it must be meaningful and connections must be made. I question how much of this is meaningful to the learner, how much of this is age appropriate - comprehensible by the student. What is it we really want students to understand? and What do we want them to do with it? Knowledge accumulates daily at an expanding rate. What do we really want students to know? It is not possible for students to know it all. Learning takes time and is a critical element for successful learning and performance. With this many standards/benchmarks where will there be time to explore, reflect, evaluate and try again until the concept or skill is mastered and learned. We need to value the process of learning not just what is to be learned.

History and World History - These standards are much too detailed and out of the realm of an 8 year old. why get so detailed. Each benchmark is like a unit in itself. Students at this level have a hard time understanding a personal history, why subject them to such abstract concepts - what a waste of time.

I think that there should be more study of significant court cases since the 1950s that have altered significantly the direction of this country. This should be part of social studies curriculum requirement in grades 9-12.

For example, Roe vs. Wade and the fact that this decision was made with the statement that when life began was unknown and that if it became known that life began at conception, that the right of life and citizenship would null and void any right to abortion.

Other significant court decisions are those of taking prayer and Bible study out of public schools after they had been an integral part of our entire first 150 years. The Bible was the only textbook to start, and then was the primary textbook. There are numerous quotes from various important Americans about how important the Bible must be in American public education or our society would be in trouble. Students are entitled to learn our true history. People are free to not agree with our forefathers, or not like what they did or believed. But as US citizens, as part of our education, we need to know such things as "to be an American, was to be a Christian" that the US saw itself as "the new Israel", that in 1776, 99.8% of the population was Christian, the other .2% was Jewish. That prayer and fasting was part of our early decisions as a US government.

Statistics can also be gathered with very close and clear parallels that on many issues- teenage pregnancy, divorce, crime, child abuse,... have worsened since prayer and Bible study left the schools.

Also the lie of the ACLU about the "separation of church and state" which existed in the Soviet Union constitution, not ours. That Christians founded this country and the government has always been steeped in Christianity. The first amendment gives us freedom of religion not censorship of it!

Please include all these facts in the social studies curriculum. Thank you very much.

Regarding the Kindergarten Social Studies Standard: Many of these strands are not developmentally appropriate for a 5-6 year old who is still very much in an egocentric world. Strand 1 Substrand A: We feel that a K student cannot adequately understand the terms native and immigrant people much less understand their contributions to our history. Too difficult of a concept.

Strand 2 Substrand A: We question a K student's ability to compare and contrast.

Strand 3 Substrand (non listed) Difficult to understand terms past, present, future. Kindergartners are aware of their own lives, current events shaping history is a concept beyond their comprehension. Many events are "too scary" eg. bombing, wars, etc.

Government and Citizenship: Students should be introduced to these concepts, mastery of them should not be required.

Geography: 5-6 yr. olds should only be introduced to map and related geography concepts. This too is beyond their comprehension.

Economics: K children do NOT understand producers, consumers, goods and services. They cannot differentiate between wants and needs.

In the economics strand, it is narrowly defined as choices between wants and needs, and is described as distributing scarcity among people. The fact is, there are a variety of factors involved. This includes the ability of business and industry to create resources and expand available opportunities. Another point is that the words "market economy" should be

stated "free market economy." Standards discuss supply and demand, they need to be clearly identified as a "free market economy." Another item is the role of private property. This is the foundation of the "free market system" we have.

Some points in the US History area. The federal system within our Constitution is properly described as the "separation of powers" and a system of "checks and balances" rather than the more

popular but incorrect "shared and balanced powers." Limiting federal power, and reserving all other powers not mentioned in the Constitution, to the states and to the people. (10th amendment) Limited powers needs to be included.

Thank you for the strong emphasis on our founders and their ideals and principles that lead to the birth of America. Great the Gettysburg Address was included!

Don't censor the religious aspect of the

early colony settlements. The were Christians, who believed the Word of God, and fled the dictatorship of a State Religion. Another area in the US History standards is under the political censorship are the 9-12 US History, sub-strand H. Era8. Students should understand that Sen. McCarthy had been correct about Communist infiltration of the state department, and that none of those he accused, were innocent.

The previous comments sent are from the Marshall Public Schools Kindergarten Teachers District 413

Grade 4 1.c Era 3 Political Unrest and the American Revolution

This is too advanced for 4th graders. It is set up to fail. Better for 8th graders

Grade 4 II. C. Era 3 Postclassical Civilizations 500-1000 A.D.

This level is too complicated for 4th graders. More a middle standard and benchmarks.

The government standards should include knowledge of local and state government.

Grade 5 II. D Era 4 Regional Interactions 1000-1500

Benchmarks are too advanced for 5th graders.

Grade 6 III.A.Era2: Classical Civilizations, 1000B.C. to 500 A.D.

This is setting students up to fail. Benchmarks are more highschool level than 6th grade.

Grade 6. III.Sorl History A. Era 2 Classical Civilizations B.C. to 500 A.D. second part.

This is also more highschool level than 6th grade.

As an experienced teacher, I was appalled at some of the standards. Many children in grade three do not have the readiness for many of the standards! Secondly, there is not enough time to do as many of the standards as suggested. We are still trying to teach children how to read and that takes up the greater portion of the day.

I feel that all of the standards for U.S history are not appropriate for the majority of third graders! Whoever wrote these standards did not consider readiness!

The World History standards are not appropriate for third graders either. We as educators are putting way too much pressure on children and these standards are way too difficult!

The standards for government and citizenship were somewhat realistic. Substrands A and C are acceptable. B is not because the standards are not appropriate for third graders

For geography, only the first two sets are acceptable!

The World History pieces are out of place in the fourth grade curriculum.

I am very concerned about my children being taught evolution without creation. Evolution is only a theory that is continually proven incorrect. Both need to be taught or neither at all. If my children are forced into it, it will be a very well accepted "F" on their report cards by me.

I am a retired teacher who is still active in the educational community. It seems to me that many of the standards for grades K through 3 are much too difficult for mastery by all. I liked many of the comments that others wrote in these areas. It seems as though many of these concepts could be introduced at these levels, but I cannot believe that all children would be able to master many of the proposed concepts. Many others have reflected my personal opinion on this...listen to what people, especially elementary teachers, are saying. They truly understand the developmental levels of children at these ages.

I like the inclusion of character traits, citizenship, national symbols and songs in the standards.

I like the increased emphasis on specific people, places, and events, which will create more consistent educational quality throughout the state. However, it's important to understand the context in which people became famous, as well as to know facts about them. Children love stories and enjoy learning about real people and events as much as they enjoy fiction stories.

Grade 6 III World History C. Era 4 Regional Interaction 1000-1500

Not grade level appropriate. High school level benchmarks.

Grade 6 I. Government and Citizenship

Too complicated for 6th graders. Benchmarks high school level.

Grade 7 II U.S. History A. Era 3 Founding of the Nation and Westward Expansion -

I have a 7th grade son. To get to the level of detail in standards like these, the students would need to spend half of every day on social studies. As that will not happen, benchmarks like this are set up so that students will fail.

Grade 7 II. U.S. History A. Era 3 Founding a Nation and Westward Expansion, 1775-1860

These are high school level benchmarks, not 7th grade level.

Grade 7 II U.S. History B. Era 4 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850s-1870s

Seems biased to have a benchmark of "understand the historical reasons for the rise of the Ku Klux Klan." but no benchmark on the impact of the Klan on thousands of lives

Grade 8. 1. Minnesota History 1900-1968

If students are asked to understand the role of 5 Minnesotans on work issues, at least one needs to be a woman. The standards make it appear most all history was done by men.

Grade 8 II. U.S. History G. Era 9 The United States in an unsettled world 1989-present

These benchmarks have an unacceptable conservative bias. Where is the Women's Movement? War protest?

Grade 8 II Geography D. Interconnections

The impact of pollution and global warming is missing. Looks like a conservative bias.

Grade 8 II. Geography. D. Interconnections "The students will describe.."

This standard is missing the negative impacts of humans such as pollution.

Grade 7 - US History, ...Understand the development of the U.S. Constitutional form of Government:

I object to the Benchmark assertion that the Constitution implemented a government founded on the principle of "ordered liberty". The Constitution talks about securing the "blessings of liberty", not ordered liberty.

I believe this term "ordered liberty" is used by the religious right, referring to how the Constitution limits the actions of individuals. This is an ideological code word that doesn't belong in standards that are trying to not promote a certain ideology.

I also object to the Benchmark that the Declaration of Independence should emphasize "government as a means of securing individual rights." I believe this, again, is a way of trying to get across a conservative point of view that individual rights or "states' rights" are more important than the rights of all people (i.e. dual sovereignty).

The Strands, sub-strands, and standards are broad and comprehensive. I believe they provide an excellent framework for a rigorous, global curriculum. The Benchmarks seem to randomly select people, events, and concepts out of the blue, without a context in which to build understanding. Memorization of isolated facts isn't quality education. I recommend retaining the strands, sub-strands, and standards as they are, but using the benchmarks as examples of the kind of specific knowledge you would like districts to develop. It is my understanding that districts will be developing the assessments to measure the social studies standards. Trust them to develop their own scope and sequence of specific information within the standards that are expected for all students. That way, many districts can retain much of the content and materials they already have, and they will just have to supplement the areas where their curricula do not reach the breadth of the state standards.

I am very upset that you did not schedule more public meetings in the city of Minneapolis. I live in Minneapolis and expect to be able to attend a meeting nearby.

I believe your schedule had one meeting in St. Paul, the rest in suburbs or out-state. How can you do this - Minneapolis is the largest school district in the state!

By the time I began reading the standards, all the meetings were being held in the suburbs.

Please schedule more meetings in Minneapolis when you redraft the standards for another try.

I also believe the standards need to be reworked in a major way. I believe that they are trying to promote a conservative ideology. Code words such as "ordered liberty", "dual sovereignty", doctrine of "natural rights," significance of "four references to God in the Declaration of Independence," how the Northwest Ordinance of 1785 and 1787 "privatized" national resources, all tend to fit into conservative and religious right concepts. These standards should not be skewed toward one ideology.

I agree with the opinion expressed by Paul Seeba in The Pioneer Press on October 22, 2003, regarding the standards for social studies. Please consider this view!
Thank you, Barbara Kast

Geographic education needs to be much stronger at ALL levels.

Many of the standards and lists of requirements leave many holes. Why weren't educators in the field of Social Studies on the committee??? From reading the standards it sounds like people knew a little here, a little there--BUT they were not HIGHLY QUALIFIED in this particular field. If NCLB is requiring HIGHLY QUALIFIED teachers and paras, shouldn't the same be required of those developing the standards. They should have knowledge of the content area!

"Students will know people associated with national holidays and figures from various cultural backgrounds, including, but not limited to Christopher Columbus..."
Kindergarten students do not have enough time to learn 25 benchmarks in a half day. This benchmark should be eliminated.

"Students will know how diverse ..."

Kindergarten students need to focus on learning reading, writing and arithmetic. There is no time for this benchmark in the typical half day kindergarten.

"Students will know certain events that are tied to national holidays...."

There is no time for this in half day kindergarten.

World History

"Students will compare and contrast how people lived in earlier times and today."

Not age appropriate.

"Students will become aware that people have moved and explored throughout the world "

There is not enough time for this benchmark in half day kindergarten.

Concepts of Time

"Students will use the terms for concepts of time including past, present and future."

This benchmark is not age appropriate and there is no time for it in half day kindergarten.

"Students will recognize that current events continue to shape history."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Government and Citizenship

"Students will recognize and name the President of the United States."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Geography

"Students will describe the relative location of people, places and things by using positional words, with emphasis on near/far...."

There is not enough time for this benchmark in half day kindergarten.

"Students will use maps and globes...."

This is not age appropriate.

"Students will locate land and water features."

This is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to locate their town on a simple state map."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will locate important places in their school and community."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Kindergarten

Economics

"Students will distinguish between producers...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify the difference between basic needs...."

Kindergarten students need to learn to read in their half day classes. There is no time for this benchmark.

"Students will identify that money can be used to buy goods and services."

There is no time for this benchmark

First Grade

U.S. History

"Students will know groups and individuals associated with colonization...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know other historical figures...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know how migration and colonization...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know how interaction among American Indians...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know how inventions...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

First Grade

World History

"Students will give examples of civilizations of the ancient world...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of people that have moved...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of events that have influence world history."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

First Grade

Concepts of Time

"Students will create a timeline."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize that current events...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe how things change over time...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to connect a story with its time in history...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

First Grade

Government and Citizenship

"Students will be able to define what it means...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to explain what constitutes a right, privilege,...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to recognize that the Declaration...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify state symbols such as the state flag...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize the significance of our national symbols...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize and name the Governor of Minnesota."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade 1

Geography

"Students can name and use relative directional words...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to locate and name the continents...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to recognize the outline of the shape of Minnesota...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will compare and contrast various landforms."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Students will give examples of physical features...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to explain how human activities have changed...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade One

Economics

"Students will identify that people whose wants...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify that people who make goods and services...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will understand that trading goods and services...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will define scarcity...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize that because of scarcity...."

My recommendations are as follows:

(The first four refer specifically to civics standards)

1. Reconstruct the current civics subcommittee. It is heavily biased politically and the draft of standards reflect that bias. Two of the six are acknowledged activists in the extremely conservative Claremont Institute and Maple River Coalition. A third is, or was, a county Republican party chairperson. That is not a balanced committee and the draft standards reflect it.
2. Set aside the current draft of civics standards and draft a new set of standards.
3. Appoint members to the committee who teach civics. Experience and skill in teaching civics should be a valued asset.
4. Appoint parents who do not have a political agenda or if you do want political agendas represented, do it fairly.
5. Use the national standards in Civics, Economics, American History, World History and Social Studies as useful guides in developing your standards.
6. The current history draft standards apparently reflect, according to one of your committee members, the core knowledge curriculum of E.D. Hirsch and the Claremont Institute's position. Where is the balancing perspective of liberal or moderate curriculum views?
7. Use NAEP research and work on social studies standards.
8. Use the research of CIRCLE in your work on civics standards.
9. Economics standards as currently drafted are incomplete and unbalanced. Economics is not a value free field. The current draft predominantly reflects one perspective only.
10. American History and World History need significant revision for the following reasons:
 - a. More emphasis should be placed on analysis/interpretation and less on memorization

- b. Love of country should be based on a reasoned commitment to the principles of this country as evidenced in the Bill of Rights, Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and other significant documents such as Martin Luther King's speech.
- c. The draft standards have too much specificity and too little trust in the teaching ability of classroom teachers. They resemble a cook book that gives little or no respect to the professional skills of classroom history teachers.
- d. Too often the standards are developmentally inappropriate and lack overall integrity.
- e. Too often the draft standards reflect the thinking of organizations such as the Claremont Institute, Fordham Foundation, and Shanker Institute. The first two are widely known as neo conservative think tanks with extremely conservative views. The third organization has obviously not read the thematic curriculum organizing national standards it is most critical of its recent publication Shanker Institute.

11. Standards committees should include experts in all fields not just in geography and economics. Civics and history had no one with experience and expertise equivalent to David Lanegran or Rick McDonald?

12. Classroom teachers currently in the classroom, and respected as leaders in their field, were not adequately represented on the committees.

13. The Fordham Institute is an acknowledged right wing think tank whose head is Chester Finn. Finn has made a variety of inflammatory remarks about social studies. Organizations like the Fordham Foundation, whose leader, Chester Finn, refers to current national social studies leaders as lunatics, Goths and Huns add little to the process of adopting world class social studies standards. If his organization is going to be used as a reference for standards development than a left of center equivalent should also be used.

Minnesota deserves world class social studies standards. This draft is woefully inadequate.

Grade Two

World History

"Students will become familiar with people who ahve made cultural...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of contributions of past civilizations..."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to link an event happening today...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to explain how past events shaped the world today."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize ways that current events...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade Two

Government and Citizenship

"Students will understand that the Declaration of Independence...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will understand that the Constitution...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to name the three branches of government...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize that the Declaration of Independence...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to explain the significance of national symbols...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

A team of social studies teachers in our district has reviewed the proposed standards in social studies. A number of concerns were raised. 1. The standards tend to be excessive by sheer number in some of the strands. In many cases they would be difficult to teach in a year long course. 2. The grade levels to which the standards have been assigned are vastly different than what is included our current curriculum. If the standards were to be accepted as written, we would have to totally rewrite our entire K-12 social studies curriculum and purchase new materials for virtually every single grade level and subject. In fact, there is concern that it would be impossible to find curriculum material that matches the standards at the grade levels indicated in these configurations. We would have to spend significant dollars for curriculum writing time for teachers to make the changes, and extensive training would be necessary. We do not have the resources to support that kind of overhaul of our curriculum. The proposed social standards need serious revision.

Grade Two Geography

"Students will be able to explain that the equator is an imaginary line...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will name and locate physical features of the U.S...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will name and locate some major cities with the U.S. and Minnesota...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will examine and be able to describe places they read and study about...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of how and why people have moved...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of cultural exchanges...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will begin to develop an idea of how places and locations around the world...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will begin to develop an idea of how a region or place such as their community...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade two

Economics

"Students will recognize that productive resources...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will be able to define opportunity cost."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will give examples of opportunity costs in everyday life."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade Three

U.S. History

"Students will locate where the American Indians settled...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand the motivations...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand cultural interactions...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand political, religious, social economic and conditions...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify the growing political, economic and social tensions...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

I am writing to give feedback regarding the social studies standards. First, I do not like the spiraling imbedded in these standards. We should be tied into the national standards for social studies which are developmentally appropriate to specific grade levels. Textbooks and resource books are geared to these standards. I really dislike the "jumping around history" that occurs in these standards. Students in 3rd grade are in US history then jump to early civilizations then jump to civics -what a mess. I teach 5th grade and we study US History and government from the first settlement of the continent through WW II. We study history as a progression of events one leading to another with emphasis on the stories that make history interesting not just dates and events. In this way students are involved in a journey not jumping off from one period of history to another age. What a horrible way to have to teach. I find it hard to believe you are even proposing this. In like manner when I taught 6th grade we spent most of the year studying world history - again seeing how one period influenced change which developed new ways of thinking. Again we didn't jump from the Renaissance to the Civil War! I am wondering how many teachers were involved in setting up these standards. I noticed a number of university profs - I question whether these people even know about what is developmentally appropriate to each age level. Too many times you do not have the involvement of the teachers who are doing the teaching and these programs you propose never work. Line up the Minnesota standards with the national standards and forget these ridiculous proposals you have made. Furthermore get more teachers involved and be realistic about your expectations.

Grade Three

World History

"Students will compare and contrast characteristics of ancient cultures...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe the importance of large-scale irrigation...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify and explain the following:...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe daily life in the Roman Empire."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will correctly place several people and events...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Essential Skills

"Students will develop a chronological sequence of persons, events...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade 3

Government and Citizenship

"Students will identify and recognize the importance of responsibility, accountability and pursuing self-reliance."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize that inalienable rights are...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize the equality of all citizens under the law."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will recognize the majority rule and minority rights."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will understand the freedom of the individual...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will identify the functions of legislative, executive and judicial branches."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will memorize the Pledge of Allegiance and songs...."

Rote memorization of these songs is not a sound educational practice.

Grade Three Geography

"Students will locate and identify U.S. Regions...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will locate the 13 colonies...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will use geographical terms..."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will be able to explain and use such terms as source, mouth, tributary and drainage basin"

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will locate major river systems on continents studied."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will identify major physical features such as seas...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will identify major cities...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will identify cultural features such as pyramids..."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will identify regional climatic patterns...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will describe how humans influence the environment...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will describe how technology affects one's ability to modify the environment..."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

"Students will be able to identify the climate of Minnesota...."

There are too many benchmarks for third grade geography, therefore, this one should be eliminated.

Grade Four

U.S. History

"Students will know and understand issues and events that led to the American Revolution...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Students will know and understand how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Students will know and understand the roles of key individuals in the American Revolution...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand key factors and events contributing to the colonials' defeat of the British...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the government established by the Articles...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will know and understand accomplishments of the first five presidents...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

Grade Four

World History

"Students will show map locations of Viking origins...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe consequences of Barbarian invasions...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe the importance of the Eastern Roman Empire...."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will locate sites of the origin and expansion of Islam."

This would be a great benchmark for grades 9-12.

"Students will identify key figures associated with the rise of Islam."

This would be a great benchmark for grades 9-12.

"Students will describe the importance of camel caravans and the city of Timbuktu...."

This would be a great benchmark for grades 9-12.

"Students will locate and identify major cultures such as Axum...."

This would be a great benchmark for grades 9-12.

"Students will develop a chronological sequence of persons, events...."

This would be a great benchmark for grades 9-12.

My feeling is that most of the topics listed under Minnesota History for 8th grade are more appropriately taught under the title "Geography." The most obvious exceptions are the five prominent Minnesotans and the World War I and Depression benchmarks. Other than that, many of the benchmarks are highly geographical. For example, students are to understand, "how flourmills, iron ore, and the lumber industries changed where people lived," and "understand evolving patterns of immigration." I assume that these patterns are spatial patterns. Thus, these benchmarks and many of the other Minnesota History benchmarks addressing, resources, settlement patterns, development, economic globalization, and so forth, are really human geography and/or its subfields of economic geography and historical geography. In my opinion, the Minnesota History benchmarks should be retitled "Minnesota Geography." Without significant geographic content and without instructors trained in a geographical perspective, the material listed in the benchmarks will be shortchanged.

Grade Four

Government and Citizenship

"Students will explain the lawmaking process."

This benchmark is not age appropriate.

"Students will describe the executive, legislative and judicial branches."

This would be a great benchmark for eighth grade.

"Students will explain the significance and meaning of the Declaration...."

This would be a great benchmark for eighth grade.

"Students will memorize...."

Rote memorization is not a sound educational practice.

"Students will identify and be able to discuss the concepts in songs...."

This would be better put in a music benchmark.

The Geography material is good, absolutely necessary, and if possible expanded. The geography benchmarks concerning the physical resources and ecosystems of Minnesota are essential to understanding the Minnesota History benchmarks. Really, I think that the Geography benchmarks provide the factual and conceptual knowledge base from which to understand Minnesota History. However, I am concerned about the lack of concrete examples from real places in the Geography benchmarks. Perhaps, more of the geography of Minnesota and the U.S. should be inserted into the Geography benchmarks.

Did you know that 52 of the 55 signers of the Declaration of Independence were orthodox, deeply committed Christians? The other three all believed in the Bible as the divine truth, the God of scripture, and His personal intervention. It is the same Congress that formed the American Bible Society. Immediately after creating the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress voted to purchase and import 20,000 copies of scripture for the people of this nation. Patrick Henry, who is called the firebrand of the American Revolution, is still remembered for his words, "Give me liberty or give me death." But in current textbooks the context of these words is deleted. Here is what he actually said: "An appeal to arms and the God of hosts is all that is left us. But we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God that presides over the destinies of nations. The battle sir, is not to the strong alone. Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death." These sentences have been erased from our textbooks. Was Patrick Henry a Christian? The following year, 1776, he wrote this "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great Nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For that reason alone, people of other faiths have been afforded freedom of worship here."

The high school geography material is long overdue. U.S. teenagers and even college-educated adults are incredibly ignorant of geography compared to their counterparts in the rest of the world. This ignorance is not just map quiz stuff but awareness of the interrelationships between different regions and relationships between ecosystems and economies, to name a few. I teach geography at the college level and several times while teaching the 3-cell model of global circulation (which by the way is a wonderful means of explaining the spatial pattern of deserts and rainforests around the globe), I asked my students how many had seen this in high school. All of my foreign students, whether educated in Sweden, Bombay or Taipei, know the model and none of my U.S. students had a clue. A year of high school geography should be required of all Minnesota students. One problem is that most social studies teachers are trained primarily in history and political science. That should not be an excuse. All of our state universities have strong geography departments and can provide the necessary training.

In several places in the geography benchmarks the phrase "distribution of ..." is used. I suggest more specificity by adding "spatial distribution" or "geographic distribution." I would also like to see more connections between the benchmarks on "global regions" (really the physical basis for geographic regions) with the material on "U.S. and World Regions." In other words, teaching students to understand climate processes in order to understand water conflicts between U.S. and Mexico or between Israel and its neighbors, as well as the economic development opportunities and barriers for various parts of the world. In short, connecting the physical geography and the human geography.

These comments concern the geography standard.

I want to congratulate the group that put these geography standards together. The proposed geography standards for 9-12 education in Minnesota reflect well the National Geography Standards that were published in 1994 from input by the American Geographical Society, the Association of American Geographers, the National Council for Geographic Education and the National Geographic Society.

A student in Minnesota that successfully attains the proposed geography standards will be well versed in global issues, will understand the many cultural and physical processes that leave their imprint on the earth, will understand political and economic systems from an international perspective, and will understand how social and economic policies are

shaped. This student will be able to use the various methods and tools, such as maps, geographic information systems, and global positioning systems, to explore geographic problems. These students will be involved in interdisciplinary discourse, as many of the issues that geographers look at cross disciplinary boundaries. For instance, for a student to understand the application of geographic information systems, this student will have to understand graphic representation, math, computer science, logic, and the nature of the data he/she is studying. One of the inherent strengths of geography is this multidisciplinary nature...these standards promote this strength.

Though I recognize that these standards as proposed might need a bit of editing, the overall content, and intent are sound. I support these geography standards.

My comments pertain to the first benchmark for geography entitled, "Global Regions" which focuses on physical basis for regions. This benchmark could be retitled as "Physical Basis for Geographic Regions." Beyond that, it has some awkward wording and is underdeveloped compared to the other geography benchmarks. This is, however, extremely important material. I think the benchmarks need to be more specific. For example, under climate I think students should know the 3-cell model of global circulation. This will save a lot of time memorizing the locations of rainforests and deserts since it explains their location. What soil types do we want students to know? I think students should know the difference between prairie soils and rainforest soils but realistically do we expect them to know mollisols, alfisols, oxisols, and so forth. Perhaps what students need to know is a simplified version of Gersmehl's model of nutrient storage and circulation in soils/litter/biomass so that they realize that prairie soils are good for farming and that cutting the rainforest is not a good, sustainable strategy because the soils and nutrient cycling are configured differently because the climate is different. The language about watersheds is awkward. I think students should understand the basics of the hydrologic cycle, river and floodplain processes, and the way that watersheds and river basins help organize geographic space. The point here should be the interrelationship between climate, landforms, and water bodies and the relationship between what humans do to the land surface and how the effects show up in the water (or air).

I am happy to see high school geography in the standards. Along with this material on physical regions, we could use more on natural hazards and on land-use change. This would help integrate the physical and human parts of the geography benchmarks. Students should know how hurricanes affect barrier islands and should know about population trends in vulnerable coastal regions. Students should know about population densities in earthquake regions and population trends in drought-prone regions in Africa. Students should know about trends in landcover change globally (conversion of forests to urban and agricultural land, etc.) and how that plays into global climate change. Closer to home, students should know about trends in lakeshore development in Minnesota and how that affects water quality.

Hello-

I have been a fifth grade teacher since 1986. During my career, I have seen many changes come and go in Minnesota Education. My comments are only going to be directed towards fifth grade social studies. Here goes.....

II. World History Strand

D. Era 4: Regional Interactions 1000-1500AD

All four references to this on page 15 of the working draft need to be taken out completely. This adds so much content to my curriculum I would have to teach Social Studies for an additional eight weeks. Even then, I would be hard pressed to be able to make sure I had developed sufficient understanding.

Strand II. Economics

Sub Strand A Producers and Consumers and B Economic Choices

With draw these standards from the final draft PLEASE. They are developmentally and instructionally impossible to accomplish.

Thank you for taking my input.

I fear the overwhelming amount of content in the proposed standards, will in essence, become state mandated curriculum. I am extremely pleased with the social studies units currently being taught at my children's elementary school and I fear the loss of that innovative curriculum and common sense approach. With many elementary schools having only 30 minutes a day to focus on Social Studies, requiring 5 Social Studies content areas from grades k-6 is over-whelming. The cost to create this new curriculum will be outrageous.

Perhaps you should consider the approach Kansas took with their social studies standards and allow schools the freedom to dictate when certain social studies subject areas are covered. Instead of having specific benchmarks for each grade organize the standards so that they state" by the end of second grade, by the end of 4th grade, and so on....

My second concern is that @ the 9-12 level. The Civics standard may be completed in only a one trimester or semester. Again I would like to point to the Kansas standards and suggest that a good Civics/government standard should include BOTH content and process & skills. I would like to see more emphasis placed on Civics and part of that must include active citizenship skills.

All in all I find the standards to be poorly written and disappointing not only for what is included and the obvious ideological slant to it, but also for what has been left out.

What is the rush?! I would urge you to carefully consider the resolution passed by the Buffalo school Board that states, " the standards are inappropriate and not suitable for students in our district and urge the Commissioner to reject the standards as written and begin rewriting with major input from k-12 Social studies teachers." My children and our students deserve better!

I teach both World History and Govt. The amount of detail that is expected to be covered and the grade levels that the standards are placed at are both unrealistic. Furthermore, their does tend to be a slant in what should be covered.

I recently attended the public meeting in Stewartville. I listened carefully to the comments made regarding the social studies standards, trying to keep an open mind. After a couple days of thought, I would like to express my deep concern for what the standards will do to education in rural Minnesota. First, I do not necessarily have a problem with basic standards , even if they are largely content standards. Expecting students to know basic concepts , events and persons is reasonable. However, the process becomes difficult as it becomes politicized - how many white men, native Americans etc. are to be included etc. For that reason, I believe the number of BASIC standards need to be significantly reduced at all levels. Knowledge of the Constitution, what various eras of history that are commonly accepted / used by historians, who presidents were, significant court cases etc. are items that most history teachers could agree on. Place location, basic map skills etc. are geneerally agreed upon by most geography teachers. Instead of being comprehensive, be BASIC. If one looks at the reading and writing tests, one can see the BASIC nature of the skills being tested. Surely we hope most students will be able to read and write better than the BASIC tests require. Likewise the social studies standards could measure BASIC knowledge and, I hope, skills as well, yet we would surely expect most students to go beyond the basics.

As the standards currently read, they are in violation of the legislative mandate which requires that no curriculum be established. Yet that is exactly what the standards do. They specify what needs to be taught at each specific grade level, with some flexibility at the high school - but only to the degree that schools can afford to offer electives. Requiring BASIC social studies standards as I have suggested would allow schools more flexibility in PLACING THE STANDARDS IN PREEXISTING COURSES, because their are fewer BASIC standards. In the current draft, their are 106 benchmarks listed for World History. We offer several electives which address most of the benchmarks. 75% of our students take these courses. If we must implement all 106 standards into our curriculum, we will need to create a World History class that is required this includes three blocks of classes.. To do that we will have to eliminate all four social studies electives (two of which are 1/2 blocks) which includes our only AP course (European History) and psychology/sociology. These are popular courses with approximately 25% of the students taking AP European History, clearly a course with stringent standards. OR, we could eliminate one of two years of U.S. history courses that are required in 9th and 10th grades. Dividing US History over two years allows in depth understanding of concepts related to US History. Civics, economics and geography are incorporated into the course. Eliminating either year would also eliminate integrating many of those concepts into the curriculum.

Finally, the 6th through 8th grade standards need to be more discipline specific, with no dictation of which grade vlevel they are taught at. We teach U.S. History and Geography in 5th grade, Minnesota History in 6th grade, and World Studies (History and Geography) in 7th and 8th grade. Teaching US History in 5th grade works well with our in depth 9th and 10th grade study of US History. In depth study of World Geography and History works well with the elective approach in our high school. We have spent ten years getting courses into place that are integrated, offer students choice, and meet the majority of standards suggested. But any significant increase will completely wipe out social studies as we know it in Chatfield. Please stick with BASIC standards that will not have such a major impact on rural Minnesota schools, schools which are NOT FAILING the students and parents. A BASIC set of standards will guarantee, like the reading and writing tests, that students are

It is going to take us all day to teach all of the reading and math standards required for first graders - when are we supposed to find time to teach all of these COMPLICATED social standards? Do you really think these are meaningful to first graders? I don't. Remember, they are six years old!!!! I think we would be better off just making sure they can read and solve problems. Then they will be ready to learn about these social topics when they can READ about them. These are unrealistic for the age level.

As a 5th grade teacher I am concerned that the proposed social studies standards are too broad and would give us too much material to cover, thereby preventing any in-depth study. I feel that we are laying the foundation for American history studies and not how to be a successful Trivial Pursuit player. We now cover the American Revolution, Civil War, WWI, and WWII, and just barely get that done. To add World History eras would make it very difficult to continue quality teaching.

In sub-strand A-benchmark 1 and 2 replace Students will know to students will be introduced to

In Sub strand b-replace students will know to students will be introduced to.

In substrand A-replace students will compare and contrast to students will be exposed. It is not developmentally appropriate for students to compare and contrast at this time.

In sub strand B-replace students will understand to students will be exposed to

In Concepts of time, benchmark 2, replace past, present, and future with yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Students are at the developmental stage of yesterday, today, and tomorrow than past, present and future.

In benchmark 3-eliminate it!!!

In cubstrand a-remove benchmark 1-not developmentally appropriate.

In substrand a-benchmark 2- remove student will give examples-but leave exhibit good citizen behaviors...

In substrand b benchmark 2-replace students will give examples to students will exhibit responsible behavior towards others...

In substrand c benchmark 1 replace students will recognize to students will be exposed to

In substrand B benchmark A-replace students will use with students will be exposed to

Remove benchmark 2

In substrand C-benchmark 2-what are the important places they need to locate??

In substrand A remove benchmark 1-not developmentally appropriate!!

In substrand B-benchmark 2-replace with students will identify that money can be used to buy things.(remove goods and services!-(Not developmentally appropriate for 5 and 6 year olds!))

In substrand A-remove benchmark 2-not developmentally appropriate!

In substrand A remove both benchmarks-not developmentally appropriate

I am concerned about the glaring lack of historical knowledge among many children and teens and agree that history is essential to citizenship and a good education. However, I strongly oppose these standards.

1. The standards seem more designed to preach a particular view of our country's history, than to inspire any true understanding, pride or interest.
2. They seem designed to teach students to blindly learn by rote memorization. This will not inspire a greater understanding of history or create any interest or ability in the subject!
3. The standards seem designed to produce correct answers on tests and "cookie cutter" citizen robots: NOT students who can think, reason, research or, frankly, care about the past.
4. While the standards include important facts about our nation's history, many essential people, events, movements and IDEAS are ignored.
5. Although the people included are undoubtedly important, other equally significant historical figures are left out. For example, it is disturbing that leaders of civil rights, labor, and women's rights movements appear to be under-represented in the standards. Is the commissioner afraid to inspire students to be active citizens who can think for themselves? I wonder.
6. Young people may be ignorant of history in part because they see it as irrelevant. By leaving out the dynamics and debate of history, this curriculum does nothing to change that.
7. As parents, we should resist allowing our schools to become factories for instilling a single political ideology our children and focus instead on the true best interests of our state's children -- Providing a quality education of balanced view points and high standards of achievement taught in a way that nurtures young people to become interested, engaged learners and active citizens who can think and choose for themselves.

We have been told over and over that the Standards aren't set in stone. The committee should be replaced and start over. As written, the standards are politically biased. All of our history, the good and the bad, and regardless of political association, needs to be taught! Our student aren't going to be too excited to memorize names and dates. History is much more than that! Without learning the meaning and importance of those dates our this generation will not be able to make good decisions for the future of our country.

First a general comment. The middle school standards are too broad. By seventh and eighth grade students are ready to do in-depth exploration of a few topics. Only by doing in-depth studying can the complexity of an area of study be understood. Secondly, too many topics are being included in each year of study. The standards have student in 6th grade bouncing from 1000-1500A.D. to the foundations of the American political system and then into the physical processes that shape the earth and finally into the role of the market economy. While you may be able to make this into a coherent whole in college, it is not possible to have 6th graders understand what one has to do with the other without a great deal of foundation knowledge. By placing so many standards in the middle school, it is impossible to cover any of this topics with any depth. Without depth students do not develop a deep understanding and appreciation for the importance of a topic. Superficial knowledge is not retained and does not create meaningful links to other aspects of social studies. It would be better to place specific areas of study at each grade level. I would recommend 6th grade either ancient world history or Minnesota history, 7th grade - American history from the founding of the nation to 1930's, and 8th grade world geography. These areas are all developmentally appropriate, can be limited in scope to allow for in-depth investigation, excellent preparation for high school courses, and allow students to develop an understanding of the complexity of each area of study.

Kindergarten children should be introduced to holidays and figures as well as native and immigrant people. To expect them to know them is not developmentally appropriate.

Kindergarten children will not be able to identify the months of the year. They should be introduced to them but not expected to know the names of all of them at the kindergarten level. First grade spends a lot of time learning them.

With teacher guidance the students will be able to use globes, maps, etc. for locating places in the world. They will not be able to do this on their own.

I am a historian. I am also a proud graduate of public schools. I have attended public primary and secondary schools across the United States, and I have to say that the public schools I attended in Minnesota were among the best. I went on to attend a large public university, the University of Missouri at Columbia. I graduated Magna Cum Laude with general honors and departmental honors in History, as well as two BAs in History and Russian Language and Literature. I intend to pursue an academic career as a historian. As a well-educated historian and a product of Minnesota's public schools, I have to say that I am appalled by the new Social Studies Standard. It is one of the most poorly thought-out and blind attempts to educate children that I have seen, and that includes my experience in Montana's public schools. In general, the social studies curriculum will produce students who will perform well on standardized tests and will do an excellent job of answering short essay questions because it expects students to do no more than memorize, identify, and "understand." (You complain about the vagueness of the Profile of Learning, and then use a word like "understand" to define your expectations of students?) Even in outline form, the bias of the standard is clear in your emphasis on America's "great deeds" and your willingness to gloss over our many errors. Ms. Pearson-Yecke has said that

the standard is incomplete and still being refined, but how do you expect me to believe this when you say that students should "understand" the importance of Chico, California (which not even I can do, by the way - please refer to the above academic credentials) but decline to say that students should "understand" the importance of the internment of Japanese-Americans on our own soil during World War II? Between the emphasis on definitions at the cost of greater understanding of historical movements and the emphasis on blind patriotism at the cost of understanding the many mistakes that America has made, you will not produce historically-aware and well-educated students, but students who are unable to think critically about history and its links to events in the modern world and who are unable to use what they know about America's past mistakes to make the US a better place. I ask you to think very carefully about this. At the very least, put the effort into it that was put into the Profile of Learning (which, by the way, I used during high school, and which I thought was excellent). Your sloppy and hasty work and unwillingness to think critically and thoroughly about the social studies standard could have serious and debilitating consequences for a generation of historians (and citizens) to come.

By the way, it would be really nice if you stated somewhere on the website that answers must be limited to less than 2000 characters.

This looks to be a very overwhelming curriculum for 10-11 year old children. Can't we give kids an overview without having them memorize so much specific information? This could prove to be very frustrating for most kids and the parents who must help them with hours of homework every night. As a working mom, I have little enough time to help him with math, english, science and the required a/r reading. Ease up a bit!

Students will not be able to identify different denominations of currency and coin. Our math standards in kindergarten only includes the penny, nickle, dime and quarter.

There are too many standards for kindergarten. Most school districts only have their kindergarten children for half of a day. When it all of this material supposed to be taught? Reading and Math are a #1 priority in kindergarten. If the state funded all day kindergarten, there would be time for the social studies and science standard concepts to be taught.

Dear Committee:

I write as the social studies department chair. We have polled our community and students to offer the following response to the proposed standards:

We seek two years of American history at the high school level. Research supports the importance of contiguous and sequential instruction for history. This result has been repeatedly demonstrated by the Organization of American Historian, the Fordham Foundation and every group to have researched the instruction of history. One year of American history at the high school level is insufficient when placed on the predication of a fragmented instruction of history at younger levels. In point of fact, the current placement of a myriad of standrds at the middle school level carries the potential for an increased financial burden upon schools that would be compelled to adopt several textbooks for the same grade.

Our department supports a year long instruction of world history. Such a plaement, when coupled with two years of American history - enhances the opportunity for colloboration across the disciplines which again serves to strengthen the educational experience for students.

As a department we support the proposed placement of economics and government at the high schoool level and support the proposed standards for those areas.

We believe geography should be placed at the middle school level. It provides a visual framework for work in history and government while setting a ground work to understanding economics and government.

We see a logical progression in our suggestions that ameliorates fragmentation of instruction while providing for the strong potential for colloboration between disciplines, a chance for deeper exploration versus a superficial breadth and an educational framework upon which a student can create a schemata for future learning.

We look forward to your favoable consideration.

The benchmarks for geography relating to culture seem too broad. We need to spend more time dicussing culture and how history and what is taking place in today's world is all related to cultural differences. If we don't understand and accept these differences, how can we live in peace with eachother?

In the benchmarks for geography relating to culture groups, shouldn't we be stating "students will learn to accept cultural differences." Isn't that what we are trying to teach the students?

Another major topic that seems to be missed when discussing cultural differences is language. Language is an important medium by which culture is transmitted.

Positive and negative comments:

Proposed strands that I feel are age appropriate include all geography, all economics, government and citizenship (sub-strand A and C), and concepts of time. An appropriate strand would be found in concepts of time where students create a timeline. Students can relate to their own experiences. These are well written and could be part of the second grade curriculum.

U.S. history and world history benchmarks are developmentally inappropriate for seven and eight year olds (ex. strand 2, world history--examples of contributions of past civilizations--too abstract!) There are too many strands and too many benchmarks to achieve quality results. Funds are not available to purchase materials needed. There are not age appropriate materials even available for seven year olds to study the government and citizenship strand (sub-strand B) Declaration of Independence and the Constitution .

These are general comments for 4th grade. The curriculum should focus on US Geography. The students should have an understanding of maps and globes,i.e directions, latitude, longitude, weather and climate, continents and oceans.

The students should learn and know the five regions that make up the US. They will identify the states which make up a region. They will be able to explain and identify the geographical features of each region. Students should understand how the culture of a region and what makes it different from another culture. Students should explain what makes regions interdependent on one another in relation to the economy. Students should explain how the location of a region affects its climate.

Both positive feedback and areas for consideration of dropping:

Proposed strands that I feel are age appropriate include all geography, all economics, government and citizenship (sub-strand A and C), and concepts of time. An appropriate strand would be found in concepts of time where students create a timeline. Students can relate to their own experiences. These are well written and could be part of the second grade curriculum.

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Standard: knowledge of ancient civilizations -- should be moved from 3rd to 5th grade where developmentally appropriate

Standard: knowledge of ancient Rome & impact on Western civ. -- should be moved from 3rd to 5th grade.

Standard: knowledge of rise of major world religions -- should be moved from 3rd to 5th grade to fit with ancient civilizations.

Standard: identify physical and cultural feature of ancient civilizations -- move from 3rd to 5th grade to integrate with study of ancient civilizations

Standard: understand relationships between geography and culture -- move from 3rd to 5th grade to integrate with study of ancient history.

Standard: knowledge of rise of Islam -- move from 4th to 5th grade to fit with study of ancient civilizations

Standard: study the geography, religions, and politics of Ancient Greece -- move to 5th grade.

Standard: study the geography, religions, and politics of Ancient Rome -- move from 6th grade to 5th grade.

Please group all strands of government, citizenship, geography, maps and globe studies, economics that pertain to local communities or major cities in the U.S. to one grade level - such as 3rd grade so that students may integrate their knowledge and thereby maximize their learning. Please keep one theme of study for each grade level instead of scattering a bit of U.S. history, World History, MN history in each grade level. Sound educational research shows that students can retain facts much better if they learn them within an integrated and comprehensive thematic unit of study.

Standard: understand the transitions in Europe and Middle East after the fall of Rome -- move from 6th to 5th grade because it belongs after the study of ancient civilizations.

Please put all study of ancient civilizations in one grade - such as 5th -- so that student can study in depth and so that they will have a framework of knowledge to help them remember individual facts.

Standards on Minnesota history, geography, economics, Indian cultures, etc. -- Please put all in the same grade level - such as 4th grade, where students normally study U.S. history.

Strand I: Benchmarks 1,3, and 4 are too hard for 4th graders.

Strand II World History is way to advanced for 4th grade. They do not yet comprehend US History.

Gavt and Cit. Sub strand A is taught in Health. Sub strand C: The Preamble and Declaration should not be memorized. Let's work on memorizing basic math facts instead.

Geography strand C: Students at this level should only know US geography, i.e. The Rockies and Appalachians.

Both standards should change from "know" to "be exposed to" or "introduce"

Standard 2 is too difficult for 5/6 year olds. (Not developmentally appropriate.)

Change "Students will compare and contrast how people lived in earlier times and today." to "Students will be introduced to the idea that people lived differently long ago"

These standards are as ridiculous and so far out of reach of children as the original Profiles of Learning. Dump them!

II. World History;- Change to "Students will be introduced to the idea that countries and cultures around the world have holidays and celebrations.

Many of these standards are far too intense and detailed at the Second Grade level. An average 7-8 year old is still attempting to grasp the spatial relationships between a town, state, country, and continent. Delving into the Persian civilization is well beyond the reach of their grasp.

U.S. exploration and expansion are important concepts. However, expecting the student to be able to explain exactly HOW they shaped our history is not realistic.

MN history is traditionally a 6th grade topic. The specific material expected to be covered concerning MN state history is far too intense for Second Graders.

The Declaration of Independence? Yes, it's mentioned in Grade 2. But for the students to be able to state and understand its "guiding principles" is again, not realistic.

Let's tone these standards down!! In rural MN we are working on challenges that have given us rise to use about 75% of our day in Reading, Writing, and Math. Please change these standards to accommodate ALL of Minnesota's children!

There are too many standards for Kindergarten. At this time the state only pays for 1/2 day kindergarten. In 21/2 hours, when will teachers find time to teach and assess all of the benchmarks, as well as teach reading, math and social skills? (All students must read proficiently by the end of first grade.)

Change to "Students will be introduced to ...", instead of "Will identify

In this world natural systems and social systems are constantly interacting. In addition, Minnesota Statute Section 115A.073, set specific goals for EE. "Pupils and citizens should be able to apply informed decision making processes to maintain a sustainable lifestyle. In order to do so, citizens should: 1.) understand ecological systems; 2.) understand the cause and effect relationship between human attitudes and behavior and the environment; 3.) be able to evaluate alternative responses to environmental issues before deciding on alternative courses of action; and 4.) understand the effects of multiple uses of the environment." The environment is not adequately addressed in the standards. For example, a geography benchmark in the 9-12 grade level states "The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it." Sounds fine initially, and listed under it are pieces concerning technology, sustainability, and impacts of "natural hazards." But this is not enough to give the students a full understanding of their relationship to the environment, let alone sufficient knowledge about what the environment actually is. There is one mention of "externalities" under economics. This at best gives a very thin understanding of environmental issues, not the real depth required to understand them and make informed decisions. In addition, the section addressing Natural and Managed Systems has been removed. These are all critical components for the creation of environmental literacy. How can students (some of whom will become the industrial, political and public policy leaders of tomorrow) "apply informed decision making processes to maintain a sustainable lifestyle?" It has been demonstrated that students become engaged in effective learning through EE. A nationwide study demonstrated that using the environment as an integrating context in multiple subject areas significantly improved student learning and behavior.

Get rid of benchmark 3- "Students will recognize that current events...." This is not developmentally appropriate. Kindergarteners have difficulty understanding abstract concepts.

Change "past, present, future" to "yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Combine two benchmarks

Remove Independence Day from benchmark 1- We do not have school at this time of the year.

Use "Students will be introduced to the use of maps..."

Students will be able to recite their address, including city and state. (Map use is not appropriate for 5 and 6 year olds.)

Too abstract for kindergarten. Not appropriate

Remove benchmark one

Change #3 to Student will identify penny, nickel, dime and quarter. (Be specific.) This is a national standard.

Strand III. Is too difficult for kindergarten. (Needs and wants)

How much time a day will students be spending everyday on history and geography? You're asking for much when you throw in accountability for reading, writing and math plus gym, art, and music.

I currently teach middle school social studies and have also taught high school social studies. I do not believe the proposed social standards are what we want for Minnesota students. The standards are too specific and try to put too many "strands" let alone benchmarks at each grade level. The standards are not appropriate for the grade levels at which they are listed and there seems to be an excess of rote learning. I am extremely disappointed that some of the social sciences such as anthropology, sociology and psychology are left out for the most part. We want critical thinkers and this would require topics of ethics education, culture ,current events,etc. The best activities in my classroom involve debates, simulations, mock trials and unfortunately with grade 7 looking at covering Minnesota History, US History, Government and Citizenship, the 5 Themes of Geography AND Economics our critical thinkers will simply try to recite names and dates. It's bad planning and I expect to see some MAJOR changes throughout!

My First comment would have to be that the people involved in writing these strands have not spent enough time in an elementary classroom working with seven and eight year old children. I see both positive and negative aspects of the material you are thinking of asking 2nd grade teachers to cover during the school year. I would like to see MUCH MORE thought put into what is developmentally appropriate for young children.

Proposed strands that I feel are age appropriate include all geography, all economics, government and citizenship (sub-strand A and C), and concepts of time. An appropriate strand would be found in concepts of time where students create a timeline. Students can relate to their own experiences. These are well written and could be part of the second grade curriculum.

U.S. history and world history benchmarks are developmentally inappropriate for seven and eight year olds (ex. strand 2, world history--examples of contributions of past civilizations--too abstract!) There are too many strands and too many benchmarks to achieve quality results. Funds are not available to purchase materials needed. There are not age appropriate materials even available for seven year olds to study the government and citizenship strand (sub-strand B) Declaration of Independence and the Constitution .

Some of the Social Studies standards did not seem to be developmentally appropriate for first grade students. First Grade teachers feel our most important job is to teach students to read and this takes much of our day. So we feel there may be too many social studies standards listed for our grade level.

Strand 1 A. Christopher Columbus was a cruel conquistador who enslaved the Native American people. Are we to teach reality or fantasy at this age?

Kindergarten II Geography B. Students will use maps and globes... Maps and globes are too abstract for kindergarten. They are busy learning that letters represent sounds for reading. They are NOT ready to grasp the transfer of a place name to a map.

KII.Economics A. It is too abstract to teach such vocabulary as producer and consumer. Inappropriate level- too hard.

Grade 1 I. U.S. history B. Famous Americans- The wording "interaction" paints a false picture of the results of conflicts in colonial America. False story at an early age.

Grade 1 US History A. Famous Americans The concept "colonization" is way too hard. Students at this age can be misled by the Disney story of Pocahontas-- they are too young to understand her real relationship to John Smith.

Grade 1 Gov't and citizenship.B. the terms "right, privilege, and responsibility" are too abstract. First graders are very literal and need concrete concepts.

Grade 1 II. Geography A. Be specific. Does this mean North south east west?? Many 6th graders are still confused by east and west.

Grade 1 II. B. Famous events. Both outcomes are too vague. Exploration led to torture, oppression, domination of one group by another-- not concepts a 6 year old is ready to

explore.

Grade 1 III. A definition is too challenging and abstract -- what is "wants" I want my mom??

Grade 1 II. Economics B. Scarcity is too abstract for most sixth graders. They can understand they have choices, but scarcity belongs at about the 4th grade level.

Grade 2 I. US history A. the Dakotas-- too young to teach about their massacre and removal. The land was already settled- benchmark wording leads to a false belief that the land was unused by the Natives.

I am a second year teacher at Eastview High School. I am writing you in concern for the future of our state and district curriculum. I believe I may offer a different perspective then many of the other voices that you may be hearing. I am not tenured at my school and am very careful how I present my beliefs and perspective on topics around other faculty members. That being said I carefully read and weighed the 56 page document that everyone was discussing in our department meeting. Many other teachers were struck with anger, or disappointment. I was a little as well, but being reserved as the "new guy" around, I held back any comments. Upon further inspection I considered what wonderful things, and objectives that were presented in the document. Now, I too was wondering about the social sciences? Where did they go? Why are they gone? Are they less important? Well, my personal thoughts are that the social sciences are EXTREMELY important to the socialization and maturation of our young adults. They help broaden our understanding of people in our community and our world. They also help us to understand who we are as individuals. Therefore I don't believe that we can afford to lose these precious opportunities to educate our students about them. It isn't that I don't believe that what you want us to teach these kids isn't wonderful, it is that you forgot to KEEP some of the other vital social studies content that has been there and should continue to be. I only hope that we do not act in a very extreme way by extinguishing all of these wonderful courses so hastily. Thank you for lending me your time and thoughts,

Dear Commissioner Yecce:

- The draft proposal is far better than the Profile.
- The expectations for student achievement are much higher than under the profile.
- Citizenship, patriotism, and founding documents are important and present in the draft standards.
- The market economy is taught and American history is included in the social studies standards something which wasn't true under the Profile.
- They are more specific and more challenging than the Profile which is what we want for our kids.
- The geography standards need to focus on geography and not drift into environmentalism. (An example is one standard entitled "Interconnections". "How human activities impact the environment". It contains the expectation that students will "understand that people are connected to each other and the environment and these interconnections influence how and where people live.")

General Comments from Moorhead (9/15/03):

"Concerned in upper elementary – placing items in chronological order when S.S. curriculum is topical.

Geography – H.S. 1 year requirement – benchmarks are quite appropriate for H.S. level, only when all prior benchmarks have been covered K-8 – So keep all geog. Benchmarks and standards with a stand alone 8th gr. Geog. Curriculum/class.

Concern – 7/8 MN Hist. – N. Lights in elementary – cost factor for adding curr.

Concern – Overlap with benchmarks of world history can be accomplished in geography as well.

Concern – 7th grade – too many areas covered.

Concern – K-6 – too many s.s. areas – economics difficult concept to grasp.

Concern – Smaller districts, fewer staff. "

"While we appreciate the hardworking efforts of this committee, we respectfully disagree with the new standards. As a middle school teacher, I have done quite a bit of reading from Turning Points 2000 and Best Practices. It seems to me that many of the new drafted standards are exactly opposite of what is recommended by these research-based books. My readings have emphasized less survey classes and less curriculum studied more in depth. Another concern is the large number of topics to be covered. This is almost forcing a lecture-based teaching style which is also cited by many sources as being ineffective.

To clarify, my concern is mainly regarding the numerous topics to be covered, especially in the middle school level. For instance, to have a short survey on Minnesota history in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade seems more of a survey issue. The same goes with dividing up geography, world history, citizenship, American history, etc. This is not to say you discuss and study these separately. In studying history, you will always refer to geography, economics, etc. They are embedded together but should not be a "survey course" of all content in one grade level."

"Too much of an emphasis on religion."

"To streamline = K-6 = too many areas. "

"Concern about positive timelines when teaching by concepts."

"There is no career exploration here."

"Keep MN History in grade 6 only."

"Can't have just a sanitized version of history – need to reflect reality so students can think critically of the world around them. Show dark side as well a bright side. "

"Kindergarten should be a time for playing, not learning history."

"Include the anti-war movement. "

"Need a more critical discussion of the difficulties and problems of capitalism."

"No Psychology or sociology at middle or high school."

"Local control – changing the middle school standards will be hard."

"Too much in kindergarten."

"Inch deep, mile wide."

"Gr. 1, Strand I, C -- Should be more academic – not focused on patriotism."

"Grade 4 standards – too many! Should be geography only – put history in grade 5."

"Grade 4, Strand II, A – Need this to be regions of the U.S. at Gr. 4 – Geography."

"Grade 5 should be history – Grade 4 should be geography. "

"Keep all of MN history standards in grade 6 only."

"The Northern Lights curriculum is wonderful for us to use."

"Too much material."

"Buying textbooks for this is too expensive."

"Grade 7, Strand I – Govt./Citizenship – 8th benchmark – This is pushing religion. Should also state no references to God in Constitution."

"Grade 8, Geography (Non-Integrated) – Keep as separate class in grade 8."

"Grade 9-12, U.S. History, Sub F, Era 6 – 95% of our teachers cannot identify Ida Tarbell and Robert La Follette. Why are these names in here???"

"Grade 9-12, U.S. History, Sub F, Era 6 – 95% of our teachers could not identify Alvin York. Why is his name in here?"

"Grade 9-12, U.S. History, Sub H, Era 8 – Mention controversy on Vietnam War."

"Grade 9-12 – Need more on state and local govt. Need more process – how a bill becomes law, etc. "

"Thank you for addressing natural rights. "

"Too many standards – best practices. "

"Best practices state students should choose own topics for discussion. "

"Best practices show only 30% of middle school students can think abstractly – too many abstract concepts. "

"Middle school students will be left confused by the volume of standards. "

"Don't want a survey approach to history. "

"World history standards are broad and intimidating. "

"We need to have 1 full year of world history at high school.; 2 full years of U.S. history at high school."

"Need stand alone standards in psychology and sociology – ½ year each. "

"Students must understand national sovereignty and the founding principles/founding documents must be emphasized – this document does that – thank you. "

"Need to add Native Americans after Colonial times – Western expansion. "

"We need to strengthen this document by emphasizing the greatness of this country. "

Comments from Fergus Falls Public Hearing (9/16/03)

"My concern is that you assure that we not lose relational and analytic skills to memorization of facts and details. The benchmarks include an extremely comprehensive list of knowledge necessary in social studies in 9-12. In fact, so many, with specific details that teachers may have to spend their whole time in a European lecture-style of educating. How do you determine what is taught in each year (9-12) and assure that increasingly mobile students will receive the same info/skills when they move from school to school? State to state? "

- "1) I question if we can cover the Econ benchmarks in a semester.
- 2) I question if we can cover the world history benchmarks in a semester.

3) I would like to see a breakdown like this

7th grade – U.S. history (maybe other benchmarks could be added if kept to a small number.)

(in any order):

8th grade – geography

9th grade – civics

10th grade – U.S. history

11th grade – world history

12th grade – econ

4) Content is important, but...I teach children to THINK ... not memorize. "

"My biggest questions and complaints come in the nature of the social studies areas chosen. U.S. History, Geography, Government, Economics are important for high school students to understand, but the requirement of world history. I teach 17- & 18-year-old students heading into a work world, college, the military, or family life. How can spending at least a full year of Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Byzantines, etc....better prepare them for what they are going to experience "next year" and years to come? Understanding issues of our world and issues of our society. To view them informed or with background information to develop their own view. World history odes not help in that world view or societal view formation. It is outdated, trivial, and probably already covered to some extent in geography and history.

I feel this process to be very reactionary and very political. Yes, the Profile with its "packages" were not the answer. But in the area of the Profile that was a success was teaching of the process and concepts which is the heart of social studies, not facts, names, and dates. The few years of aligned standards in the Profile gave a blueprint for what skills we want students to attain. Research, ability to examine/evaluate, etc... Memorization is not one of them. I feel that the process is politically motivated and endangering the education of Minnesota's students, which is currently very highly regarded, and scores very well nationally. We are here to teach mind development, not mind control!! Our students in the technology age are more literate in how to manipulate things, how to problem solve, not to spew information. Thank you!!"

"There seems to be a heavy emphasis on classical civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome, etc. over several grade levels, but almost no reference to our neighbors, Canada and Mexico. Are the World History standards, especially in grades 3 & 4, developmentally appropriate? Will support materials such as textbooks be available that include the material in the standards? Textbooks should not be the curriculum but teachers are entitled to adequate support materials without having to reinvent the wheel in each individual school. "

"We all have different versions of skies of blue and clouds of white, but it is idealistic to think this will prepare good citizens."

"Thank you for the emphasis on American history."

Working Draft: September 4, 2003
"Need to add Canada and Mexico."

"We should understand and respect that other cultures may not value these concepts."

"Need broad concepts, not trivia – too many details."

"Not who/what/where/when – Don't want to return to lecturing."

"If students are to be held accountable/tested on all the benchmarks, classes in the block will have to be extended. This process would wipe out the opportunity for electives across the disciplines, as there would be no time in a student's schedule to study anything but social studies."

"These standards will force us to return to the lecture-style classroom that has been proven ineffective. These standards will result in teachers teaching to the test, which takes the focus off hands-on learning and performance based assessment, which we believe is crucial to academic success."

"Re: 9-12 World History – Of the 23 benchmark boxes outlines, only one deals with contemporary issues. Understanding relationships is key to learning history. Students need to learn about the past in the context of current events. Expectations do not match the current credit requirements for a Minnesota diploma. In order to cover all the material adequately, students would be required to take a full year of World History in a block schedule. There are no applications for the material covered – simply names, dates, events, and symbols."

"Re: 9-12. U.S. History – Comments are similar to World History. Current practice is to cover 20th century U.S. History not EVERYTHING. In order to cover everything every year, students would gain repetition, but no depth – Ever! There is very little emphasis placed on anything after WWII and contemporary America. What about Watergate, Vietnam, social movements, etc?"

"Re: 9-12 Geography – The last standards proposed by the administration focused on cultural geography, these focus on physical geography and the United States. Will funding be provided for revamping the entire curriculum?"

"Re: 9-12 Government – Content is ok. Currently, everything is covered in our current curriculum. The only concern, again, is that there is an omission with any kind of service learning opportunities, and performance-based assessment. Time is of the essence – not everything can be covered in order to accommodate that sort of teaching strategy."

"Re: 9-12 Economics – Instructors are pleased with the content, but would like there to be some consideration made with the relevance of understanding aggregate economic fluctuations in the national economy for this level of student."

"Re: 9-12 -- As a whole, the document reads like a textbook (50 pgs). We do not believe what is currently outlined is best for kids, and that we are taking a step backwards. There is not a smooth sequence from one grade to the next. If the process allowed for time to consider and apply best practices found in current research on student learning, we believe teachers and community members could identify strands that outline high standards/expectations for our students. We are concerned that adequate time for thoughtful consideration has not been allowed. We are proud of the quality education we offer our students and we hope these comments will be taken under careful consideration."

"Govt. – content is OK – this is fine."

"Not developmentally appropriate."

"Need more contemporary issues in World History and U.S. History."

"Geography – good."

"Why aren't we doing career exploration here?"

"The high school standards are in good shape."

"Please add more skills and analysis. "

"We need to be taught about our freedoms and how our forefathers secured them. Thank you for this effort."

"Please add more analysis, analytical skills, and the recognition of relationships."

"Change 'the student will understand' to 'the student will analyze.' "

"I'd like 7th grade U.S. History, 8th grade Geography."

"Re: 4th grade, Our district just purchased a new Social Studies curriculum following a six year review process. The series chosen matches National Standards. In most commercial textbooks (including our) fourth grade is expected to cover geography and history of the United States. It is written as an overview or introduction to our country and doesn't have an in depth study of events and people. An example: our text has five pages about the Revolution and events leading up to it. The standard has many benchmarks about the Revolution that would require many weeks to cover adequately. A nine year old would have quite a task understanding and remembering which is the Declaration of Independence, the Proclamation of 1763, the articles of Confederation, Constitution and Bill of Rights. Then to understand the strengths, weaknesses and basic principles of each would be quite overwhelming."

"Re: 4th grade, As we go through the standards and look at the World History portion there are many concerns. First, would be finding material to cover these benchmarks that would be age-appropriate and within a fourth grade readability level. One benchmark says to describe the importance of the Byzantine Empire in transmission of Classical Culture to Western Europe following the Dark Ages. I really question how much elementary material is out there about that subject and as teachers already incredibly busy are we going to be expected to create additional curriculum to cover this benchmark?"

"Page 11 – 4th grade – The volume of material and the depth of understanding that is required would be difficult to accomplish in the constraints of our school year. At this level we are really just laying the foundation and not analyzing events in such a complex fashion."

"Can you change the Economics and World History standards to one semester, not a year, to match the new graduation requirements?"

"Please let teachers decide on the content."

Public Comments from St. Paul Hearing (9/22/03):

"Need to have standard on research skills."

"Civics additions needed: Magna Carta, 3/5 VA Plans, NJ Plan, judicial review."

"These standards are patriotism on steroids."

"Pledge of Allegiance – children should not pledge to a lie – omit it from these standards. No child should be forced to say these words."

“Our social studies courses need to have our kids out in the community solving social problems.”

“We need more of an emphasis on multi culturalism.”

“Add anthropology and sociology and psychology.”

“Need more hows and whys”

“Need Minnesota History in one grade only or the text books will be a problem.”

“Need to add agriculture and forms of transportation in the early grades. Also, the history of inventions.”

“Please add post-colonial issues.”

“Please add Pol Pot, Stalin, Castro, Sadaam Hussein, Battan Death March.”

“The current social studies standards are too whacky. Thanks for trying to fix them. Until then, my kids will be going to a private school.”

“We want a year of World History, not just a semester.”

“Repetitive standards.”

“In grade 7, Take out the names Bidwell and Narcissa Whitman.”

“Civics – right-wing fringe group wrote these – called Maple River.”

“This is a racist agenda.”

“This is inappropriate methods of instruction.”

“Quantity is way too much.”

“Too prescriptive.”

“In St. Paul, over 50 percent of our kindergarteners do not speak English. We need to recognize that fact.”

“The funding must match the mandates.”

“This is a morally bankrupt system, because it won’t pay for this.”

“Standards do not follow research on pedagogy.”

“Add more skills, such as inquiry and analysis.”

Working Draft: September 4, 2003
“Please add themes and concepts.”

“These standards scare me.”

“Research suggests integrating history and geography.”

“There is no state test – a loophole.”

“These standards need to not force participation.”

“Our founders were deists, not Christians, so the reference to God in the Declaration of Independence are not appropriate.”

“At no point do these standards address the Constitution.”

“Our government is based on the will of the people, not on God-given rights.”

“As atheists, we support the teaching of history, but these standards teach religion.”

“Add ‘analyze’ to standards for higher levels of thinking.”

“Students must make up their own minds about what is important in history.”

“List Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.”

“Add anti-war in the 1960’s”

“Minnesota has embraced the MCA tests for reading and math. We need a test in Social Studies.”

“You are asking students to be ‘whales who will ingest and sift through lakes full of information.’”

“As an atheist, I object to the promotion of religious songs under the guise of patriotism.” (p. 9, 12, 16)

“MN History should be in grade 6 only – please.”

“Skills of the historian need to be emphasized.”

“Please pare back. Too much, too hard.”

“Your enthusiasm is evident, but be careful to not include too much.”

“We will prefer $\frac{1}{2}$ year of geography and 1 year of world history.”

“Block scheduling will be a problem as we work to implement these standards.”

“This process is invalid and unfair.”

“There is NO higher level thinking. This is only memorization.

“We need standard for all, and advancement stand in 9/12.”

“Students in kindergarten cannot possibly understand the economic concept of scarcity.”

“You missed the British Empire.”

“The fall of the Berlin Wall had nothing to do with Ronald Reagan.”

“Less on Civil War and more on Chicago.”

“I don’t know about you guys, but I don’t store facts very well. I need to have things that interest me. You need to hold hearings for high school students. None of my friends could possibly learn this stuff. Find people who know what they are talking about and start over.”

“I want to go on record saying that these social studies standards are wrong. Students cannot – will not – be able to learn this stuff.”

“This is narcissistic history – it celebrates what we have done/”

“We need the public’s history to be included.”

“These standards will harm teacher’s morale.”

“Minnesota history – s/b Grade 6.”

“Please add more skills.”

“There were no teachers on this committee... that the problem.”

“Need to add: Crispus Attucks, Seneca Falls, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, John Brown.”

“I see nothing on gays and lesbians. I guess they’re still invisible.”

“For 60 years, kids are still being heckled and harassed to say the pledge.”

“When civic education fails, Republicans get elected and cut the school budgets.”

“Not having a hearing in Minneapolis is racist. I demand you hold 4 hearings in Minneapolis.”

“I am tired of being excluded from American History. If we do not include African-Americans as being important we will continue to lock up millions and have millions killing each other on the street. Children in classrooms who aren’t in the standards are made into nobodies. You are putting the world at risk of annihilation with these standards.”

“This is not what I want for my children. There is no mention of Asian-Americans. There are 200,000 Asian-Americans in Minnesota. Why are we excluded? We are here in Minnesota as refugees due to American foreign policy.”

“These standards support Western Civilization. We need to be allowed to pick and choose what are children will learn.”

“I left Texas to get away from history that reflects dead white males. I don’t want that here.”

“I want students to relentlessly question authority and to ask why gays, lesbians, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, the struggles of organized labor, and the corruption of capitalism have been omitted from the standards.”

“I am a union leader and want to know why the history of the working class has been omitted. If you mention James J. Hill, then mention Caesar Chavez.”

“Less factoids.”

“I know how the game is played. You avoided inclusion on this committee.”

“What you are doing is political. Why aren’t you able to deal with slavery?”

“Thank you for the opportunity for public input. The standards are a radical departure from the Minneapolis public schools. Not developmentally appropriate.

“Too politically biased. The winner writes history – we need more balance and embrace all perspectives.”

“My eurocentric education handicapped me to live in a multicultural world.”

“I am requesting that all committee members do the right think. Stop. Provide an opportunity to represent the metro area. You must all resign. You do not represent the state.”

“We cannot minimize the importance of content.”

“Include critical thinking skills! I realize the difficulty in testing this standard but that is not a good reason to include this essential standard.”

“History needs to be taught from multiple perspectives – not only the perspective of the dominant U.S. culture.”

“Think diversely when considering who the important individuals of history are – be sure to include women and people of color.”

“Don’t you think that students should learn every possible skill to deal with the tarnished image of America in the international arena today? Recent events indicated that the U.S. does not have any friends left in the world. Don’t you think that the young generation needs to know more about other nations (and the only way to do this is to know their history which shapes their thinking, behaviors and attitudes) so that they understand and repeat them? Is not this the only way to avoid the tragic mistakes we make in political and economic areas? America has a reputation for being arrogant. Learning world history in such a short time is the best example of arrogance I have seen so far! Please do justice to the students and do not leave them alone in the world. This is a responsibility you cannot avoid!”

“Pedagogically archaic. Socially irrelevant for today’s students. Designed to solidify consent and docility. National conference in social studies theme this year is media literacy. Students need to know” Who is Rupert Murdoch? Ted Turner? Why only one reference to the computer? And one technology reference that refers to Greece? Why don’t we connect with our real lived experiences and learn how to live?”

“Please listen to the people speaking (at St. Paul) and actually make changes and do not let it appear the standards represent the communities desires BECAUSE there were community meetings.” Thank you.

“With President Bush addressing the United Nations tomorrow, it is important that every child know what the UN is and is not. We have a very diverse student population – from countries all around the world and to understand the world as it is will become more and more important. Students must understand: UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention of the Rights of a Child. Materials are available to teach UN and they should be part of the standards.”

“The systematic changes to the scope and sequence may be needed (such as adding geography to the High School) but, these changes require new instructional materials. Specifically most districts teach geography in the middle school. New textbooks will be needed to teach geography in the high school. Will you as the Legislature for the money? Or will this be an unfounded mandate?”

“Commissioner Yecke, you responded during the hearing that one criteria for selecting committee members was cultural diversity. How do you explain the zero diversity on the stage? You also say there is a 60/40 split between suburban and rural representatives. I know you are new to the area but Hopkins, Burnsville and Edina educate a far different clientele than Mpls and St. Paul. It seems you have yet to establish a firm grasp on where the greater population of students are educated, as well as the diversity of the students. So much of the panels, the hearings, the standards smell of political undertones. Another example, why mode the standards after states like Arizona (because it’s Republican?) Having taught in Arizona, I know that their system is not one to be modeled. Why the rush? Please let us know the research that was used on the best ways to teach our kids. For example, please refer to Project 2061 for the age-appropriate science topics. I suggest the committees postpone any decisions for one year. During that year, I encourage committee members to dig into the latest research, talk to more teachers and basically get their information before signing off on the standards. Don’t be swayed by politics. Do what is best for Minnesota kids.”

“I was pleased to read that the 9-12th grade proposed civic standards include students demonstrating the knowledge and understanding of our US government and the rights we have as citizens, as stated in the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. I was pleased that the standards include teaching that the purpose of government is to protect these rights. Our founding fathers knew the importance of this is for a free and independent nation to survive. I strongly believe these should from the foundation of any social studies curriculum. In the National Standards, the principle of national sovereignty is minimized, it focuses on the UN Declaration of Human Rights not on the success of America as a free nation. Thank you Civic Committee members for your good work!

Now if we look at the proposed geography standards, they de-emphasize the concept of nationalism. The importance of national boundaries are minimized. For example, the proposed standards on two occasions say, “Students will understand the boundaries of states and countries on political maps were created by people and that these boundaries have changed over time.” And “students will understand the changing nature of sovereignty and its impact on political units in the United States.” This implies that national boundaries, nation sovereignty, and nations and their governments are insignificant. Perhaps it should be rewritten to state that “students will understand that the Founders of the United States believed that the formation of this nation as an independent nation of the world was essential to protecting the rights of life, liberty and property.” I believe it is important for our students to know the locations and boundaries of nations.

“What outreach was made for non-English speaking citizens? Was there any method made to offer the standards documents in any languages other than English? I believe at least half of the parent population in St. Paul are non-English speaking and there were no interpretation services or options available at the public hearing.

Re: 9-12 Civics – Very strong! I am pleased to see the emphasis on our founding documents.”

Re: Geography, emphasize globalism and not nationalism. Please continue to emphasize national sovereignty and respect for our freedoms. Please add active participation to respect for the law. I am pleased with has been included. Please add free market economics. I am amazed at what I have heard at the public hearings – a lot of bias – This document gives me a sense of optimism. I am pleased with the direct and detailed content that explains our culture and our values.”

“Need to add 9/11/01 *** Need to add terrorism and objectives of terrorist organizations.”

General Comments from Willmar (9/24/03):

"History – Need more names listed – more on Pilgrims. "

"Our nation was founded on God. We need more of this in our schools. "

"We need more information on the Federalist papers. "

"We need to see more morals taught in our schools. "

"Most of the history standards are very interesting, but this is a bit too specific. "

"If things are listed, does this mean they will be tested? "

"Please give more support to local curriculum coordinators. "

"Why do we have history standards that don't match textbooks? "

"We need more money to support these standards. "

"Please mention Kennedy. "

"Please mention President Clinton and the economy. "

"This isn't wholistic. "

"I can't tell you how shocked I was when several years ago, my daughter could not identify the significance of 1492. These standards are specific and I like that. "

"The issue of religious intolerance in colonial America (Anne Hutchinson). "

"There was a civil war in Guatemala and I never learned about it in school. "

"We need to see linkages between what happened in the past and how it's connected to today. "

"I was really impressed with your emphasis on National Sovereignty and what rights we have. We are living in a wonderful country. "

"Geography was a little bit on the cultural side. We need more of a focus on physical geography. "

"Our students need to graduate knowing who our presidents are, the conflicts and wars we've been in, and the people who sacrificed their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor for our freedoms. "

"Many countries have come and gone, but America still stands. This is due to our greatness and our kids need to learn this. "

"Many people are home schooling their children because they don't agree with the values being taught in some of our history classes. "

"Lack of emphasis on cultures. Too much world history. Need to speak about the global economy. "

"There is no sociology. "

"I appreciate specifics. Thank you for the specific information. "

"We don't have to go along with the rest of the country. The national history standards should not be followed. "

"Thank you for including the Declaration of Independence. "

"Our government recognizes that our rights are God-given. "

"We are the beacon of freedom across the globe. Other countries envy our freedoms. "

"The students in Tiananmen Square were holding copies of the Declaration of Independence. They gave up their lives for this. Thank you for including the Declaration. "

"I am a teacher with high standards, high expectations, but my students are children, 14-18 years old. There are 107 benchmarks for World History. That's 1 1/2 benchmarks per day. "

"I am a member of the National Guard. The tragedy of the Jessica Lynch situation in Iraq was a result of poor knowledge of physical geography. They didn't correctly read their maps. This is a basic skill children should master by age 12-14. Now the U.S. Army has to make up for this lack of a basic skill that the public schools failed to teach. In this situation, 8 young people died. As a military leader, I am ashamed that our education system failed these children. "

"Early elementary standards are developmentally inappropriate. Young children only know about themselves. "

"Please substitute 'understand' with 'introduce.' "

"Only materials on MN history are in 6th grade. "

"Need more on citizenship in early grades – individual responsibility, respect. "

"These standards are missing: Piaget, Constructivism and large concepts and constructs. "

"As a 6th grade teacher, I do not want to teach the Protestant Reformation. I believe in the separation of church and state. "

"What you have done as a committee – I applaud you. The Profile was a disaster. I am a parent and I know how the Profile watered down academics, and I see it now in my own daughters who were honors students in high school, but who needed remedial courses when they got to college, due to the disaster of the Profile. Please continue with these new standards. "

"If a kid can memorize a dirty rap song in a couple of hours, he or she can memorize the national anthem. "

Comments from Worthington (9/25/03):

Reactionary and conservative document.

Too long, too much.

Economics – p. 54, the standard of entrepreneurship has too many benchmarks – We may as well erect a statue and kiss the feet of businessmen. There is nothing on labor unions. I am a union member (MEA). I resent this.

Joe McCarthy is made to sound like a good guy. He's not – he's about blacklisting.

Cold War – one sided and reactionary.

More thinking skills needed and more citizenship.

Gr. 6 - World History is too demanding.

Gr. 7 - Economics is too challenging.

Gr. 8 – Too much content.

Page 3: Voting is a concept children cannot understand.

At the middle school we need more connections between the social studies disciplines.

Middle school students cannot think abstractly.

P. 9 – Grade 3 – Spreadsheets is too hard for this grade.

P. 9 – Grade 3 – Too hard to memorize the National Anthem.

P. 13 – Grade 4 – Geography is way too hard and grade level inappropriate.

Kindergarten kids (p. 2) – Economics is too hard.

P. 5 – Persia, India, China and Japan – Too hard for Grade 2.

Graduation standards don't look so bad now! I wish I had kept my mouth shut.

Using maps and globes is impossible for kindergartners.

We want to focus on reading in 1st grade.

Unrealistic to have 1st grade students know about Greece and Egypt.

1st grade is too early for the state flag and flower.

P. 3 – 1st Grade students cannot use directional words.

P. 6 – 2nd Grade students cannot create maps.

P. 7 – 3rd Grade – Too much World History. They are incapable of understanding ancient cultures.

All grades need more character traits.

9-12 – Sociology and Psychology are missing. These are not addressed.

You should have allowed educators, not noneducators, to write these standards. We are the professionals. It is insulting that only 40% of the committee was made up of teachers.

We have only 30 minutes a day to teach social studies, science and health. That's 30 minutes total.

I am a university professor and support an active learning pedagogy. I want more time to evaluate the document. It is biased. This is indoctrination driven by nostalgia, not fact. Its essence is not to create questioning citizens.

Indigenous peoples are represented in a racist way. Why is there no benchmark on P. 14 regarding Native Americans?

P. 14 – We need more time spent on Reconstruction.

You limit (p. 29) the history of organized labor to only a few times. Surely, the 8-hour day deserves a benchmark.

Women are neglected and deserve separate benchmarks throughout the entire document.

To give specific feedback implies acceptance. I do not approve of this approach.

Students do not need to know about Renaissance Italy and the DaVinci family.

P. 2 – Ancient Civilizations – Too hard. 1st graders are concrete thinkers and cannot comprehend Egypt and Greece.

I am a parent and I like content. Out of content comes knowledge.

Be sure you include all amendments, including 2 and 10.

Our kids need to know the basic foundations of our government. Thank you for including this.

Do not apologize for America being a beacon of freedom!

This is a great improvement over the Profile.

Be sure kids know that planned economies don't work.

I don't want MN History in 3 grade levels – 6th grade only!

These history standards do not stress multiculturalism enough.

We should not be teaching about historical leaders, but instead we should teach about the average people. These are the people who made history.

These standards should've been written by teachers. The public put forth only a low level understanding.

From the earliest grades, students need to know that public officials are their servants.

These standards will contribute to lower numbers of voters and a weakened democracy.

General Comments from Cloquet (9/29/03):

"Silly trivia."

"Too many benchmarks – need more direction and prioritization."

"Look at key themes – Some people and events are more important than others."

"Concern about reduction of civics from 1 credit to ½ credit. Programming in smaller schools will be hard."

"If they learn it in grade 4, it doesn't need to be repeated in grades 9-12."

"Ronald Reagan was not the sole reason for the collapse of the Berlin Wall."

"Need a better scope and sequence, or we'll need more funding."

"I like focusing on the neighborhood and community in grades K-3."

"H.S. geography standards aren't very different from the middle school geography standards."

"This is a sovereign nation and children need to be taught about our Constitution and Bill of Rights."

"The people in this nation need to let educators know what they want our children to learn – and that is the greatness of this country."

"Reading and writing and math take a lot of time at the elementary level, and are more sophisticated than in the past. We need to have a strong foundation in these basics and don't have time for other areas."

"The standards need to be able to be integrated into reading."

"This will force us to totally change what we are doing!"

"Need more Native American history in K-5."

"Certain terms are inappropriate, such as patriotism. Symbols, songs and places are elevated to be venerated. This is inappropriate."

"The benchmarks are too specific."

"How can grade 1 students learn about Greece and Egypt?! "

"There is too much politicalness in these standards. "

"These standards promote white supremacy. "

"The word barbarian is inappropriate. "

"Add inquiry skills please. "

"I refuse to let my children take standardized tests. "

"Children should be taught to be Americans – not hyphenated persons. "

"I am happy to see a positive presentation of American history. "

"Where are the national history standards? "

"Where are the standards on our community? "

"We have only 30-45 minutes per day for science and social studies together. "

"Teaching about religion violates the separation of church and state. "

"Equity and multicultural issues need to be added. "

"Too Eurocentric. "

"9-12 World History is only $\frac{1}{2}$ credit. There are too many benchmarks for $\frac{1}{2}$ credit. Can you split World History standards into 2 parts? This way we can have 2 courses.

Comments from Princeton (9/30)

Add FDR's New Deal

Add more about unions

Too much memorization

I do not like references to globalism and a global economy.

We can only preserve our rights through an education citizenry.

We need a direct reference to 9/11/01.

Students should understand the effects of terrorism and its historic roots.

Kids who see these standards will think they are stupid.

95% of your outcomes are American. We are only 4% of the world. Why are you focusing on America?

Thank you, Governor Pawlenty, for doing this. These more rigorous standards are what we need in our classrooms.

Grade 1, strand II, World History, A, benchmarks are too advanced here.

Grade 1, strand II, World History, B, 2nd benchmark – Need to focus on U.S.

Grade 1, strand II, Geography, B, 1st benchmark – Too hard – Please keep it more local.

Gr. 3, strand I, U.S. History , A, 2nd standard, 1st benchmark – This is more appropriate for grade 5. Our textbooks for grade 3 do not cover this.

Gr. 3, strand II, World History, B, ancient Rome – 1st benchmark is too hard for 3rd grade.

Grade 3, strand II, World History, B, rise of religions – benchmarks are too hard for grade 3, move them to grade 4.

Grade 4, strand II, World History, C, 1st standard – Should move the 3rd grade religion standard here.

Grade 7, strand II, U.S. History, A, 2nd standard, 4th benchmark – This is inaccurate.

We have new challenges in Minnesota – We are facing real problems – Our state is changing and we are more multicultural now.

Our children should not be taught that our founding fathers were bad. They acted appropriately for their time. This must be recognized.

Depth: This is a mile wide and an inch deep.

Why should kids know this? When will they use it?

Please use words like explain, evaluate, analyze, and apply.

We need flexibility among grade levels: K-2, 3-5, 6-8.

Standards are repeated in grades 5 & 8 – reading maps.

I like this change. The grade level specificity will help kids who move around a lot.

I'm pleased with the focus on our founding documents. As a parent and school board member, I am proud of this country.

Japan teaches memorization and lacks creativity.

Harold Stassen and Hubert Humphrey need to be added. These are famous Minnesotans.

Need to discuss collapse of détente – Anyone who wants a nuclear weapon can get one.

We have a limited time to teach science and history, as we have to focus on math and reading. We spend 45 minutes a day on this.

General Comments from Hibbing (10/1/03):

"I'm disappointed in the broadness of the standards. "

"We need more depth. Please place one subject per grade. "

"There is much here that I love. As a teacher, I believe the geography standards, k-12, are positive strength. Geography is a skill children will need. "

"I strongly support the 9-12 geography standards. "

"As a teacher, I believe the most important thing a social studies teacher can do is focus on a core curriculum. "

"As a teacher, I am concerned that we need time to teach current events, such as 9/11 and the War on Iraq. "

"Cut down on benchmarks, please. "

"6th graders are not abstract thinkers. "

"Eliminate all World History standards on grade 6. "

"Give flexibility on the strands in grades 6-8 so middle school can have the same flexibility as 9-12. "

"I don't have a problem with content, because children need content in order to make cogent arguments. As a teacher, I believe this is important. "

"We need to make content relevant to today. This application is important so we can make students active citizens. Thank you. "

"I commend you for all of this hard work! "

"Sketch maps are not used by most teachers. This is too nebulous. Kids who are not artistic will be limited in their ability to perform well. "

"Please make this available in Word document when it is in final form. "

General Comments from Bemidji (10/2/03):

"Write 6-8 like 9-12; gives more flexibility. "

"World History is new in K-3 and beyond their comprehension. "

"I was very impressed with the quality of the economics standards. "

"Do these standards in economics align with Junior Achievement? "

"Economics should include personal finance. "

"Why are you doing new standards when we are cutting social programs? "

"Some people think the solution to crime is a handgun. We need to solve crime first then worry about education. "

"The Minnesota Indian Education Association wants to include other tribes – Dakota history, for example—not culture—is our recommendation. "

"Our children need to get an inclusive picture of history that includes Native American history. "

"We need to get the kids out of the classroom and into the community to address social issues. "

"Please include tribal governments – 11 tribal governments. "

"I support a factual approach, but my school is not teaching accurate facts. "

"This content is old school. I will lead a charge to defend my country so that I will have the right to burn the flag. This teaches blind patriotism. Where is Malcom X? We should not teach students to be perfunctory citizens. "

"I hear teachers saying that their elementary students can't learn world history. I am tired of this. My kids are learning world history and are capable of doing so. If I can teach this to them, why can't a teacher? "

"I teach geography in grade 7 and U.S. History in grade 8. When I started teaching in 1970, it was U.S. History in grade 7 and Geography in grade 8. I want this to stay the same."

"We have much to learn about all cultures. "

"We only have ____ minutes per day to spend on anything other than reading and math. "

"I want to see more connections to the real world in the U.S. History standards. "

"More analysis of concepts. "

"I want my students to have high self esteem. This isn't going to happen if they have to learn about Pompeii. "

"Please add Blackhawk, Pontiac and other Native American leaders to make this more inclusive. Also, where are the women? "

Coon Rapids Public Hearing (10/9/03)

Add immigration laws, we are proud of our diversity.

The Constitution is omitted in this document.

Roe v. Wade will be gone if these standards are passed. We need to change these.

Don't make these grade-level specific, let the districts decide.

Christopher Columbus-why teach about genocide to kindergarteners?

African Americans need to be included with Kindergarten, Strand 1, Sub strand B.

We need to have tests to have standardization and uniformity or we will have chaos. Help us create assessments.

There is a need for money for textbooks.

How can you teach about the Fourth of July except during the summer?

Grade-level specificity is too specific. For example, MN history is over too many years.

Developmentally inappropriate in some areas.

Some standards need to be moved, we don't want to make them too hard.

Grades 9-12 needs to beef up the three branches of government.

Late 60s and early 70s needs to be added to 9-12.

Patriotism should not be taught.

Teach the Vietnam War.

Please cluster grade levels. We teach nearly all of this, but at different grade levels.

I just came back from the Soviet Union to help train teachers there. They needed to learn how to analyze, evaluate and assess.

Too often, teachers think "critical thinking" means giving opinions, not attending to facts.

Pocahontas-Don't teach the Disney movie, we need to tell the truth about how she was taken to Europe and lost her culture.

Students at grades K-4 must only learn about their neighborhoods and communities. History should not be taught until grade 5.

Grade 3, Strand II, Sub-strand A, "Students will compare and contrast characteristics of ancient cultures such as Persia, Egypt, China, India with Greece"this is too hard, level is inappropriate.

Grade 3, Strand II, Sub-strand B, "Students will locate on map site of origin for Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Judaism and Hinduism...this is not relevant. Most kids only know they are Lutherans."

These geography standards are great. We already teach these.

Grade 4, Strand 1, Sub-strand B, "Students will describe the organization, role and constituencies of political parties." Too hard!

Grade 6, III, A, "Students will identify the geography of the Middle East and know its significance as the birthplace of three major religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam." Please add Fertile Crescent and its civilization.

Grade 7, I, A, "Students will recognize the significance of the Founders' four references to God in the Declaration of Independence." Please add the Constitution as a founding document.

We STILL don't have equal rights for all people!

Judicial "supremacy" should be corrected to judicial "review"

Grade 9-12, I, B, "Students will analyze and define the fundamental principles of the Constitution...analyze and define are out of order.

Please add standards from page 38 on Supreme Court and Bill of Rights.

Please add due process equal protection of the law and the rights of the accused.

Grade 9-12, I, D, "Students will describe the difference between inalienable rights as described in the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, versus limited rights as described in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Independence of Human Rights." I would like to see students discuss these opposing points of view.

Grade 9-12, II, A, third bullet, change "United States and the world" to "United States and/or the world"

Grade 9-12, II, D, fifth bullet...this will be too expensive. We don't have this sort of equipment. We don't have this sort of technology. Same days our e-mails doesn't even work.

SLOW DOWN-this is not required by NCLB.

New standards will take the focus away from closing the achievement gap.

The focus is on religious isolation, not a global point of view.

9-12 needs more words like "analyze," "evaluate" and "assess"

As an atheist, I am concerned that these standards emphasize religion and has a bias toward Christianity. Instead, we should include materials like "Different Drummers." This is 300 pages of lesson plans about pluralism. Nonbelievers deserve respect.

We want times for hands on learning.

Remove all benchmarks.

This administration is pushing an agenda.

We do not teach any American History in middle school and do not want to change this.

These standards are indoctrination. Education is a sham when it gives only one side of an issue. We must show that many of our wars were unjust and immoral. 'Under God' was added in 1954. These standards are an insult to atheists.

Representative Davnie says the new standards are a radical departure. They are supposed to be!! We need to focus our schools on excellence and rigor.

The references to God did not refer to a Christian god. We are extremely diverse and those standards must reflect this and not cherry-pick the facts that are pro-God and pro-country.

Please use the Profile revisions instead of the new standards.

Leave these as a LOCAL decision. We need the flexibility.

Please divide the world history standards into two semesters. This is one years worth of standards.

You are setting kids up to fail.

We'd like deeper coverage and not survey courses.

Comments from Apple Valley Public Hearing (10/13/03)

Add research and inquiry, analysis and synthesis and evaluate and debate.

This document is gender biased and not inclusive or culturally balanced.

Need an extra year for implementation.

This is a plan to make sure schools fail so that vouchers can be introduced.

Social Studies content must be aligned with the real world.

Add credit unions and coops.

Social Studies content must be aligned with the real world.

This content is politically biased.

Benchmarks are too specific and onerous they should be guidelines only in order to protect local control.

Add: Civil rights, Key Supreme Court cases, references to private property, William Bradford, agricultural socialism, JFK and Magna Carta.

Please remove the Commissioner from office.

Thank you for not focusing on America's deficiencies.

Americans should be proud of this country.

The U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance--I feel that this is opinionated and has no place in schools.

Minnesotans do not want these standards. They force patriotism.

We need to have a test for history so we know what to prioritize.

Critical thinking should be taught at the high schools so teachers cannot indoctrinate young students with the teachers' political views. Young children need a foundation in basic facts.

Please add analysis and application tools to the social studies skills.

Please include appreciation of cultural deficiencies.

We need to make sure that these standards help businesses to create global workers.

Knock, knock. Who's there? JFK. JFK, who? This is what our students will say unless JFK is included in these standards.

Take Charlemagne out of substandard D. He was dead.

Replace Sinclair Lewis with Upton Sinclair.

The idea that all students should know this is absurd. Some of my students are immigrants and came from a nomadic background with no written language.

These standards result in a loss of local control. NCLB does not mandate this.

18-24 months is the time needed for this.

Include inquiry.

Grade 2, III, A, bullet #1....overemphasis on consumerism, need to address more on limited resources.

Grade 2, III, A, bullet #3...too hard!

Grade 4, I, C, bullet #2....too complex

Grade 4, I, C, bullet #2...students must know the Thomas Jefferson owned slaves. Students must know that our Founders were rich white men.

Working Draft: September 4, 2003

Grade 5, I, B...This is good and needs to be developed increasingly as grades go up. Please include in grades 6-12.

Grade 8, II, F...More emphasis on the 60s and 70s is needed.

Grade 8, II, G...There is no evidence that Ronald Reagan's role was a significant cause of the fall of the Soviet Union.

Grade 8...I do not support the integrated approach. There is no unified theme here.

Grade 8...We are already doing this but it takes two years.

Upton Sinclair should be mentioned in 9-12, I, F, bullet #3

Grade 9-12...Geography should be integrated into the History Standards.

More attention on Latin America, Asia and Africa.

We don't want to waste taxpayer's dollars on new materials.

This is like Soviet propaganda. It is too patriotic, because not all views are given equal weight.

These standards are racist. They promote racism.

I'd rather teach kids how to wire a house than how to read with comprehension.

Everyday in college I hear people attack out country. I am proud of this country. My country. I came from Cuba. My family has a wonderful future here.

Why are people complaining about facts? You can't think without facts.

Add research projects.

Egregious racial omissions here. Soviet-style jingoism. Orwellian white wash.

No curriculum materials exist to support the K-3 history standard.

I am a future dead white male and I am pleased to see the emphasis on studying the classical civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome.

Thank you for including founding documents and the concept of national sovereignty.

Geography standards do not focus on physical geography and please too much emphasis on regions, not nation.

We want a topical, not integrated approach.

How will this address the achievement gap? These are too hard and too content oriented.

These standards are communistic. You are telling my children what they should know.

I represent the Freedom School and these standards are not diverse and history is not presented honestly.

These standards are teaching us what you want us to know. We want to learn about what we are interested in. We should decide what we need to learn. Children should be in this committee.

These standards prevent us from learning what we want to learn. People shouldn't tell us what we should learn. These standards are male, European with only a few tokens.

Add: Sitting Bull, Chief Joseph, Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, genocide of the Native Americans, Black Panther movement (they gave us the free lunch program), Trail of Tears, reservation systems.

Put together concepts and let districts decide when and where to teach them.

You forgot about psychology and sociology. We should not ignore humanities.

Please do not promote state testing of social studies or placing social studies benchmarks into law. If you have buy in, the standards will improve education. You won't get buy in if the state makes state social studies benchmarks and testing mandatory as a part of a state accountability system. Please allow for local participation in setting and assessing social studies expectations. NCLB doesn't even require social studies standards, let alone require testing in social studies.

Many people would like to continue to have physical and human geography taught integrated with US and World History, rather than in isolation. It will cost money to needlessly reformat curriculum and many believe that it will not improve education, so as you did with Grades 9-12, please provide grade level flexibility in meeting standards in Grades 6-8.

After learning about Foundations of the American Political System, America's Founding Documents, the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship, and Other Forms of Government, shouldn't the students learn about the Minnesota caucus system, strengths and weaknesses of the caucus system, and introducing resolutions? Please include information about Minnesota caucus system in Grades 9-12 in standards.

Please state the benchmarks in a way to promote analysis rather than memorization. For example, reword the Grade 8 US History benchmark on page 31 from, "Identify causes of fall of Soviet Union, including significance of role of Ronald Reagan" to, "Analyze causes of fall of Soviet Union including the significance of role of Ronald Reagan". This also helps prevent the curriculum of our children from becoming so political at the legislature. There are of course many facts that I want my children to know and understand, but it is important to take time to develop analytical skills and communication skills through debate and essays. I think it is important that students can consider a lot of factors when interpreting events in history and evaluate the significance of the factors.

More Examples of Suggested Changes:

Students will know and understand the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War including the wars in Korea and Viet Nam, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the collapse of communism in Europe. Page 31

Change to: Students will know and understand the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War and analyze the causes of wars in Korea and Viet Nam, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the collapse of communism in Europe.

Students will understand the impact of atomic weaponry on diplomacy and warfare, including the reasons why America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Page 41

Change to: Students will analyze reasons America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the impact of atomic weaponry on diplomacy and warfare.

Forest Lake Pubic Hearing (10/20/03)

Leave name lists out.

Consider using themes rather than a chronological approach.

These standards glorify dead white males. Not one woman is listed in 7 pages of standards.

"Minnesota Academic Standards" - the latest gimmick.

Please make these more general - less specific.

People who complain that these are too hard are expecting too little from our students. Critical thinking must be based on content & facts - not on opinions. We need higher expectations for students.

Grade 3, I. US History - Too many benchmarks

Grade 3, I. Gov. and Citizenship - Too many benchmarks

Grade 5, I. US History - Too many benchmarks

Grade 9-12 I. US History A. 1st Standard - Change North America to the Americas

Grade 9-12 I. US History A. 2nd Standard - Change North America to the Americas

Working draft - insult work corrections without insults.

Grade 9-12 I. US History D. Era 4 - 2nd Benchmark - This is not Euro centric, as some people claim.

Grade 9-12 I. US History I. Era 9 - standard - Change Bush II to George W. Bush

Grade 9-12 I. US History I. Era 9 - benchmark - Add: The human suffering under communism - solidarity in Poland and Lech Waleska

Thank you for these standards & for the content knowledge here. Teachers can determine pedagogy. I commend you for your hard work.

Where is the research? Where is the time for music, arts, and sports?

It is an outrage that the Declaration of Independence is elevated to the level of the Constitution, which is the Supreme law of the land. The D of I is hyperbole used as propaganda to force war with England.

Separation of church & state does not appear in the Constitution or any founding documents. It is a specious argument to use this to criticize these standards. Geography standards should not stress regionalism, but national sovereignty.

Kent State & peace marches are missing

OSHA & workman's comp and credit unions are not even mentioned.

In MN history, please include the impact of Scandinavian immigrants.

These standards have a conservative bent, but the volume is excessive.

I find these standards miss gender balance, but I really like the scope & sequence that would be consistent throughout the state. This document has values, & it pains me that people who are liberals like me are ripping this document apart.

I am pleased with the inclusion of world religions.

We need support for the resources we'll need to teach these.

Our standards need to reflect the multicultural nature of our society.

There are no social justice standards. This is wrong.

As a student, I feel that teachers should have more freedom to teach what they want to.

This draft presents only one point of view on economics.

I am not sure about the emphasis on patriotism.

Stephen Ambrose, historian, said that we have a lot to answer for regarding how we have taught history recently. It has been wrong. We need to ask: "Who are the heroes, & what did they do?" We should not apologize for the greatness of our country.

It is wrong to have children memorize the Pledge of Allegiance. It is nothing more than a veiled prayer.

Our teachers agree with the increased content, but we worry about the volume.

We worry about finding resources.

We worry that time might get taken away from teaching reading & math at the early elementary grades.

There are 88 males listed & only 7 women.

There is too much religion here.

Thank you for including our founding documents.

Working Draft: September 4, 2003

As a Liberian immigrant, I know that America is the best country. At the St. Paul hearing, I was shocked at the number of Americans who spoke against America. These people need to spend one month in any other country - then they would appreciate, America, this wonderful country.

As a refugee from Somalia, please note that non-citizens also must obey/follow the rights & privileges of citizenship. I don't want my little brothers to feel different from citizens.

The words should be civic participation, not citizenship.

My father & his family spent time in concentration camps here in this country during WWII. After 9/11, some people feared that Iraquis would be rounded up. I'm glad cooler heads prevailed.

While standards are appropriate, the number of benchmarks is excessive.

Please present content chronologically for elementary students.

Please go beyond the first two levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

Why are we looking at standards from arch-conservatives? A google search shows this arch-conservative bias.

Please use NAEP standards.

May 20, 2004

Commissioner Yecke
Minnesota Department of Education

Dear Commissioner,

I'm the social studies coordinator for Hopkins School District 270. As you are aware, there are mounting concerns about the proposed Minnesota Academic Social Studies Standards. I would ask you to take a look at the work done by our staff to assist in making needed revisions

The standards have specific changes to be made as well as general concerns to be considered. I've provided you with a copy of the standards with specific changes and general comments.

In addition, the following key issues should be addressed:

- Standards should be re-evaluated to determine if they are developmentally appropriate
- The strands taught throughout the K-12 program would limit instructional strategies due to the sheer number of standards students would be required to memorize
- The cost of providing materials for integrating K-8 world history and U.S. History standards at each grade, would be a burden for schools when budget are being drastically cut, not to mention that materials would be difficult to find
- The lack of diversity in the standards is unacceptable

- The draft of social studies standards doesn't include any investigative or skill- based standards

I appreciate your efforts to gather feedback and will look forward to the revised edition. Best of luck!

Hopkins School District 270
Minnesota Draft Social Studies Standards Global Critiques:

Elementary Level

- ✓ Concepts found at the elementary level need further analysis. Placement of some of the benchmarks aren't pedagogically sound.
- ✓ Students at the first grade level don't understand past, present and future.
- ✓ Multicultural perspectives are lacking in the standards. Consider a specific cultural strand to insure a balanced more balanced curriculum.
- ✓ The integrating of U.S. History and World History strands, K-8 offer extreme challenges. The need for materials as well as the availability of such materials would be difficult to find and fund.
- ✓ Some benchmarks are very specific; others are too vague & big. Need consistency.
- ✓ They are too many, too Euro-centric and too politically biased.
- ✓ Minnesota History should not be spread as a strand throughout the curriculum.

Grades 7 & 8

- ✓ Benchmarks must be measurable if students will be tested on them specifically; e.g., "Students will be able to explain, identify, describe", not "know" or "understand"
- ✓ Standards are "a mile wide and an inch deep"; they do not promote critical thinking and do not encourage meaningful learning.
- ✓ Very few women are mentioned specifically by name.
- ✓ Some benchmarks are very specific; others are too vague & big. Need consistency.
- ✓ We don't teach "social studies" as generalists at the middle/junior high level. It's more pedagogically sound to teach a social studies subject as a grade level.
- ✓ Minnesota history benchmarks talk only about white men.
- ✓ There is no mention of African Americans in the American Revolution or in the Civil War fighting for their own rights.
- ✓ There is no mention of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Why does Teddy Roosevelt get his own benchmark yet progressives, child labor, organized labor, women's suffrage, and temperance are squeezed into one?

World History & World Geography

- The amount of standards placed in courses DOESN'T match the amount of credits given for those courses. There are 5 pages of World History Standards for a theoretical 1/2-credit course. There are 2 pages of World Geography standards for a 1-credit course. This makes no sense.
- There are absolutely NO women in the World History standards. Key female political leaders like Queen Elizabeth I of England, Catherine the Great of Russia, Cleopatra, and Isabella of Spain are not mentioned. Social leaders like Emmiline Pankhurst, Rosa Luxemborg, and the Empress Dowager are completely ignored. Women are not even footnoted as a social group. According to these standards, women had NO role in world history
- The World History standards are extremely Euro centric post-1500 AND they are biased. They do not address European domination of countries or the racism or oppression of the Imperialist system.
- The standards emphasize low-level skills on Bloom's Taxonomy like describing or explaining but completely ignore higher-level skills or critical thinking. They emphasize route memorization but ignore important skills like interpreting primary sources or analyzing bias.
- The curriculum is redundant: WWI, WWII, are taught in US History (multiple times) but covered yet again in World History. This is pedagogically unsound.

- If students take A.P. European History, the most widely accepted A.P. course at colleges, they would not meet the World History standards. These standards effectively eliminate A.P. European History as a course offering statewide. This denies the opportunity to earn college credit and compete for national scholarships.

Take this out of World History

- Era 5: European Discovery – It is covered in U.S. History.
- Era 7: Global Conflict 1914 – 1945 – It is covered in U.S. History.
- Post-War Era (H1): The Cold War is covered in depth in U.S. History.
- Era 6: The Age of Revolutions: Industrialization and the social and economic impacts of this movement are covered in U.S. History. We will cover Imperialism in World History.
- Era 8: Post War Era (H2) : Vietnam is covered in U.S. History. We teach China.
- Era 8: Post War Era: MAD, SALT, collapse of communism in the Soviet Union covered in U.S. History.

Government and Civics

Pg. 48 A) 1) Either remove bullet 1 entirely OR remove specific names.
 2) Remove bullet 2

Pg. 49 B) 1) Remove bullet 4 (NW ordinance – goes in History)

Pg. 49-50 C) 1) Remove bullet 6 (major milestones in US and MN thought)

Pg. 50 D) 1) Remove bullets 2 and 3 – move to Comparative Government Course.

Need to be added –

Standard specific to institutions (3 branches of gov't, how a bill becomes a law)
The draft of civic standards are general citizenship – not specific knowledge.

Stewartville Public Hearing (10/21/03)

At middle school, please be discipline specific, not integrated.

We need a more logical sequence.

At high school, these are ok.

We are not a democracy. This is a republican form of government. Our founding fathers warned against the tyranny of the people. This concept must be made clear.

Our estimate in Rochester for implementation will be over \$500,000.

Grade 4 I. US History Benchmark 2 - In Rochester, we expect this at grade 9, not grade 4. This concerns me.

Grade 5 II. Geography Benchmark 1 - (regarding "topographical choropleth") What is this? Too advanced!

MN-6, then US History grade 7, then World History at grade 8.

Giving high school the flexibility of all strands was great. Please allow this at the middle school level. Give us standards that we can arrange as we wish at 6-8.

We are concerned about the lack of flexibility. Social studies is unique, in that we have to cover 7-8 disciplines.

Please help students learn the difference between primary & secondary sources.

The number one thing all employers want are employees who can work together - cooperative learning, not competition. Competition is outdated for today's employment needs.

I am disturbed by these standards. They should mirror the national standards.

Our children do not need to learn about the founder of Chico, California. Why is this in the standards?

Current events should be covered in every grade!

Please add 9/11 - this is significant.

These standards will take time away from reading, writing & math at the early grades.

These standards make our local standards worthless.

I fail to see the difference between these standards & a curriculum.

Please make sure that we can still allow electives at 9:12. We especially need service-based courses. My class has a great deal of time for reflection - time to consider changes in themselves - not just facts. These standards scare me because they will take these opportunities away.

I'm glad World History is at the high school.

Between 6-12, there will be 3 years of American history. This is not balanced.

I like the sub strands, especially at middle school - but they must be grounded more appropriately. For example, civics & economics should be at grade 6, to set the foundation for later grades.

Where are anthropology, psychology, and sociology?

National sovereignty is important, but the geography standards pay too much attention to regions. Please change the focus to physical geography.

The role of private property is not mentioned in economics. The key principles of the free market economy must be emphasized.

The issue of scarcity is a government-made problem. In a free market economy, people can use their ingenuity to solve scarcity. Such ingenuity results in creative innovations.

Please, in economics, compare the free market & controlled market systems.

Please show how the World History standards can be split between two semesters.

Please keep MN history in one grade.

We get only 30 minutes per day for history in grades K-6.

We have taught the same thing for 30 years in my district - I have taught here for 25 years and I don't see why we need to change.

The pendulum has swung too far to the right.

We need a more consistent scope & sequence.

These standards need more application. We need content and process.

Albert Lea Public Hearing (10/22/03)

We like our local curriculum, don't want to change, it will be too expensive.

Psychology and Sociology need to be addressed.

Add free markets in the economics section

We prefer local control and to keep our local curriculum.

More modern history is needed.

Get rid of high school geography credit.

Add Sacajowea and Mandan Indians.

On page 6 Sub-Strand D last benchmark, do not emphasize regions.

On page 23 Sub-Stand A add Enlightenment to the first benchmark.

On page 25 add the following to the benchmarks Harriet Tubman, Dred Scott, U.S. Grant, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the 54th Massachusetts Regiment

Add more emphasis on diverse cultures in geography.

Add earthquakes, volcanoes, and plate tectonics to benchmarks on page 34 Sub Strand C Physical Features.

Third graders should only study their communities, not world history, ancient cultures, and the 3 branches of government.

Congratulations on a fine document! I am so happy to see our founding documents. We need to ensure that children appreciate our foundations.

There are environmentalism issues in the geography standards, move these to science.

World History standards in grade 6 are too hard.

An integrated social studies approach is too complicated. Please give us flexibility in grades 6-8.

The geography standards are too much like the Profile. I disagree with this approach. They too closely mirror the National Standards, which are flawed.

I need to teach peer mediation, to blow noses, stop teasing, and tie shoes. When do I have time to teach these history and social studies standards?

We need to have the opportunity for debates.

The grade 8 geography standards are good and rigorous.

We don't have enough time to teach these.

Please give us the option to teach local history. We want our children to honor their local history so they may stay here, or return here, as adults.

Public comments e-mailed:

Thank you once again for receiving my comments for the Standards Committee. My wife and I have four children at home aged 8-13. We consider their education a high priority and so when I learned of the transformation of our schools under Goals 2000 and School to Work I began reading material from the then DCFL. I obtained two documents (The Minnesota Goals 2000 Initiative and The Minnesota School to Work Initiative). After looking thru these documents I realized how radically schools would be changed and be directed toward work force preparation systems and and less directed towards a broad based liberal arts education. As a result of learning this I began to call my legislators to ask them to repeal the Profile of Learning. Thankfully, they did and it was a great start toward the directing education to a knowledge based academic system which you are doing via the Standards Committee and Commissioner Yecke. I want to thank you for the hard work of making genuine academics a priority again in the State of Minnesota. I want to commend the Social Studies Standards Committee for making the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence and founding fathers an important part of our children's education.

From Geography Standards:

The draft Geography standards were taken directly from the National Geography Standards. While parents and the public in general are sold on the need for geography standards, primarily because they understand the need for students to know physical geography, the draft standards contain little physical geography. Rather, they are a pretense for radical environmental education, multi-culturalism, and they downplay objective knowledge. They are a betrayal of what people expect from a *Profile* repeal.

The 3-5 committee, for example, had included in its draft an abundance of physical geography standards, much of it taken from Core Knowledge curriculum. At the scope and sequence day, that knowledge was systematically removed and replaced with the politically driven content of the national standards.

The *National Geography Standards* state, "It [geography] is an integrative discipline that brings together the physical and human dimensions of the world in the study of people, places, and environments." This is reminiscent of the *Profile* standard, "People and Cultures Framework." In fact, some of the individuals on the committee helped write the "People and Cultures Framework."

Our recommendation is that the Geography standards focus on physical geography, and eliminate the environmentalism, multi-culturalism, unbalanced regionalism, overemphasis on the manipulation of maps, and the politicized content.

1. Emphasis on Environmentalism

The standards are pre-occupied with environmentalism throughout. Some examples are:

- a. "The student will understand that people are connected to each other and the environment and these interconnections influence how and where people live." (p. 14, D-1) [This is cultural anthropology and environmentalism, not a Geography standard.]
- b. "The student will use five fundamental themes (location, place, human environment interaction, movement and region) to analyze the earth surface." (p. 17, A-1, p. 34, A-1) [This is an environmental standard, not a Geography standard.]
- c. "Students will recognize changes over time in a nearby ecosystem resulting from farms, forests and farmland being replaced by housing developments." (p. 34, D-1-a) [This is biased environmental indoctrination. There is no attempt to present a positive role human activity plays in the environment. This should not be a Geography standard.] human intervention (examples: natural wetlands being replaced by
- d. "The student will be able to describe how humans influence the environment and in turn are influenced by it." (p. 34, D-1, p. 51 C-1) [The benchmark then cites the "sustainable use of the environment." This is loaded political terminology. At the very least, the words should more accurately reflect what most people think it means – "environmentally friendly." This environmental education, however, is out of place in Geography standards, and should be eliminated.]

2. Overemphasis on maps and globes

While maps and globes are an important aspect of geography, their overemphasis has the effect of focusing students on all of the central planning land use schemes, rather than on the knowledge of geography. For example:

- a. Grade 4 has 8 different benchmarks addressing the use of maps and globes.
- b. 4th grade standard: "Students will compare political, physical and thematic maps." (p. 14)
- c. 5th grade benchmark: "Students will use various categories of maps: population, historical, elevation, land use, vegetation, climate, topographical Choropleth, density, flow." (p. 18, B-1-a)
- d. 8th grade: "Students will illustrate spatial information using data, symbols, and colors to create political, physical and thematic maps." (p. 33 B-1-a)
- e. 8th grade: "Students will be able to use maps and images to analyze interactions between people and their environment." (p. 34, A-1-b)

At a presentation to Education Minnesota's 2003 conference in October, the **Land Management Information Center (LMIC) used the draft Geography standards stated above as examples of their intention to link the Minnesota's academic standards to the Minnesota Environmental Atlas (EPIC). That is, the draft Geography standards have been designed to lay the foundation for the political agenda of the Minnesota Environmental Atlas. Their plan is to use the standards as a basis for training students in land use planning -- what they call "environmental education in Minnesota."** [See page 1 of the enclosed attachments, the "Environmental Atlas: Links to Social Studies Standards, Working Draft of Standards: September 4, 2003, Geography Standards, 5th Grade."]

LMIC, which intends to be linked to the geography standards, states, for example:

“The EPIC Atlas is fast, easy-to-use and requires no formal GIS training. includes new composite data layer, hot links to Web sites and integration with Education Effectiveness Program (MEEP) and others to distribute the atlas to

Instructors use the atlas to support lesson plans...The environmental atlas online DNR data sets. Minnesota Planning is working with the Minnesota educators and government organizations.” [See attached documents.]

The LMIC also states:

“The atlas has three power maps to examine your community more closely... The data is organized by county on CDs... The Atlas project provides one county

CD to each school district.” [See attached documents.]

And:

“Tools to teach. The EPIC Environmental Atlas includes more than 250 digital maps and teaching tools to support K-12 curriculum development and multi-disciplinary environmental studies.” [See attached documents.]

And:

“[It] [EPICplanning] makes maps to support: Comprehensive planning, Hazard mitigation planning, water planning, growth boundary discussions, sustainability studies, other local planning needs.” [See attached documents.]

This is a politicized central planning agenda masquerading as Geography standards. Its intention is to use the schools to transform students into activist government planners during the school day. In the “new” civics, this is called “civic engagement.” “Sustainable development” and “sustainability” have become code language for a broad and radical political agenda. (More information on this will be forthcoming.)

3. Over-emphasis on the concept of “region”

The *National Geography Standards* state: “people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity.” (p. 34) The concept of nation state is undermined in the national standards, and that approach is replicated in Minnesota’s draft standards.

- a. Students are not required, for example, to know about the existence or location of most of the major nations of the world, such as Brazil, India, Iraq, North Korea, or Russia. Students should be required, by 9-12th grades, to know the locations and important cities of the larger countries of the world, not simply find them on a map.
- b. The importance of nations and national boundaries is minimized. For example, the proposed standards, on at least two occasions state:

“Students will understand that boundaries of states and countries on political maps were created by people, and that these boundaries have changed over time.” (p. 6 – B-1-d and p. 9 – A-1-a)

They also state:

“Students will understand the **changing nature of sovereignty** and its impact on political units in the United States.” (p. 50 – A-2-c)

- c. The standards repeat several times that:
“The student will use five fundamental themes (location, place, human earth surface.” (p. 17, A-1) [Region has been inserted in place of nations. The undermined.] environment interaction, movement and region) to analyze the role of national sovereignty is

d. On page 10, B and C, two separate standards focus on “understanding regions,” rather than learning about countries that exist. The implications of such statements are that national boundaries, national sovereignty, nations themselves and governments are superficial and insignificant. Such language should be eliminated and replaced with statements like:

“The nations of the world have generally recognized the importance of being independent nations and in protecting their national boundaries.”

4. Emphasis on Economics, World Politics and Cultural Anthropology instead of Physical Geography

The draft Geography standards are so broad that they become Socials Studies standards, not Geography standards.

Examples are numerous. Some examples include:

- a. “The student should be able to understand the physical **and cultural** features **of ancient civilizations**.” (p. 10, C-1) [This is cultural anthropology.]
- b. “The student will be able to understand physical **and culture** features of continents studied. (p. 14, Grade 4, B-1) [This is cultural anthropology.]
- c. “The student will understand the **relationships between geography and culture**.”(p. 14, D-1) [This is cultural anthropology. This standard is then followed by a list of cultural anthropology benchmarks.]
- d. “The student will use five fundamental themes (location, place, human environment interaction, movement and region) to analyze the earth surface.” (p. 17, A-1). [This is cultural anthropology.]
- e. “Students will know how attitudes toward mining **conflicted with North American value of sacred lands**.” (p. 18, D-1-c). [This is sociology and cultural anthropology.]
- f. “Students will discuss the connections between geography and the **development of cultures and civilization**.” (p. 22, D-1-b) [This cultural anthropology.]
- g. “Students will create a flow map to **show movement of people**. (p. 34, A-1-c) [This is world politics, sociology, and cultural anthropology.]
- h. “Students will describe the cultural, economic and environmental processes that interact to shape patterns of human populations, density, interdependence, and cooperation and conflict.” (p. 35, D-1) [Sixteen benchmarks follow, having to do with human migration, the impact of human activity, patterns of economic activities, transportation changes, communication changes and the like. This is economics, sociology, and cultural anthropology.]
- i. “The student will explain the pattern of **economic activities and land use** in the United States and the world.” (p. 49.) [This is political science and sociology.]
- j. “The student will explain how patterns of **political systems create government units** at various scales in the United States and the world.” (p. 50.) .) [This is political science.]
- k. “The student will describe and explain the primary factors behind the contemporary spatial distribution of **major culture groups in the United States and the world**.” (p. 50.) [This is an anthropology standard. It also represents the multicultural philosophy that divides people into culture groups.]
- l. “The students will understand the distribution, the patterns of growth, and the **demographic characteristics of the human population**.” (p. 50.) .) [This is world politics, sociology, and anthropology.]

To: Dr. Pierson Yecke
Minnesota Commissioner of Education

The Forest Lake Area Schools Social Studies Curriculum Review Committee has studied the draft of the social studies standards which are currently posted on the MDE website. The committee consists of 22 professionals in education representing elementary education, secondary education, curriculum and instruction, and administration. Each of these individuals has a passion for social studies and awaited the development of these standards. Our committee recognizes that the task of developing standards for any content area may be daunting, but many of us are here this evening to present concerns regarding the standards draft and offer our recommendations for improvement.

These recommendations are brought forth by our curriculum review committee, of whom possess knowledge of social studies content, teaching methods and have developed exemplary courses in social studies for our district’s students.

In addition to the overview of recommendations, we are including a document in which we spent many hours highlighting our concerns and making suggestions for improvement to the standards and benchmarks. Our hope is that this document will be shared with the upcoming standards-development committee.

- In many of the strands and sub-strands, the standards may be written appropriately, however, the benchmarks, are more often than not, developmentally inappropriate, and excessive in quantity. To emphasize our point: The number of benchmarks in grade 7 is 74. Within a school year of approximately 175 student contact days, this would require a benchmark to be taught every two days. Again in grade 7 alone, the content to be covered is Geography, U.S. History, Minnesota History, Government and Citizenship and Economics. We recognize the strength of integrating various components of social studies, but find it impossible to teach all of these areas in one school year, maintaining the integrity of each.
- Until the benchmarks are rewritten to be developmentally appropriate, they cannot be aligned with the proposed standards.
- Elementary students are most successful in social studies when material is presented in a chronological approach. The chunking / spiral approach used in this document will not be effective with elementary students.
- The benchmarks are written to be overly prescriptive, very detailed, lacking depth and represent a narrow view of social studies.
- Throughout the social studies draft, there is very little emphasis on social studies processes and critical-thinking skills. Instead, there is only knowledge, facts and much memorization. The terms, “know and understand”, “identify”, “recognize”, “name and locate”, are used countless times in the benchmarks, suggesting the memorization of content, obtaining only the first and second levels in Bloom’s Taxonomy. The requirement of students to “know and understand” lacks the essence of how events and people make an impact on the past and present. There is little time or opportunity for our students to apply or analyze any of the content they learn because of the countless benchmarks. Children develop a love for learning and a greater understanding of history and the other social sciences by delving deeper into curriculum as opposed to learning many facts in a shallow manner. We currently teach curriculum containing a number of well-planned units allowing opportunities for depth and understanding of content.
- There are very few references in the standards and benchmarks to modern-day United States history, lacking the potential to study the presidencies of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson and the diverse nature of modern-day America.
- We currently offer courses in Eastern, Western, Ancient and Russian Civilization. In the proposed standards and new credit requirements, our school district and others would be expected to teach about all of these rich civilizations in one course / term.

Economics Standards:

Much of the draft Economics standards were taken directly from the National Content Standards in Economics. The national economics standards are founded on the principle that economics is primarily about the distribution of scarce resources. This approach to economics leaves out some of the most important principles of the free market system. Some of these issues are addressed below:

1. Scarcity vs. Creation of Resources:

Beginning in kindergarten, the draft Economics standards narrowly define economics as choices between wants and needs. They describe economics as distributing scarcity among people. This corresponds to the national economics standards, which identify scarcity as the 1st Economics content standard.

Examples in the draft standards:

Kindergarten: "Students will understand economic choices are based on needs and wants." (p.2, B-1)

1st grade: The same standard has two clarifying benchmarks, "Students will define scarcity as the condition of not being able to have all of the goods and services that you want." (p. 4, B-1-a) and, "Students will recognize that because of scarcity they need to make choices." (p. 4, B-2-b)

9th-12th grade: "The student will understand the implications of the economic problem of scarcity." (p. 51, A-1) That is the first standard, followed by five benchmarks that drive the principle home.

There is no foundational principle that identifies the role of business and industry in creating resources and expanding opportunities. Economics is an understanding of the role of private ownership of property in creating economic well-being by the use and creation of resources.

2. Private Property as the Foundation

The role of private property is not clearly identified as the foundation of the free market system.

3. Impact of Population

The role of sufficient population and population growth in economic success, as stated by Adam Smith and shown in current data, is absent.

4. Human Resources

Human resources are not identified as substantially unique from other resources, such as natural resources and capital resources. Not recognizing that human resources are unique leads to dehumanizing people as workers in the economy.

5. Free Market Economy

The key principles of a free market economy are not simply and clearly stated, such as supply and demand, scarcity and the creation of resources by free enterprise. The words "market economy" should state "free market economy."

6. Supply and Demand

While the standards discuss supply and demand, they are not clearly identified as the basis for the free market system. Some basic benchmark like, “The student will understand that…” would suffice.

Recommended changes:

1. Pages 2, 4 and 7, add to the standard under “Economic Choices,” “availability of resources, and the ability to create resources.”
2. Page 2, add benchmarks to Economic Choices:
 - a. “Students will identify that things that are plentiful are easier to get (seasonal foods are cheaper in season).”
 - b. “Students will understand the concept of ownership of private property.”
 - c. “Students will recognize that in the United States they can start and/or own business.”
3. Page 4, add benchmarks to Economic Choices:
 - a. “Students will understand that wealth and resources are created by business and industry.”
 - b. “Students will understand that business creates resources and expands opportunities.”
4. Page 7, add benchmark to Producers and Consumers:
 - a. “Students will understand that population and/or population growth is important for having workers and consumers in a market economy.”
5. Page 11, add benchmark:
 - a. “Students will understand the important differences between human resources and other kinds of resources.”
6. Page 23, add benchmark to National Economy:
 - a. “Students will understand the nature of free enterprise.”
7. Page 51, a standard 2 to The Market Economy:
 - a. “Students will understand the ability of business, industry and individuals to create wealth and resources.”
8. Page 51, add benchmarks to Standard 2, The Market Economy:
 - a. “Students will know the role that renewable resources play in expanding wealth, such as ethanol, timber, and plastics.”
 - b. “Students will know the role of technology in expanding wealth and creating resources, such as, computers and hydrogen power.”
 - c. “Students will understand the movement of China toward a market economy has led to rapid economic growth.”
 - d. “Students will understand the failure of the former Soviet Union to privatize its industry led to its collapse.”
9. Page 52, add benchmarks to The Market Economy, 1st standard:
 - a. “Students will understand the views of Adam Smith, Karl Marx and John Maynard Keynes.”
 - b. “Students will understand the correlation between free enterprise and economic well-being.”
 - c. “Students will understand the recognized superiority of free-enterprise over socialism.”
 - d. “Students will understand that wealth and resources are created by business and industry.”
10. Page 53, The Market Economy:
 - a. Remove benchmark #2. To say what is the appropriate role is strictly a value statement.
 - b. Replace #2 with, “Students will understand the correlation between private property rights and economic well-being.”
 - c. Restate benchmark #3 to say, “Students will describe services that are provided by government.” The appropriate role is a value judgment.

- d. Restate benchmark #5 to say, "Students will recognize that some government policies have the consequence of redistributing income."
- e. Remove benchmark #6. It is vague and undefinable.

K - Econ. Why emphasize needs and wants? It would be better to drop the first standard (which appears to have an agenda behind it) and simply say Students will be introduced to the idea that money is used to buy goods and services and that money is made by people who provide goods and services.

1 US history - Rewrite to - Students will be introduced to individuals and groups (such as pilgrims) who colonized, explored and settled the US, including but not limited to William Bradford, Christopher Columbus, and Pocahontas. This is a very achievable standard, our students do this each year.

Good to list names of people like B. Franklin that students should know.

1 - US history - Drop the migration/colonization standard

I prefer "will be introduced to" in most cases. Could also use will hear and discuss.

1 = World History - the ancient civilizations one is good as is. Students will be able to talk about pyramids, papyrus, myths, etc. and learn something about these civilizations. Our students do every year.

The second sub-strand Famous Events...is very doable for first graders... but it might be helpful to give an example or two for the second one so teachers see how easy this would be to teach (the invention of paper, an earthquake, the end of a civilization, a war where many died).

1 - concepts of time All students can help create a time line. They can use their own lives (yesterday, today and tomorrow if need be.) This is age appropriate. It will be rudimentary, but still worth it. The rest are fine as they are with words such as "will be introduced to"

1 - Gov't Students will explain what it means to be an "involved" citizen in terms of participating by voting, learning about the issues and helping other people.

Just because someone is not loyal and good at self-government does not mean they are a BAD citizen. This is a very judgmental standard as it stands.

Second one ok as is.

1 - Gov't B. rights... Separate these. They should not automatically go together. Rights first - Student will explain what some of their God-given rights are including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness

2. Students will recognize that the Declaration of Independence is the key document that described these rights

3. Students will recognize the Constitution as another place that explains how our country and freedom were created and guaranteed.

Responsibilities (drop privileges altogether) - Students will be introduced to the idea that they have a community responsibility to be a good person, help others and learn about our government so they can protect everyone's individual rights, but that they have all their rights just because they are an American and don't have to "do" anything for the government to keep them.

C. all are good as is

1 - Geography A. good as is

B. good as is

Can't go on with comments since the rest of the document was inaccessible.

9-12 Geography B. Global regions -- Why are we talking about regions and not countries primarily? Drop this section altogether (both sections of global regions).

C. Interconnections - this is anthropology, not geography. Lobby for anthropology as a required course, but leave it out of geography. Drop whole section. Changing the environment? Sustainable use of the environment? Natural hazards on human activities? These all are "agenda" items meant to propagandize. DROP please.

D. keep as is

9-12 Econ A. The FREE market economy - Standard: The student will understand the implications of scarcity and abundance.

Then each benchmark (there should be fewer here) should reflect balance, not agenda propagandizing about scarcity.

A. The FREE Market Economy - decision-making 1. Students will recognize that effective decision-making typically requires comparing the additional or decreased costs of alternatives with the benefits and down sides.

3. Career choice should not be in this one that is supposedly about decision-making in economics. Drop it.

7. Students will be able to describe how insurance and other risk management strategies can be used to minimize financial loss, taking into account the amount of money that is spent over time.

The next FREE Market Economy sub-strand appears to be promoting an involved (not limited) government in households, trade, money exchange, etc. Why? Gov't need not grow in these areas and this appears to be a part of the "agenda." Instead, leave gov't out as a "partner" and build the concept of individualism within a community that is dependent upon each other. Sorry don't have the right words for this one.

The fifth box of Free Market Economy slips in "scarcity" in the first benchmark. Drop the word, since it is possible for my company to plant more trees so I have more paper for my books, not less. Why assume all resources will be "scarce?"

Entrepreneurship - Drop the last benchmark. It assumes that non-entrepreneurs don't have long hours and lots of stress. I happen to be an entrepreneur who owns and runs a business that does not require long hours or lots of stress...I know plenty of others who have a similar experience, though surely there are others who do spend many hours. On the other hand, I have a relative who works for others (bar tending) who works lots of hours and has much stress since she is not making enough money and juggling children, a family and long and tough work hours. This has "agenda" written all over it I think.

There are too many benchmarks for the Economy section. Cut by half and stick to basics that honestly reflect America's values in the free market.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Public Comment (from Upper Sioux Community from a letter mailed to Commissioner Yecce by the Executive Director of the Indian Affairs Council)

What follows is an excerpt of the letter and then the review comments. "On Tuesday, October 7th, 2003 the Minnesota Indian Affairs Executive Committee and MIAC staff discussed the proposed Minnesota Academic Standards... These comments are offered to provide a statement from MIAC to the state during the comment review time... In closing I would like to add that at last week's Minnesota Indian Education Association annual conference held at White Earth, much discussion took place regarding the proposed change in standards. The prevalent sentiment was that the proposed standards would be a step backwards in meeting the needs of Indian students. Education should instead be progressive in not only recognizing the crucial role that American Indians play on a global and international perspective but also the Dakota and Annishnabe role that has taken place historically and continues to play in a contemporary role in the state of Minnesota."

Much of the standards language is oppressive.

- Minnesota's first settlers. Aren't the Natives the first peoples?
- Introduction of Indigenous populations would be appropriate at the beginning of the MN History. More information is required before jumping straight into settlers
- The 1803 Louisiana Purchase should be brought into focus during the MN History.
- Minnesota could not have ever become a state without the treaties of 1851, 1858, etc. Treaties are really the basis for states.
- In what way will Columbus Day be discussed? It is a misconception.
- In what way will Thanksgiving be discussed?

Selective information and lack of Indigenous perspective.

- The Iroquois Confederacy should be a point of basis, including Ben Franklin in the development of the U. S. Constitution.
- 1876 last treaty closing the frontier: U.S. History.
- Termination era (1955): U.S. History
- Indian Removal Act (1836): U. S. History
- Indian Reorganization Act (1934): U.S. History
- Relocation Act (1887): U.S. History
- Dawes Act (1887): U. S. History
- Kennedy
- Prehistory of original peoples on Turtle Island

Some basic points left out of the standards and benchmarks.

- Statute of Religious Freedom was only a right for some. The AIRFA (American Indian Religious Freedom Act)
- No mention of Tecumseh in the War of 1812.
- Reservation development in 1880-1900, which were basic to mining and agriculture.
- Indian Civil Rights (Felix Cohen)
- AIM, Black Panthers, Malcolm X
- George Wallace's role; KKK & Brown vs. Education

Lack of diverse pedagogy.

- Geography should question how people could live with the land, as opposed to changing the land. How can we work and adapt to our environment?
- How do Indigenous peoples contribute in a global perspective?
- Religious studies: North American & South American religions are not discussed: Elementary (grades?)

Omission of American Indian contributions.

- Tribes contribute significantly and impact the local, regional and state economies.
- A significant number of names and places (states, waterways, Minnesota cities, etc,) come from tribal language.

American Indians, when they are discussed, [are only] discussed in a historical view; nothing contemporary.

- Hunting and fishing rights as they pertain to treaties (Supreme Court issue)

These are just some of the highlights we wanted to bring in which the standards would have a devastating affect on our students, including non-Indian students. If we don't educate whole systems and peoples, we continue to perpetuate stereotypes and misunderstandings.... We feel that the overall proposed standards have an undertone of a select voice of people. We do not want our children to all think the same way, to process understandings the same way, nor do we want them to recite "facts", we want them to be thinkers.

Dear Commissioner Yecce:

We write to express grave concerns about the proposed Minnesota Academic Standards in History and Social Studies based on our professional expertise as historians who are also citizens and parents. As teachers, we share the concerns expressed by many teachers throughout the state that the standards are unwieldy and impractical, and as historians we believe that many of the proposed standards are inaccurate, misleading, and represent an oversimplified view of American and World history.

Many historians at the University of Minnesota have worked for years toward the goal of encouraging a more substantive treatment of history in the public schools, especially at the secondary level. Our engagement in that process has been direct, including a long-running commitment to the History Day program, and, most recently, partnering with the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools in a three-year grant funded by the U. S. Department of Education to improve instruction, assessment and student performance in American history ("Bridge for American History"). We applaud the State of Minnesota's commitment to that shared goal. Our concern is that the content and the pedagogy implied by these standards is likely to drive students away from any sense that history is relevant to their daily lives or any future interest in things historical. And insofar as students learn what is prescribed here, they will take with them a seriously incomplete and sometimes erroneous understanding.

Our concerns fall into five main topics.

- I. The standards are developmentally inappropriate.
- II. The content of the standards does not come close to reflecting the complexity and variety of historical knowledge and research.
- III. The standards fail to capture the richness and diversity of significant individuals in shaping our nation's history.
- IV. The standards express a conceptually impoverished understanding of the importance of studying American history.
- V. The standards offer a fundamentally incomplete and unbalanced portrayal of the history of the rest of the world.

I. The Standards and Child Development

The standards, especially in the earlier grades (K-8), are developmentally inappropriate. They do not follow the scope and sequence guidelines of the National Council for Social Studies, which is the gold standard in this respect. In the early grades, they introduce concepts children cannot understand. The standards are also far too detailed and repetitive. Teaching to such standards would require extensive time devoted to rote learning and undermine the teaching of basic skills in reading and math, as well as undermining the ability of teachers to function creatively in the classroom. Note that the verbs used most frequently (such as "identify," "recognize,"

“know and understand,” and “describe”) imply lower level thinking skills compared to verbs that appear infrequently or not at all (such as “examine,” “analyze,” “debate” or “compare”).

II. Content

Any standards designed to drive the curriculum for all students in Minnesota public schools should make a serious effort to reflect the breadth and depth of contemporary historical knowledge. These proposed standards fail to do so. Indeed, one of the most troubling aspects of the standards is their comprehensive failure to incorporate the most widely disseminated and accepted scholarly interpretations in both U.S. history and World history of the last forty years. This failure leads to important omissions, misplaced and misleading emphases, and, in a number of instances, clear factual errors.

The standards ignore the fact that few historians today understand the historical process as an orderly unfolding of ideas or identities, or as the fulfillment of a national mission. In the portion of the standards focused on U.S. history, the history of dissent and conflict within our nation and society is downplayed or suppressed altogether, and in both the U.S. and World history strands, the U.S. is described largely in isolation or distinct difference from the rest of the world. The narrow slice of world history presented in the standards perpetuates an inaccurate and outdated presumption of a single line of development from the Ancient Mediterranean through Western Europe to “Us” where the “Us” – Americans – are all presumed to be of a shared descent. The World History standards also feed the discredited understanding of global development as a “clash of civilizations.” In each of these respects the standards threaten to defeat the very point of our educational system: to equip our children with the knowledge and the skills they need to become informed, active, and contributing citizens of our nation and members of our world.

The inadequacies and flaws of the proposed standards are demonstrated in the following examples drawn from the proposed standards in U. S. and World History and Government and Citizenship. This list is in no way complete, but rather is intended to be suggestive.

The Colonial and Revolutionary Eras. The Colonial and Revolutionary periods are introduced in kindergarten and returned to repeatedly in nearly every grade through 12. We share the implication here that these are vital and foundational eras in U. S. history. We believe, however, that a curriculum driven by these standards would seriously misrepresent the central issues of the period.

A. Discussions of Cultural Encounters

Point: Without learning about the devastation caused by disease, starvation, and warfare, students cannot fully understand the shifting power dynamics in colonial North America, nor how, why, and at what extreme cost some of the British colonists on the eastern seaboard survived, prevailed, and eventually created a new nation.

Throughout the standards, from K through 12, the processes by which Europeans moved into the Americas are referred to in misleadingly neutral terms that are not neutral at all in their impact on students’ understanding. In **Grade 2** and again in **Grade 3**, for instance, the benchmarks describe European-American Indian interaction as “cooperation, compromise, and conflict.” Ostensibly benign terms such as “exploration,” “movement,” “migration,” “colonization,” “settlement,” “expansion,” “acquisition,” and “annexation” are nowhere balanced by terms such as “conquest,” “subjugation,” “exploitation,” or “enslavement.” This is not merely semantic quibbling. The choice of language throughout the standards’ treatment of the periods from prehistory through the late 18th century massively and misleadingly understates the genocidal impact on the Americas of European incursions: mortality rates of well over 90% in many places from epidemic disease, starvation, and warfare; the complete annihilation of entire peoples, languages, and cultures; the extinction of numerous species and the destruction of whole environments.

B. Slavery

Point: Nowhere do the standards acknowledge or discuss the complicated, contentious, and enduring legacy of slavery for American race relations past and present.

Integral to the shifting power dynamics in the colonial world and the creation of the new United States was the institution of slavery. Slaves, listed without comment as one group among many in colonial life, are mentioned for the first time in a U.S. History benchmark for **Grade 3**. The institution of slavery, in its economic, political, legal, and social dimensions, is mentioned for the first time in the standards for **Grade 5** and again in **Grade 7** – and then, in both places, only as a *political* issue

in the context of the abolition movement and the growth of sectional tensions, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. Nowhere do the standards recognize that slavery's legacy continues to shape the present.

In **Grades 9-12**, a benchmark prescribes that "students will explain the impact of North American slavery on colonial life." It is not clear from this, however, that the students will be taught adequately how and why the historically innovative version of American slavery was constructed in the 17th century, transformed into a racial category, and deeply implicated in the economic, political, and social development of the British (and Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Dutch) colonies and subsequently the U.S.; nor about the efforts of enslaved persons to resist their dehumanization and exploitation and to force the issue of their exclusion from the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence.

C. The Founding of American Government

Point: The standards include repeated, and repetitive, study – but never the careful examination or necessary contextualization – of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. They also have serious errors of historical fact.

The benchmark for **Grade 2, Government and Citizenship, B: Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities** states that "Students will understand that the Constitution establishes how our nation is governed according to principles of the Declaration of Independence." The Constitution did no such thing, and in fact it collided directly with the Declaration in several ways, most notably in its three provisions for preserving and protecting slavery (the three-fifths compromise in Art. I, Sec. 2, the fugitive slave clause in Art. IV, and the protection of the slave trade until at least 1808 in Art. 1, Sec. 9, and Art. V). This error is repeated in the **Grade 4, U.S. History** benchmark: "Students will know and understand the basic principles of the new government established by the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the U.S. and the Bill of Rights." This is misleading: the Declaration proclaimed ideals; it did not establish a government.

From the convening of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 to the present day, critics (including patriot Patrick Henry) have contrasted the Declaration's ideals with the governing structures established by the Constitution. It was, in the first instance, groups excluded from full or partial citizenship under the Constitution who first embraced the Declaration as the nation's founding document. And it was only with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in 1863 that that idea began to be embraced by a wider public. The statement (and others like it) that "Students will understand that the Declaration of Independence is the founding document that sets forth the guiding principles for our nation" inadequately renders the more complicated history between the Declaration and the Constitution.

The framers of the Constitution did not "secure the equal rights of all citizens," as is claimed in the **Grade 8 Government and Citizenship** standard. They failed to do so, which is why U.S. history since 1789 includes so many and such long-lasting movements to secure just those rights. What the framers succeeded at was in creating a structure that others could then use to make claims for and attempt to realize those rights. The framers also profoundly disagreed on the meaning of equality, the appropriate balance between equality and liberty, and the terms and inclusiveness of citizenship. All of these foundational principles have been continually contested and redefined over the course of American history, and it is essential that students understand these struggles – from the colonial period all the way to the most recent past.

The **Grade 7 U.S. History** benchmark and **Grades 9-12 Government and Citizenship** benchmark suggest that The Articles of Confederation "failed" and the Constitution "succeeded". Many Americans favored the Articles of Confederation and did not see the need to replace them with the proposed Constitution, and they fought against the latter document's ratification. A specific group of Americans (the "framers") wrote the Constitution and successfully substituted it for the Articles by political means that were largely invented as they went along. The Constitution represented not only abstract principles but also the interests and perspectives of the framers as individuals. The proposed standards imply, instead, that the Articles of Confederation were rejected and replaced by the Constitution due to inherent qualities in the two systems of governance, which is simply not the case. The change from one form of government to the other was by means of political actions by different groups within American society.

In the benchmark for **Grade 7, Government and Citizenship, A-C** we read: "Students will recognize the significance of the Founders' four references to God in the Declaration of Independence." Given the complexity of the Deism expressed by Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and other "founding fathers," as well as the substantial differences of religious opinion among them, the "significance" of these references remains a matter of serious historical debate.

The Modern Era. The coverage and interpretation of recent U. S. history in the proposed standards are as selective and incomplete as that of the more distant Colonial and Revolutionary periods. Yet understanding the broad sweep of American history in the second half of the 20th century is vital to Minnesota students being able to grapple with and contribute solutions to issues of critical importance to Americans today.

A. Individual Rights

Point: The failure to explore the full range of rights movements in the post World War II era makes it impossible for students to understand the fundamental and sweeping character of the revolution in individual rights in this era, the importance of individual and group action to achieving change, and the longer-term struggles behind these movements.

The one rights movement recognized in the standards is the Civil Rights Movement. Other fundamentally important movements remain unacknowledged. There are no references in the standards, for example, to the women's rights movement, the labor movement, the anti-war and student movements, the environmental movement, the movement for consumer's rights, the movement for welfare rights, the American Indian movement, the gay and lesbian rights movement, or the movement for and against abortion rights. Simply looking at the range of movements listed here should give one a sense that something incredible was afoot in America. The failure to introduce students to the expansive sweep of rights movements in the post-World War II era represents one of the stunning silences of the standards. That silence in itself makes the standards woefully incomplete. It matters for other reasons as well. Exploring the full sweep of the rights movement of the post World War II era is critical for understanding that Americans generally benefited from a dramatic expansion in individual rights touching everything from fair housing, to clean air, to the right to know the terms of a loan.

The reluctance, more generally, in the standards to address the history of exclusion from full citizenship in our nation's history, the arduous path to its achievement, and the social, political, economic, and legal impediments that remain to achieving full equality for all Americans is deeply troubling. The proposed standards' silence in charting the multiple paths toward equality for women — toward realizing, for half the population, the ideals implied in the Declaration of Independence offers one example. The standards reduce women's equality to a single issue: women's suffrage. Nowhere is the broader 19th century movement for women's rights mentioned, nowhere is the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s mentioned. This silence renders the standards not simply incomplete, but rather grossly misleading. Suffrage was but one element of the denial of full citizenship to American women. Its achievement in 1920 still left women largely second-class citizens. A few examples speak volumes. Through the 1960s, banks could deny loans and mortgages to single women and refuse to count the earnings of married women in determining the size of mortgage for which a married couple was eligible; employers could refuse to hire and fire women at will because they were women, or married, or had preschool age children, or were pregnant; states could automatically exclude women from jury pools because they were women. Simply put, in constitutional terms, separate was not unequal when it came to sex. Only in the 1970s, as a product of the women's rights movement, were the assumptions behind these denials of fundamental rights successfully challenged. Surely this is a part of our nation's history that students must know.

Many of the questions raised by the movements noted above were and remain deeply contested. Some of them, including, for example, abortion, deeply divide Americans. But surely controversy cannot provide a basis for ignoring significant elements of the American past and present. Indeed, these topics provide ideal opportunities for students to practice in the classroom the kind of dialogues vital to a democracy.

Other silences in cases of flagrant denials of individual rights and exclusionary laws are equally troubling on their own account and because of the broader patterns and persistence of racism which they highlight. There is no reference in the standards, for example, to Japanese internment. Equally troubling is the way in which immigration is addressed in the standards. For example, students in **Grade 8** are to "identify the segregation and racism that faced new immigrants such as the Irish and Chinese" in the 1880s-1900. The pairing is a strange one, especially since the Irish arrived in largest numbers in the mid-19th century. Left completely unmentioned is the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which, for the first time in American history and setting a pattern for the future, barred immigration of a particular immigrant group on the basis of race and class – Chinese laborers. There is a similar silence regarding immigration restriction over the whole course of the 20th century.

B. Government, Economy, and Democracy

Point: Understanding economic history and the role of the government in the economy in the post World War II era is critical to understanding the meaning and experience of democracy in this era.

A second troubling silence in the U. S. history standards for the post World War II era relates to the relationship among government, economy, and democracy. The standards ignore critical elements of the domestic impact of the war, such as the role of government war spending not only in bringing the U. S. out of the depression and spurring dramatic demographic transformation, but also in contributing to a postwar economy dominated by corporate giants such as Westinghouse, GE, etc. Moreover, the U. S. history standards completely fail to address the dramatic changes in the nature of the U. S. economy in the post World War II era including de-industrialization, the dramatic growth of the service sector and low-wage, low-skill jobs.

The separation of cultural, political, and economic history obscures the relationship between the culture of consumption and the practice of democracy. It is vital for students to understand the elements that combined historically to make it possible for President Bush to tell Americans in the wake of the 9/11 bombings that patriotism included continuing to buy more goods. The history of the conflation of capitalism and democracy is deeply rooted in the Great Depression and the Cold War. That history simply is not here in the standards.

Students are not given the opportunity to gain an essential historical perspective on many of these issues, in part by the proposed standards' defining them as outside history and therefore not amenable or appropriate to change. For example, the role of government in regulating the economy is embedded not in the Strand of U. S. history, but rather in Strand III. Economics, Sub-strand A. The Market Economy, for Grades 9-12. The benchmarks here are presented as economic principles rather than as historically specific and politically charged policies on which well-meaning Americans profoundly disagree.

C. The U. S. in the Wider World: Domestic and Foreign Policy

Point: It is vitally important for students to be given the tools to think critically and fully about the role the U. S. has played as a superpower in the years from World War II through the Cold War.

In large measure, the second half of the 20th century is compressed into a truncated narrative of WWII and the Cold War. Indeed, the only two Presidents listed in Benchmarks for these years are Presidents Roosevelt and Reagan. In **Grades 8 and 9-12** students are specifically required to know the “role” of Ronald Reagan in leading to the collapse of communism. Many issues should be raised here. They include at least the silence in the standards on the vitally important role of the U. S. in shaping the post-war international economic order. Critical here were organizations such as International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine. In a climate where Americans wish to understand how others view them, it seems more important than ever to fully explore the incredible power that the U. S. has wielded through international economic policy as well as through military policy.

Part of what is lost here is the complex and critically important relationship between foreign and domestic policy. Two examples suffice. In **Grades 9-12** the standards provide “students will understand the rise of the federal highway system and suburbs in the 1950s. . . .” The benchmark is mentioned in connection with cultural transformation in the post World War II era. It specifically is not listed as a benchmark for student understanding of the foreign and domestic impact of the Cold War. The federal highway system did not simply “rise;” it was constructed with federal dollars in direct response to the Cold War. Second, there is complete silence in the standards on the important respects in which the fight against communism both advanced African Americans claims for equality and provided a tool to obstruct those claims by whites.

Finally, there is a troubling resistance in the standards to consideration of more complicated narratives related to America’s use of force. For example, in the benchmarks for **Grade 8** relating to the Cold War students are to “know and understand the role of America’s military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam.” A complex mix of political, economic, and cultural factors shaped American policy in Vietnam. Students need to know this history. To define the American war in Vietnam in terms of “defending freedom” represents a gross, profoundly misleading, and even dangerous simplification. The benchmark for **Grades 8 and 9-12** relating to current American policy is similarly problematic. The benchmark for **Grade 8** related to the post 1989 years, provides that students are to “know and understand the new clash of civilizations” “and the challenges it presents to the United States.” The **9-12 standards** require that students know “the key events and policies in the war on terrorism during the early 2000s.” First, understanding the present conflict in terms of a “clash of civilizations” implicitly refers

to a discredited paradigm of world history. Second, while discussing current events in the classroom is vitally important to developing the practice of citizenship, establishing these events and current administration policies as history benchmarks risks undermining the entire mission of a serious history curriculum.

III. The Role of Individuals in History

Point: If we chose to identify particular individuals as especially worth students knowing, that list must include not only the pantheon of military heroes and presidents, but also a more inclusive, representative, and inspiring range of heroes who fought (sometimes against law when the law was unjust) for justice, rights, and reforms in a whole host of ways and locations.

Courageous, thoughtful, and gifted individuals are central to narratives of U. S. history, as they are to the history of every nation, culture, or society. They are also important in teaching Government and Citizenship. It is important for students today to see and know that individuals can and have made a difference in our nation's history. The standards do recognize the role of individuals in American history, but the list presented is narrow, incomplete, and hence misleading. As Eric Foner, one of our most important contemporary historians, has written, American freedom has been shaped and claimed "not only in congressional debates and political treatises but also on plantations and picket lines, in parlors and bedrooms, by our acknowledged leaders and by former slaves, union organizers, freedom riders, and women's rights advocates" (*The Story of American Freedom*, 1998). A more inclusive list of significant individuals is not only a matter of historical accuracy, but also important in helping students see in themselves the potential to matter to the course of U. S. history.

One can question whether it is appropriate to "name names" at all, but if the standards elect to require students to know names, the list should at least be more complete and representative. We might start the process of expanding the list of important actors and agents by noting who is included in the standards from the ranks of Native Americans and Women. The standards identify Squanto, Pocahontas and Sacagawea as the only American Indians that students should know by name. Each of these individuals represents a sad and complicated story. We should ask ourselves how different the narrative would be if students were asked to remember Native American leaders known for cultural integrity, resistance, and self determination such as Powhatan, Metacomet, Pontiac, Joseph Brant, Tecumseh, Geronimo, Sitting Bull, Minnesota's own Little Crow, and Wilma Mankiller, just to mention a few of the most obvious possibilities. It is especially crucial to examine these political leaders, military heroes, and social reformers because typical narratives of American history refer to Indians only in the aggregate, e.g. Ojibwe or Dakota.

The list of women students should know in the U. S. History standards is also a short one. Between Kindergarten and Grade 12, students are required to be introduced by name to a total of twelve women: Harriet Tubman (Grades 1 and 5), Pocahontas (Grade 1), Sacagawea (Grade 2), Harriet Beecher Stowe (Grade 5), Sojourner Truth (Grade 7), Abigail Adams (Grade 7), "pioneer women" ("e.g., Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bidwell, Narcissa Whitman") (Grade 7), Georgia O'Keefe (Grade 8), Ida Tarbell (Grade 9-12), Rosa Parks (Grade 9-12). Looked at another way, according to the standards, only one woman is worth knowing by name in the Colonial Era (Pocahontas), only one woman is important to know in the Revolutionary Era (Abigail Adams), and despite all the gains asserted for women by the standards in the second half of the 20th century, only one woman (Rosa Parks) is important for students to identify by name. And looked at a third way, as students develop in intellectual ability, women become progressively less important to know; only two American women (Ida Tarbell and Rosa Parks) are worth mentioning by name in high school.

Not a single woman is mentioned anywhere by name in the standards who is principally known for her advocacy for women's rights. Important individuals in American women's history must include immigrants, activists in movements in addition to abolition and civil rights, elected office holders, and especially those women (and men) who have actively worked for women's rights and women's self determination. Important omissions here include Judith Sargent Murray, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Jane Addams, Mother Jones, Rose Schneiderman, Margaret Sanger, Alice Paul, Dorothea Lange, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Chase Smith, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Phyllis Schlafly, Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsberg. These are just a sampling of the women who have made important contributions to American history as individuals, as social reformers, as leaders of organizations, and as pioneering officeholders.

IV. The Uses of History

Point: Patriotism should not be taught as a reflex action of blind obedience or conformity, but rather as a self-conscious decision based on critical judgment and independent, informed, thinking.

The study of **Government and Citizenship** in the K-12 social studies curriculum should open up U. S. history in all its messiness and failures as well as its justly celebrated triumphs. As drafted, the standards sell students short and cannot hope to inculcate the values and skills essential in a democratic citizenry. Of particular concern here is the way in which the standards address the meaning and practice of patriotism.

From Kindergarten on, the benchmarks in Government and Citizenship, emphasize “good citizen traits” of “honesty, courage, patriotism, and individual responsibility” (p. 1). At its best, patriotism includes that which makes a democracy real, namely active participation, critical thinking, citizenship initiatives (the opposite of complacency, apathy, conformity.) These traits of critical thinking and political action are not only necessary in a democracy; they are a matter of historical fact and the only reason that American society has moved as much as it has toward fulfilling the ideals of equality stated in the Declaration of Independence and the civil rights enumerated in the Bill of Rights. Children need to learn that American history has always been contentious. At times in our nation’s history those most responsible for moving us as a nation closer to the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice for all did so only by embracing a far different model of good citizenship than the one espoused in the language quoted above. If the Government and Citizenship category is depicted as timeless and static “truths” (as it currently is), then the U.S. history sections will not make sense to students, or at least will be harder to connect to issues of Government and Citizenship. Students will be ill equipped to understand the concept of self-governance and the value of a democracy by, for, and of the people.

To that same end, students should understand that the Pledge of Allegiance (benchmark for **Grade 3, Government and Citizenship**) is itself a primary source document of American history. They should learn about its author -- a socialist at a time when socialism offered a viable social and political alternative, who was forced by the political climate of Jim Crow segregation and xenophobia to omit, deliberately, the mention of “equality” along with “liberty” and “justice.” And they should learn as well the controversy surrounding the words “under God” added by Congress in 1954. Songs too are no doubt important to helping students gain a sense of themselves as citizens as well as offering them important insights into our nation’s history. Should not the list of patriotic songs include others in order to more fully represent the longings and struggles of a diverse range of Americans for a more inclusive national identity? Such songs might include at the least, “This Land is Your Land” (Woody Guthrie’s 1940 answer to Irving Berlin’s 1938 “God Bless America”) and the Civil Rights Movement’s inspirational “We shall Overcome.”

V. World History.

Point: The World History Standards offer a fundamentally incomplete portrayal of the heritage of the American people. By focusing on American “roots” in the guise of world history, the standards perpetuate a myopic and misleading understanding of other civilizations.

The sections on world history have many of the same pedagogic problems as do the sections on U.S. history. The standards are overly detailed and prescriptive in terms of a teacher’s coverage. Perhaps most troubling are the assumptions of what matters about world history for U. S. students. The idea behind what gets covered here is that students really need to know “our” history, including its ancient roots, and that “we” are all European in lineage. What the standards provide to students then is a small and narrow slice of world history.

As a consequence, the world history standards are grossly biased in favor of Europe to the detriment of the rest of the world. The total number of benchmarks which refer to world history is over 170, about 160 of which refer to specific places in the world. The overwhelming number of the standards (over 100) refers to European history (including Rome and Greece). About 20 refer primarily to Asia (East and South Asia) and 20 refer primarily to the Middle East. Only 3 standards refer primarily to Latin America, and only 5 refer primarily to Sub-Saharan Africa. Only one standard refers to Southeast Asia and that is in the general context of revolutions in Asia. This excludes many recent immigrants—from Southeast Asia, from Latin America, from Africa—as participants in the lineage that is being traced here. The point here is that we need to have an inclusive notion of who constitutes “We, the People.”

The specificity of the benchmarks for European history is not matched by an equal specificity for non-European history. For example, in the case of non-European locales “students will compare and contrast characteristics of ancient cultures such as Persia, Egypt, China, India with Greece” (**Grade 3** World History benchmark). The next benchmark states “Students will identify and explain the following: Roman Republic, Roman Empire, Julius Caesar, the Forum, the Coliseum, and

Pompeii.” The units of analysis invoked are hardly comparable. Similar discrepancies exist in the standards for **Grade 5**. For example on the one hand “students will identify major contributions of the Maya, Aztec and Incan civilizations,” whereas when it comes to Europe, the standards are far more numerous and detailed. For example, also in **Grade 5**, the standards state that “Students will identify the significance of the Gutenberg printing press, Bible translations into common languages, the Protestant Reformation, Copernicus and Galileo.”

The pattern continues in the **Grades 9-12** standards. Of 106 benchmarks for high school students, there are only two very general ones referring to Latin American history, in particular to the Aztec, Mayan, and Incan civilizations: “Students will describe geographic relationship, with emphasis on patterns of development in terms of climates and physical features of these civilizations” and “Students will describe culture, politics and economics of these civilizations. After this, Latin American simply disappears from the standards for Grade 9-12 entirely. In contrast, the many dozens of Grade 9-12 benchmarks referring to Ancient and Modern European history include such specific requirements as the following: “Students will be able to explain the conquest of Greece by Macedonia and the spread of Hellenistic culture by Alexander the Great citing contributions in philosophy, science, art, and architecture” and “Students will be able to explain the effects of the theological, political, and economic difference that emerged (e.g., the view and actions of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Henry VIII). The standards thus feed into the ignorance, prejudice, and misperceptions of many Americans about much of the world rather than offering a basis for changing these assumptions.

Finally, we note that civilizations are conceptualized as if they existed in isolation from one another. Recent scholarship has stressed precisely the opposite: that civilizations are not isolated units developing according to their own cultural logics.

We ignore this learning at our peril. The proposed standards perpetuate, both explicitly and implicitly, the naïve and simplistic view of the contemporary world as divided into distinct and essential units that “clash” and whose conflict will determine the fate of the world. The standards’ treatment of Islam offers a case in point: this world religion is consistently separated out and taught at different levels and within different benchmarks than other world religions. A study of civilizations should enable instead a sense of the continual borrowings, imitations, interactions, and conflicts among a wide range of groups representing differential inheritances of diverse civilizations.

Conclusion

Our profound misgivings stem not from an occasional inaccuracy here or there, but rather from the proposed standards’ comprehensive rejection of several generations of historical scholarship, the knowledge it has produced, and the crucial instruction and empowerment it offers. It is important to acknowledge that everything cannot be covered and even topics that should be covered cannot all be addressed in equal depth. This makes it all the more imperative to carefully evaluate the narratives of U.S. and World history that students would leave Minnesota high schools with if these standards are adopted. The omissions, misleading emphases, and factual errors that we have identified here most fully in the coverage of U.S. history are emblematic of broader problems in the proposed standards. These include:

- the silencing of dissent and conflict in the past and the present,
- the stifling of vital alternative traditions within American society,
- the refusal to acknowledge (much less confront) the tragedies and injustices of our own past, as well as those of others.

We do not point out these problems in order to diminish anyone’s pride in their own history. But we are convinced that only by admitting, exploring, and analyzing these vital faults of American history alongside America’s triumphs and by more fully addressing World History, past and present, will we be enabled to learn from our shared past and resolve its complicated legacies. If not this, then what is historical study for?

We offer these comments in a constructive frame of mind. We are hopeful that they will prove helpful in evaluating the proposed standards and considering directions for their reform. As scholars, parents, and citizens we share with you and the members of the legislature a deep commitment to serious and substantive education in U. S. and World history in the state of Minnesota. We look forward to working with you in achieving that shared goal.

Sincerely, University of Minnesota History Professors.

Public Comment:

Dear Commissioner Yecke and Standards Committee,

Thank you for the time and commitment to our children. It is imperative that we get objective, verifiable academics back in our schools.

As a certified teacher in both public (previously) and presently private school I know that it is possible, and in fact easy to take facts (what kids should know) and creatively teach students these facts and have them successfully critically think with them. I am extremely confused and most suspicious when I hear all these teachers at the public hearings say that learning facts is bad, outmoded, low level, etc. What a lie. This is what the foundation of all learning is based upon. Period. Are they afraid of having their students being tested on these facts? I am not. Each year our private school students take an achievement test on facts that I and others creatively taught. The students do well exceedingly well every year, and they have been successful in high school, often out performing their peers.

Please do not let the large numbers of whining teachers and others keep you from doing what is right (and mandated by law, by the way!) Only put facts that can be measured and tested in these standards, then step back and let teachers teach, however they find it effective to do so.

Here are my specific comments; please integrate them into your public comments document.

Social Studies -

General - Overall the history, civics and government standards are fairly good. I have made comments and some recommendations below. The geography standards are terribly misguided. As a teacher who has taught geography for years I am shocked at the agenda that is being "hidden" (not really hidden) in this section. Where is real geography? And how did culturally anthropology, diversity and extreme environmentalism get in the geography standards?

1. Despite the socialists and anti-Americans who are against many of our founding documents (and our founding fathers), they ALL need to be taught. They are the foundation of American values and why millions of non-Americans come to this country each year, some risking their lives and their children's lives. Teaching and testing for knowledge of these documents should not even be debatable. By the way, We the People tells teachers and students that our Bill of Rights are negative rights. No they are not and they should ALL be taught including the second, tenth and fourteenth, which are conveniently glossed over and even avoided in the above mentioned text.
2. Keep the Declaration of Independence as primary; it is the core of what makes us free.
3. Separate rights and responsibilities in the Civics portion for all grades. We have the rights whether we ever choose to vote or take personal responsibility in government. Period. They stand alone in life and they should in the standards.
4. It is the truth to say our founders built our country on such premises as God given, unalienable rights. We must teach children this. If man gives the rights, man can take them away such as described at the end of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.
5. Please be sure that NO standard is process oriented. Though teachers can certainly teach process, this cannot be in the standards due to the law which rid us of the Profile of Learning (process oriented standards).
6. In the economics standards the "market economy" is written everywhere. Everywhere written it should be changed to "free market economy" to reflect the truth in America (not Europe, Russia, China, etc). We have a (mostly) free market economy. At least it is supposed to be
7. Scarcity is emphasized too much, beginning in the primary grades and it is not balanced by supply and demand and the idea that creative people can create more from less. We have done this successfully in America since the beginning. This scarcity principle is emphasized so much that it appears the writers have an agenda to push. Sad. Please don't let them brainwash our children's minds. Where is the balance and inspiration these children need and deserve?

8. Balanced and/or shared powers are used throughout the document. To be more accurate and representative of the earlier language used in founding documents this should be changed throughout to separated and limited powers.

9. Geography is atrocious. The basics of geography as most of us know it has been minimized and is hardly recognizable. Geography should be about locating places on maps, understanding time zones, latitude and longitude, etc. Culture, diversity and sustainable development are an AGENDA and are not really geography--maybe anthropology and environmentalism, but certainly not geography. It all should go. The professor who virtually single-handedly wrote these standards must have an agenda, one that appears to reflect the national "propaganda" standards he must have helped write. I watched how he got his subcommittee of two and off he went with no balance from others.

E-mailed public comment: Upon a quick glance, I didn't see (high school level) any reference to some "BASICS of government".

Pluralism v. Majoritarianism (Government by groups of people or by majority?)

Protection of Minority Rights (The framers of the Constitution saw themselves as the "minority group" and built in many safeguards for the minority - albeit, perhaps selfishly - but that protection is very important in the interpretation of the Constitution).

Those are some very basic, important concepts. Did I just miss them? I find it hard to believe that they didn't get included. Thanks

E-mailed public comment: I do respect the time and effort that goes into drafting this sort of document, but I feel, both as a citizen and a parent of students getting an education in our public school system, that the controversy surrounding the development of the standards warrants my concern. That was only heightened today, when a "minority report" was issued by teachers who feel their input was dismissed and that the slant is too "conservative".

There are many specifics that I don't want to go into, although I (and probably many others) would write things to reflect their own values, and I recognize the standards cannot be written to suit everyone's tastes. Nevertheless, I have a basic concern that has to do with the notion of tone and bias, in particular the writing of "history" that reads more like cheerleading and bragging about how wonderful we are.

To use something cited in the paper as an example, the demise of communism and what happened in the 1980's. When the standards talk about Reagan, do they also recognize the role that Gorbachev played? He was probably the first "modern" Soviet leader to recognize the failings of the communist state and headed it in the direction of perestroika and glasnost. Is his playing a positive role acknowledged? Or is it portrayed as the heroics of Reagan and his crusade against Communism. Had Gorbachev been like other, more obstinate Soviet leaders, the repression of Russia would still exist and so would that virulent totalitarian state. To balance the larger picture, is there anything about the many proxy wars and the side effects of our taking sides in places like Mozambique and Angola, which have suffered the aftereffects long after our departure, or the lives shattered in Argentina when we supported a military junta, all because we had a war against regimes we didn't like.

The issue, to my way of thinking, is not so much that a country is "better" or "worse" than we are because it may have more government involvement in the lives of its citizens, but whether it gets there in a democratic way. When we have supported totalitarian regimes because they happen to have been "anti-communist", that still means repression and suffering. What will be taught about the many democratic countries, as an example the Scandinavian ones, which are fine examples of democracies, and have made their own choices about the government they want and the way they want to organize their societies?

One example, if I may: Norway owns the oil it produces in the North Sea. The way it is managed is referred to as "state capitalism" and its benefits accrue to the entire society through government mechanisms, rather than a "free market" version of "trickle down". To even advocate that "trickle down" is something good, as happened during Reagan's years in office, is a statement about values. My point is that the democracies of Europe have chosen their governments and consented to the societal framework in which things operate in a fully democratic way. Americans are far too wrapped up in the thought that the United States is the only bastion of democracy because it is so oriented towards a particular notion of free enterprise and the "marketplace". Yet, this past week, an international business research group concluded that Finland is the most competitive economy, the U.S. second, and Sweden third. I am suggesting that it is possible that places that to us are "socialist" are simply functioning democracies that want wealth distributed in a certain way and regard markets differently than we do. But, those are choices and they are freely made.

When we get so avidly, sometimes rabidly, patriotic and teach only that the US is such a great country, it has to look as though everyone else is second-rate and, as we hear way too often, jealous of us. That notion is patently absurd, but it plays well for too many Americans. The social studies standards, if they are to really help educate, and not indoctrinate, need to reflect less of a bias that is built around bragging about our greatness and more around a balanced view that respects choices made by people who live in other democratic countries, with an emphasis on the fact that they are democracies. When every single "quality of life" survey is done, the US always ranks 15th or 16th and the Scandinavians and Canada always come out higher. Maybe we should be more open to understanding why that is so and be less judgmental about other ways of doing things. If we are not, the risk is that we will continue to be as smug, arrogant, and ignorant as we generally have been in world affairs.

I was struck, by the way, that there are quite a few businessmen on the various committees, to add to the mix of teaching professionals. What happened to social workers, psychologists, other human relations people, who work in society all the time and see the side of it that businessmen don't? Where are they on these commissions?

This is not about fuzzy thinking or "feel good" stuff, which the proponents of "fact-based teaching" often resort to as a criticism, it is about teaching facts in context and with balance. If the commission established to set standards can do that, then they will have really accomplished something. If it amounts to a shopping list of why America is so great, it will get a failing grade.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration.

Education organization public comment:

October 28, 2003

Commissioner Yecke,

We are writing to communicate the position of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) in regard to the proposed Science and Social Studies standards for the State of Minnesota. You have received a significant amount of feedback from the regional meetings and on the specifics of the new proposed standards. Our comments are intended to be more general than specific.

General Comments:

1. The curriculum for elementary students is now very full with the requirements to have students be successful in reading, math and other curricular areas. The new Standards in Social Studies should provide an appropriate level of instruction for elementary students but not so much instruction that the study of social studies takes away substantially from the time students need to study reading, mathematics and science.
2. Standards should be developed for school levels as opposed to specific grade levels. If the Standards are too specific for each grade level it takes away from the flexibility of the faculty to design curriculum. It also reduces access of the faculty and students to textbooks that are appropriate. The Standards at a particular grade level may not fit with the available textbooks.

Comments on Social Studies:

1. It is our observation that the curriculum for social studies in schools across the state needs both enhanced rigor and consistency. We commend the department for pressing for rigorous standards in the areas of World History, American History, Geography and the concepts of democracy. However, the focus should be on identifying major concepts to be taught at each school level as opposed to detailed listings of fact.
2. The proposed standards and benchmarks are too broad. There is a danger that the standards will produce learning "a mile wide, but only an inch deep."
3. Teaching to all 5 strands at each grade level is difficult to support with the textbooks and teaching resources now available. Further it will lend toward generalists teaching in Social Studies rather than content experts.

4. The Standards should allow and accommodate rigorous accelerated courses taught in the middle school to count as meeting high school standards. Case in point is that geography is quite often taught at the eighth-grade level. Providing that the Geography taught is of sufficient rigor, the State may want to permit that standard to be met at the upper middle school level.

5. Effort must be made to create a balance of political thought and the recognition of political accomplishments as students study American/World History.

6. Identify key concepts and key points in history without creating extensive lists of facts to be memorized. We acknowledge the importance of students knowing factual information but would prefer to see the Standards and benchmarks identify the larger concepts, leaving decisions regarding fact content to local schools and teacher teams. We commend you and the staff of the Minnesota Department of Education for the work that went into developing the first draft of the Standards and the exhaustive process of seeking input from stakeholders across the State. We encourage you, as you move the Standards into the next draft, to provide a strong emphasis on rigor and balance.

Thank you for allowing us to provide input into the process.

Public Comment: October 29, 2003

Cheri Pierson Yecke
Commissioner of Education

Dear Commissioner:

I want to bring to your attention the conclusions of the Foley Public Schools K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Team which reviewed the first draft of the proposed social studies standards. This team is the social studies curriculum leadership of the Foley School District. They have identified the following concerns which they wish to have addressed by the Minnesota Social Studies Standards Committee in creating the second draft. I have grouped these concerns for the committee:

The Direction and Philosophy of Social Studies Education in the State of Minnesota:

- Quantity vs quality of standards. If we teach all the proposed social studies standards in the time currently allotted to social studies, students will not get the instruction needed to insure a good understanding of social studies. Research shows that teaching for depth of understanding leads to better student understanding of the complex inter-relationships and multiple causes and effects in our world's social, political, economic and cultural interactions than teaching a broad coverage of numerous, discreet facts, as appears to be the case with the proposed standards.
- Inquiry vs “accepted” fact. One of the key aspects of American culture is the emphasis on asking questions, doing research, and forming one's own opinion about political and social questions facing us as a society. Also, teachers of social studies have been academically trained to examine the context and implicit bias of historians of any age. These standards have no emphasis on student inquiry and present each standard and benchmark as fact. Students will learn a lot of facts (which may or may not be retained), but this de-emphasis of student inquiry and of examining sources for bias, will do Minnesota harm in the long run.
- Bias vs balance. A general expectation of social studies teachers is to be balanced in the approach to political topics and topics relating to cultural values. In fact the Profile of Learning was criticized by some for having a liberal bias. When viewed from the political perspective of right wing to left wing, these standards appear to have a definite right wing bias. Bias is very difficult to see, and one person's bias is another's balance. To check for bias, it is critical to listen to persons of all political persuasions, and when no one is particularly happy, you've probably got balance. You're not there yet, and balance should be the goal of social studies standards for Minnesota's public schools.

What standard(s) in K-6 will have priority? There is not enough time in the current school calendar and day for students to proficiently learn all phases of the state mandated standards in math, reading, writing, science, social studies as currently either adopted or in draft. There needs to be a clear state-wide prioritization among these areas for K-6 education. Within the social standards, it would be helpful to have a prioritization of standards as well. See comment about quantity vs quality.

Elementary Standards (K-3):

- Standards are NOT developmentally appropriate for K-3. Primary students are concrete learners (Piaget), and are only a few years removed from side-by-side play (which you can still observe in kindergarten classrooms). Therefore teaching for understanding, not simple memorization, requires that the context be the world primary students know. That is why the expanding universe approach to social studies is so prevalent. For example, Foley is 60 miles from Rocori Schools, but after the tragic shootings, many kindergartners and first graders thought it happened in our high school, despite the teachers working to assure the students that it was a long ways away from Foley, in the students' universe.

Middle Level Standards (4-8):

- Minnesota history is too spread out among different grade levels to make a coherent story of our history.
- Teaching all social studies disciplines every year does not match the expertise of our teachers and flies in the face of the philosophy of highly qualified teachers.

High School Standards (9-12)

- The quantity of world history standards would be more appropriate for several courses in world history at the college level, than one semester at the high school level.
- The large emphasis on economics (macro and micro) without a similar commitment to career exploration or personal finance teaches students about our economic system without giving students the skills and personal knowledge to meaningfully participate in our economic system.

Resources and Potential Impact of Standards:

- How is the cost of materials and training going to be absorbed by the schools? An increase in the Capital Reserve Funding for schools which can be used for curriculum materials would be helpful to our local implementation. We aligned our curriculum to the previously state mandated social studies standards (Profile of Learning) within the last five years, and now Minnesota is requiring we do it again to a new set of mandated state standards. Perhaps the state would consider picking up the tab for this second round of curriculum alignment?
- How much overlap is there between these draft standards and the Profile of Learning? It appears to us that at certain grade levels there is as little as a 5% overlap (grades 2, 4 and 6). This will help us estimate how much of our current social studies curriculum (including texts, kits, and other teaching materials) will need to be replaced to implement the proposed standards. Foley's current curriculum is closely aligned with the Profile of Learning. The more overlap there is, the less expensive it will be for Foley to implement the proposed standards. The lack of overlap and the required size of the investment is a concern for us.

As an example of these concerns, please look at the first benchmark in kindergarten under the Strand: Government and Citizenship, Sub-Strand: Character Traits of Good Citizens, Standard: The student will understand the character traits of being a good citizen. The benchmark is "Students will recognize, from literature and real life examples, good citizen traits of honesty, courage, patriotism, and individual responsibility."

Quantity vs quality: The proposed benchmark is a list of traits rather than the more basic understanding that in a classroom and playground (community) there are some characteristics of classmates (or playmates) that help the community and each individual do well and be happy, and that those are to be valued and emulated.

Inquiry vs facts: The proposed benchmark is a list of traits to be remembered rather than having the students consider the question, "What makes a good citizen of our classroom?"

Bias vs balance: 'Helping one another,' such as firefighters as community helpers, is notably left off the list, and 'individual responsibility' is included. Our society is a blend of these individual and community values. To list one and not the other is an example of bias.

Developmentally inappropriate: To understand 'patriotism' requires an understanding of 'nation' which is well beyond the experience of kindergartners. Patriotism for them becomes a ritual of behaviors to be mimicked rather than a concept to be understood.

As you can see from this example which applies most of our concerns to only one standard and benchmark, I and the Foley Social Studies Curriculum Team urge you to carefully consider the direction and philosophy of the proposed social studies standards. We believe that our concerns go to the heart of your efforts, and will require deep discussion and reflection on your part both individually and as a committee. This is not a matter of simply dropping 30% percent of the standards or some other quick fix. We urge you to take your work seriously in the most profound sense of that phrase. Truly, a generation of Minnesotans' understandings regarding themselves and the world around them is in your hands.

Thank you for passing along these concerns and suggestions to the Standards Committee and for asking them to be addressed despite the tardiness of these comments. Should you or the committee request more specific information from Foley Public Schools regarding these concerns, please feel free to call or email me or any of Social Studies Curriculum Team members listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Foley Social Studies Curriculum Team

Dear Commissioner Cheri Yecke,

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the working draft of the Minnesota Academic Standards for History and Social Studies. My reactions should be weighed first as a parent of two young children in Minnesota schools (2nd grade and pre-K). Professionally, I also have an interest in this issue: I am a Senior Lecturer of American history at the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire.

There is a great deal to respond to in the 56-page long Working Draft of the Standards. It was no doubt a daunting task to put them together and the committee who compiled them had to reconcile many competing priorities. My issues with the standards regard both their content and form. Overall, I believe that they emphasize rote memorization of a large body of facts without sufficient attention to historical context and process. With the current trend toward standardized, statewide testing, I fear that teachers will devote significant class time to preparing students for tests rather than educating them in a more well-rounded fashion. I do not believe that such a trend makes our schools more "accountable."

Currently, I am participating in a three-year U.S. Department of Education-funded grant that brings together university history professors from Minnesota and Wisconsin with a select group of history and social studies K-8 teachers from those states. At our recent meeting in St. Paul, teachers voiced concerns that the new standards would undermine their ability to engage students in American history. As teachers work to educate the "whole child" I fear they will be undermined if they need to revise their curricula to address all the proposed standards.

In terms of content, I see deficiencies in the standards based on my background as a professor of American history. I see first hand the products of our public schools and know there is a great range in the preparedness of these students. In recent years, I have taught large introductory-level survey courses on American Indian history and American Women's history. Time and again, students question why these areas of history were so neglected in their earlier schooling. After reviewing the proposed standards, I do not believe they will address this lack. Students should not need to wait until college to be exposed to an inclusive historical narrative, especially since many children will not get the opportunity to study history at a university level.

The standards give primacy to political and military leaders; women and minorities of both sexes have been underrepresented in these realms and as a result, far of them are discussed in the standard. But even in terms of highlighting presidents and wars, the standards seem inconsistent and rather politicized. Ronald Reagan is mentioned three times but Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Jimmy Carter are omitted.

I counted individuals identified by name in the "benchmarks" of the standards 184 times; 170 of the 184 were men. Moreover, Harriet Tubman was named three separate times, which brings the total number of women to 11. The list is: Pocahontas, Sacagawea, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ida Tarbell, Abigail Adams, Sojourner Truth, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bridwell, Narcissa Whitman, and Georgia O'Keefe. Certainly, this list includes laudable individuals but not all the eleven on the list seem historically significant. Some of the individuals named have acquired almost mythological significance and their historical legacy becomes obscure. What is unclear is how these eleven women were selected and why other notable women --such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jane Addams, Amelia Earhart, Clara Barton, Fannie Lou Hamer, Jeannette Rankin, Ida B. Wells Barnett, the Grimke sisters, and many others who made important contributions, were left out.

Maybe a focus on real persons whose experience is easier to relate to would be more effective. For instance, I believe Minnesota teachers and students could enjoy looking at the life Harriet Bishop, the first public school teacher in St. Paul. She moved to the Territory in 1847 from Vermont, taught students of all grades whom she came to love, and then went on to promote temperance and woman suffrage for most of her life. She also helped establish the First Baptist Church in St. Paul, and it still exists. This is someone whose life was part of a pattern of settlement to this area and she exemplifies the ways women contributed to the building of their communities. In terms of form, again, I see shortcomings in the proposed standards. On the first day of all my classes, I ask my university students to describe what they like and dislike about studying history. Without fail, they say they don't like to memorize and repeat names and dates. What they enjoy are the narratives of history and being able to better understand the world we live in today. I think their younger siblings would agree, and I doubt the proposed standards will foster such a learning environment. Also, with an emphasis on rote memorization, it's not apparent that students will develop critical thinking skills regarding the historical record. The ability to evaluate primary and secondary source materials and to research a historical topic seem more germane to fostering life-long learners, and preparing those Minnesota students who are college bound. On a similar note, there are no apparent connections between your group and the Minnesota History Society, National History Day Organization or the National Council of History Education. All these institutions could offer important support to our state as it works to fashion learning standards in history and social studies.

Finally, I looked at your website with information on the standards committee members. This is clearly an impressive group with outstanding credentials. It surprises me, however, that there are only a few members with B.A. degrees in history and only one doctoral candidate in history (no history PhDs). I think input from higher education specialists in history would benefit this ambitious project.

Thank you for inviting comment on the proposed history and social studies standards from parents, educators and concerned citizens. I would welcome the opportunity to work on the revision of the Working Draft. Please let me know how I can be of help.

Education Organization Public Comment:

Dear Commissioner Yecke:

This is a response to your request for feedback on the social studies and science standards.

The Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) has conducted several statewide discussions on the standards. The following statements accurately reflect a short summary of those discussions.

1. The science standards seem to be in line with the national science standards. As a result, they have generated minimum discussion or controversy.
2. The social studies standards have raised several serious concerns among the middle school and high school principals.
3. There is a strong belief that the process for establishing the standards is flawed. For example, the process has created standards for social studies that has created both emotional and professional concern.
 - a. The standards reflect a one-sided conservative agenda.
 - b. They "dummy down" academic expectations by promoting senseless memorization of names and dates and discourages analytical thinking.

- c. Grade placement of the benchmarks creates problems for many school districts.
- d. Adding world history and geography to the curriculum will cause courses such as AP Government, AP History and "College in the Schools" Economics to be in jeopardy because of course requirements in social studies and other content areas. There is a belief that college prep social studies courses are important to maintain in a comprehensive high school. Also, there is a strong feeling that the Department of Education does not understand the complex master scheduling issues that are created by the Standards Committee(s).
- e. Assessment of standards is a big issue. How does a school district report local student proficiencies if each local district develops their own social studies assessment test? There needs to be a standardized statewide assessment that is articulated with the curriculum.
- f. Considering the financial restraints of school districts, including the lack of staff development funds, most districts do not believe they can develop acceptable local assessment tests.
- g. There is a strong perception that social studies is not getting the same attention as English, math and science. It is recommended that the amount of content be reduced and put more effort and funding into assessment.
- h. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is a perception that the social studies standards reflect specific political, cultural and religious ideologies, either through specific emphasis of certain topics — or omission of other relevant and important subject matter.
- i. Adding world history and geography to the curriculum will cause courses such as AP Government, AP History and "College in the Schools" Economics to be in jeopardy because of course requirements in social studies and other content areas. There is a belief that college prep social studies courses are important to maintain in a comprehensive high school. Also, there is a strong feeling that the Department of Education does not understand the complex master scheduling issues that are created by the Standards Committee(s).
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- m. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is a perception that the social studies standards reflect specific political, cultural and religious ideologies, either through specific emphasis of certain topics — or omission of other relevant and important subject matter.

We understand there is substantial pressure to adopt standards within a limited time frame. However, we urge you to take the necessary time and effort to assure quality standards that reflect the expectations of our communities.

If MASSP can be of assistance as you continue to improve the standards — and provide insight regarding the implementation issues surrounding those standards, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely, MASSP Director

Education Organization public comment:

Dear Commissioner Yecke:

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the first draft of the proposed science and social studies standards. Education Minnesota has encouraged members to stay informed about the developing standards since your committees began their work in July. We have provided information in our every member newspaper, leadership newsletters and on our website. We have encouraged members to participate by reviewing the draft standards with special attention to how they might fit with their students and curriculum in their schools and based on professional knowledge and practice. Many have provided testimony at your public hearings about both their professional point of view and their concerns as parents and taxpayers in Minnesota. Still others have submitted written comments.

We have grave concerns about the proposed standards and anticipate serious and substantial alterations in the second draft. At this point in the proposed science and social studies standards development, Education Minnesota offers these comments:

1. Given the federal requirements for transparent test items, more frequent testing and high stakes responses to test scores, Minnesota must adopt standards and benchmarks that are clear, specific and, as Minnesota law requires, easily understandable by the various parties including educators, parents and the public.
2. Tests must be constructed to inform instruction as well as provide rankings. It is significantly more important for us to create tests based on clearly structured standards and benchmarks that contribute to improved education for our students than to focus on ranking schools and districts.
3. The proposed standards are many, too many. Some are quoting the old saw, “a mile wide and an inch deep” when describing the proposed standards. Minnesota must identify the most important “big ideas” as standards and communicate them in a clear and thoughtful way.
4. The standards should be arranged in a curriculum neutral way. For example, while integrated science curriculum may work for some, this should be decided and designed at the local level based on clear and specific state standards.
5. School districts tell us that there are serious budget impact issues with the new reading/language arts and mathematics standards let alone the drafts for science and social studies. The state has interrupted local curriculum review cycles requiring districts to immediately redesign curriculum and in more than one area per year. There is a flurry of activity seeking to find aligned and age appropriate materials at significant unscheduled cost. This problem has emerged with the transition into the new language arts and mathematics standards; it is even more pronounced regarding the first draft science and social studies standards without significant changes. This must be addressed.
6. Minnesota student standards must be free of political ideology and personal bias or belief. For example, the often cited “Santorum amendment” was not a part of the final federal law. Efforts to promote it as the law of the land are misleading at best and unfortunately draw attention away from the standards development.
7. Education Minnesota believes that one of the foundational timbers of American democracy is the educational opportunity our country offers its young people in our public schools. Our public education must offer students a deep and balanced understanding of our past. One example is the puzzling attention to some figures in history and absence of others. Minnesota’s message to our students should not be a partisan one. Participatory democracy is enriched and will prevail only with such thoughtful citizens. Standards and benchmarks must be constructed to prepare citizens of a free democracy.
8. Standards and benchmarks must be age appropriate and must flow across the grades. The draft standards do neither. For example, the elementary level social studies standards are often areas most frequently taught in junior high and high school. Teaching facts to students who lack the maturity and previous learning to grasp them and to think about what is learned in deeper ways is unacceptable.
9. Standards and benchmarks must be based on the predominant research and best accepted thinking in both content areas and instruction. Clear documentation and references used to support the draft standards and benchmarks should be available to all Minnesotans.
10. Benchmarks must more purposely reflect various levels of learning. The current drafts are dominated by memory work that is essential but not sufficient to meet the needs of today’s students. Higher order thinking must be thoughtfully built into the learning progression articulated in Minnesota standards and benchmarks.

We understand that the proposed standards are a first draft and it is our expectation that there will be changes in the next. Our comments are briefly stated above but are intended to identify significant areas of concern. Substantial changes are necessary to generate support from our organization.

The Education Minnesota Quality Teaching & Learning Committee has begun a more extensive review of the draft standards and looks forward to the next draft of the standards we understand will be available at the end of November. Please contact me at any time that members, leaders or staff of Education Minnesota may provide assistance to assure quality standards for Minnesota students.

Sincerely,
President, Education Minnesota

Formal Remarks by Richard M. Theisen, Past President of National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) at the American Enterprise Institute, September 16, 2003

Thank you for inviting NCSS to participate in this forum. It is always a pleasure to represent my profession and the many skilled and talented teachers who have just started their school year. I will first make some comments that represent the position of NCSS on many of the issues raised in these publications. I will then address our points of agreement with the texts, and finally our disagreements.

First, a statement of principles. NCSS has consistently taken the position that social studies educators should:

- *Use their classrooms to teach history and social science content and the skills needed to analyze that content
- *Present multiple perspectives when teaching history or any of the social sciences such as economics and political science, where a variety of interpretations and viewpoints exist
- *Teach the principles found in the major documents of our nation such as the Constitution, Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence
- *Teach students the relationship between those documents and their lives as citizens of the United States
- *Use the position statement of the NCSS on multicultural education as a guide in their teaching and curriculum. This is especially important because the number of immigrants and the variety of countries from which they have emigrated have increased substantially
- *Teach students that understanding causality, searching for evidence, and respecting the tentative nature of a considerable part of knowledge are valued habits of mind and heart
- *Teach students that we are not only citizens of the United States but also citizens of the broader global community. Our goal is Ôto prepare young people to be humane, rational, participating citizens in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent.Ó
- *See their key role as one of teaching students the knowledge and skills which will enable them to be active, engaged citizens in their communities.
- *Teach students to have effective communication skills, including the capacity to be active listeners, analytical thinkers, persuasive speakers, and effective organizers,
- *Use the NCSS curricular standards to organize their curriculum and use the content standards of history and the social sciences as their guide in choosing their content standards.

Now letÔs take a look at the two publications of the Fordham Foundation. We strongly disagree with the overall characterization of social studies as a failed educational effort. However we do agree with some aspects of both books, or works of advocacy journalism, as I would prefer to call them.

We agree with those authors who believe that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law has had the affect of marginalizing social studies education at all levels, but especially at the elementary level. As one writer said, Ôif itÔs not tested, itÔs not taught,Ó and since federal mandates under NCLB do not include civics or history, it is being dropped in many schools to allow more time for testing in the mandated areas. If NCLB is not modified it will have done more to eliminate history and/or social studies than any other event, person or movement. That must change. Perhaps these publications will provide some impetus for this change.

We also agree with virtually all of Diane RavitchÔs summary statement, in which she says, ÔUltimately, those of us who reject indoctrination and propaganda in the classroom must recognize that these distortions may occur in any field, be it called social studies or history. Our goal must be to insist that students encounter a variety of views; that their teachers and textbooks recognize the possibility of fallibility and uncertainty; and that students gain a solid body of knowledge as well as the tools and dispositions to view that knowledge skeptically and analytically.Ó Few could find fault with the principles expressed in this statement, except that I would emphasize that no teacher I have ever met knowingly believes that it is O.K. to indoctrinate rather than educate his or her students.

We also agree that most textbooks have been almost uniformly bland and uninspiring. Textbook publishers can and must improve the quality of their work but, as Ravitch states in her most recent book, censors from a host of groups, right, left, and otherwise are continually peering over the shoulders of these writers. And frankly, it

doesn't help matters that most publishers cater almost exclusively to large textbook adoption states. On the other hand it does create a market for good quality reference material from smaller publishers.

NCSS certainly agrees that colleges of education need to establish and follow high expectations and standards in pedagogy, and especially content. NCATE, the nationally recognized accreditation institution, does have high standards and a very strong accountability system. In fact, the content requirements for social studies certification have increased substantially since I was certified and perhaps in the future should be strengthened even further so that teachers could only teach in areas in which they have a substantial academic background.

NCSS also subscribes to the belief that multicultural education is an important component of every social studies curriculum. Contrary to some of the representations of the authors of the books we are reviewing, the NCSS position is that, "Multicultural education supports and enhances the notion of *e pluribus unum*--out of many, one. To build a successful and inclusive nation-state, the hopes, dreams and experiences of the many groups within it must be reflected in the structure and institutions of society. This is the only way to create a nation state in which all citizens will feel included, loyal, and patriotic." (NCSS Task Force on Ethnic Studies Curriculum Guidelines, *Curriculum Guidelines for Multicultural Education, A Position Statement of National Council for the Social Studies* [Washington, D.C.: NCSS, 1976, revised 1991], p. 3.)

We believe that the publication *Terrorists, Despots, and Democracy* has some limited merit. The statements by William Galston, Lamar Alexander, Tony Blair and Abraham Lincoln are useful contributions to a dialogue about what it means to live in a democratic society. It would have enhanced the quality of the text to have included a broader cross section of viewpoints, especially in the "what teachers should know" section but the Fordham Foundation has the right to choose its authors. Unfortunately the text does little to improve the understanding of either terrorism or despotism. I must say that Mr. Finn's introductions in both texts detract from rather than enhance the value of either publication. The same can be said about the easy use of negative labels and sarcasm by some writers in the text on social studies

We definitely agree that the level of civic knowledge, as measured by the NAEP scores, and the political indifference and ignorance of students are concerns that must be addressed. There are a number of reasons for this behavior. A publication by CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) entitled *The Civic Mission of Schools* addresses the causal factors and gives an extensive list of possible solutions.

NCSS certainly does support continued high quality replicated research which can be utilized to improve the quality of classroom education and particularly the quality of civic education in our schools. We believe that changes in classroom education that are based on the most current research and presented in a teacher friendly format can be extremely useful.

Where do we disagree? From my dual perspective as a social studies leader and career long classroom teacher, the prevailing assumption in many of these articles is that:

- * We don't teach the founding documents or the appropriate history, and if we do, we don't do it well,
- * Colleges of education are incompetent and perhaps even conspire to produce teachers who are incompetent,
- * The leaders of the social studies community include few if any classroom teachers,
- * Our leaders are elitists and almost universally subscribe to left wing ideology in their teaching and theory,
- * We do not teach developmentally appropriate material and we lecture too little and use constructivist strategies too often,
- * Our teachers, at least in the examples provided by some, care more about the terrorists than our own citizens,
- * The ideas and theory our social studies leaders promote are out of touch with the common values of the American community,
- * The triumphalist narrative approach to history education is the only legitimate way to teach history,
- * Progressive education, as defined by the writers, is a failure and the cause of many of today's problems,
- * We do not effectively teach the unity aspect of *e pluribus unum*,
- * The theory of constructivism as practiced in classrooms is ineffective,
- * And, finally, that we are producing ignorant activists.

We disagree with each and every one of these assertions, as well as others I haven't mentioned. There are isolated cases that would seem to support some of these criticisms, but they certainly do not apply to the typical social studies teacher or NCSS member. We do support constructive dialogue focused on improving the quality of social studies education in this country.

Why do we disagree with the above assertions? I have responded in part earlier. I will take some of my limited time to elaborate on several others here. As a classroom teacher, I taught a variety of courses, including an elective constitutional law course which required students to read, brief, and engage in a Socratic dialogue on 30-35 full length Supreme Court cases. I used a variety of teaching strategies, depending on the course and the students in that course. In my department and in most schools across this nation, original documents are used. Curriculum standards and content standards are established and followed. My colleagues at my high school used a variety of instructional strategies, including the lecture/recitation method, as do most teachers across this country. All of my colleagues thought history should be taught in a way which would increase the probability that students would not only know the facts and concepts but see the relationship of these facts and concepts to their own lives. Some used the triumphalist narrative approach, others a thematic approach oriented toward social history. Most teachers do have an interest in the ideas, theories and practical lesson suggestions of the leadership in the field, who present at local state and national social studies conferences.

I tell you all of this to make the point that my teaching experience, and that of my teaching colleagues is not atypical. We use the ideas of our leaders when appropriate in our work, we lecture when it is the best strategy for the content, we teach concepts, facts and the critical thinking that make those facts and concepts meaningful in student's lives. My work in the past two years on national social studies projects in which I have observed the teaching of approximately 300 teachers directly or by video tape suggests that the authors of these essays have had far too little contact with what is really happening in the classrooms of the United States. There is always room for improvement in social studies education. However, the dismal pictures drawn by the twelve critics in this text are often overstated, too often unsupported by evidence, and misleading in their depiction of classroom teachers, leadership agendas, and the leadership's ability to control and change the overall direction of social studies education in this country.

I would also like to respond to the claim that the leadership is largely made up of ideological extremists out of touch with the broader community. My experience at the collegiate level taking a large number of courses at a wide variety of colleges and universities from 1966 to 2000 belies the charge that a liberal, leftist educational agenda is the rule. That is an exaggerated statement, more hyperbole than reality. The liberal bias my colleagues speak of in this book can only be true if they take the political spectrum and move it so far to the right that former moderates are now seen as left wing radicals. My point is that it is always dangerous to use easy, ideology-based labels. Most educators are not that easily categorized.

Some authors suggest that the only saving grace is that most teachers ignore the social studies leadership. The obvious first response is that, if this is true, than why attack the leadership? However it is not that simple. Ever since *A Nation At Risk* was published social studies educators have been harshly criticized for the ills of society--our inability to compete with Japan, our low voter turnout, the low performance of students on SATs, and a whole host of perceived shortcomings. Some criticisms are legitimate; others, as David Berliner points out, are distortions of reality. My point is that when you criticize social studies leaders as separate and distinct from teachers it will not resonate with most of us. We are all social studies educators and when you criticize our mentors, professors and leaders you are also criticizing us.

A dialogue which focuses on improving the quality of classroom education is something we are all interested in, especially those who are both leaders and K-16 classroom teachers. Attacks that are gratuitous satisfy the attacker but do little else. Fortunately some of the writers in this text are truly interested in such a dialogue.

And finally before I close I think it is safe to say we do not see ourselves as lunatics, Huns, Goths or other sundry labels some authors, particularly Mr. Finn heap upon us in these texts.

In closing, I do think opportunities to engage in constructive dialogue with the goal of seeking truth based on evidence and an open, respectful exchange of opinion and viewpoints are almost always of value. How could I say otherwise as a person who has taught social studies classes for thirty-five years?

Thank you again for offering NCSS the opportunity to participate in this forum.

Here are the links to the national content standards in history, civics, economics, and geography.

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/nchs/standards/>
<http://www.civiced.org/stds.html>

This is the link to the NCSS curriculum standards. FYI, the entire document is not available on-line, but the site contains explanations of the 10 themes. Also, it may be important for the committee to understand that these are curriculum standards, not content standards. They are intended to be used with the content standards above.

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/toc.html>

Here's the link to "Where Did Social Studies Go Wrong"

<http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=317>

