

Mendham Borough Public Schools  
Mendham, New Jersey

*Curriculum and Instruction*

Course of Study

**Social Studies: Grade 3**

**August 23, 2016**

**I. RATIONALE, DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE**

The circumstances, challenges and promise of the modern world, as well as our nation’s collective intent to perpetuate the ideals of the Republic of the United States, mandate a new vision for social studies education. This vision illuminates the essential connection among social studies learning, democratic values, and positive citizenship. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) advocates the “development of students who can assume the office of citizen.” The vision of the NCSS Curriculum Standards Task Force is the following:

The informed social studies student understands and applies to personal and public experiences the content perspectives of the several academic fields of the social studies. Equally important, the informed social studies student exhibits the habits of mind and behavior of one who respects the relationship between education (i.e., learning) and his or her responsibility to promote the common good.

The Mendham Borough Schools seek to cultivate students’ habits of mind and sense of individual responsibility through a program of social studies education that is grounded in the social sciences and their foundational perspectives (see “District Objectives”). The mission of middle school social studies education in Mendham Borough is the following:

Learners will employ structured methods and processes to analyze and synthesize the multiple disciplines of the social sciences and humanities, and connect human activity across time and place in order to ultimately evaluate the nature of humankind and how people should behave in relation to one another.

The elementary school social studies program guides students through a developmental sequence of overarching themes that shape each yearlong course of study and ultimately provide a four-year sequence of study in the social sciences:

**Grade K: Human Commonality:** Reflections on peoples' place within the world

**Grade 1: Human Commonality:** Reflections on peoples' place within the world

**Grade 2: Human Connection:** Reflections on peoples' relationships to others

**Grade 3: Human Expression:** Reflections on peoples' relationships to ideas

**Grade 4: Human Kind:** Reflections on the nature of being human

Third grade Social Studies learners will discover the principles by which they may evaluate contemporary and historical decisions made by individuals, by communities and by nations. In order to accomplish this, they will engage in inquiry and research with a focus on understanding themselves, other cultures, societal structures and economic interaction. They will travel to all corners of the globe and the far reaches of man's past to connect the world and its history to their lives today.

## **II. DISTRICT OBJECTIVES**

The district adopts the objectives for social studies education established by the National Council for the Social Studies according to the developmental needs of grade 3 students.

Through the study of culture and cultural diversity students will understand

- Human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture.
- Cultures are dynamic and change over time.

Through the study of the ways in which human beings view themselves in and over time students will understand

- Studying the past makes it possible for us to understand the human story across time.
- Knowledge of the past enables us to analyze the causes and consequences of events and developments, and to place these in the context of the institutions, values and beliefs of the periods in which they took place.

Through the study of the interactions among people, places and environments students will understand

- The relationship between human populations and the physical world.
- Spatial perspectives and changes in the relationship between peoples, places and environments.

Through the study of individual development and identity students will understand

- Personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout her or his development.
- Questions related to identity and development, which are important in psychology, sociology, and anthropology, are central to the understanding of who we are.
- The study of individual development and identity will help students to describe factors important to the development of personal identity.

Through the study of interactions among individuals, groups and institutions students will understand

- Institutions are the formal and informal political, economic, and social organizations that help us carry out, organize, and manage our daily affairs.
- It is important that students know how institutions are formed, what controls and influences them, how they control and influence individuals and culture, and how institutions can be maintained or changed.

Through the study of how people create, interact with and change structures of power, authority and governance students will understand

- The development of civic competence requires an understanding of the foundations of political thought, and the historical development of various structures of power, authority, and governance. It also requires knowledge of the evolving functions of these structures in contemporary U.S. society, as well as in other parts of the world.
- Through study of the dynamic relationships between individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and concepts of a just society, learners become more effective problem-solvers and decision-makers when addressing the persistent issues and social problems encountered in public life.

Through the study of how people organize for the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services students will understand

- People have wants that often exceed the limited resources available to them.

Through the study of relationships among science, technology and society students will understand

- Science, and its practical application, technology, have had a major influence on social and cultural change, and on the ways people interact with the world.

Through the study of global connections and interdependence students will understand

- Global connections have intensified and accelerated the changes faced at the local, national, and international levels.

Through the study of the ideals, principles and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic students will understand

- An understanding of civic ideals and practices is critical to full participation in society and is an essential component of education for citizenship, which is the central purpose of social studies.
- Learning how to apply civic ideals as part of citizen action is essential to the exercise of democratic freedoms and the pursuit of the common good.

### **III. ALIGNMENT TO STANDARDS**

Social studies instruction in grade 3 aligns with the following **New Jersey Student Learning Standards:**

#### **NJCCCS 6.1 U.S. History: America in the World**

- A. Civics, Government, and Human Rights
- B. Geography, People, and the Environment
- C. Economics, Innovation, and Technology
- D. History, Culture, and Perspectives

**NJCCCS 6.2 (N/A for grades K -4)**

**NJCCCS 6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

- A. Civics, Government, and Human Rights
- B. Geography, People, and the Environment
- C. Economics, Innovation, and Technology
- D. History, Culture, and Perspectives

**IV. CONTENT, SCOPE AND SEQUENCE, LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Grade level benchmarks in third grade Social Studies are built into the following units:

**Unit 1: Communities**

In this unit, students will learn to think analytically about similarities and differences between communities of the past and present.

In Unit 1, students will know

- Advancements in science and technology can have unintended consequences that impact individuals and/or societies
- Personal, family, and community history is a source of information for individuals about the people and places around them
- The study of local historical figures enables Americans with diverse cultural backgrounds to feel connected to a national heritage

- They share a relationship with people, places, and resources in the local community

In Unit 1, students will understand

- Citizens, civic ideals, and government institutions interact to balance the needs of individuals and the common good.
- Economic, political, and cultural decisions can promote or prevent the growth of personal freedom, individual responsibility, equality, and respect for human dignity.
- Interpretations of past events inform our understanding of cause and effect, and continuity and change, as well as influence our beliefs and decisions about current policy issues.
- Active citizens exercise their rights and responsibilities by participating in democratic processes.
- Active citizens respect different viewpoints and take actions that result in a more just and equitable society.

In Unit 1, students will be able to

- Make informed decisions by seeking and assessing information, asking questions, and evaluating alternate solutions
- Relate advances in science and technology to environmental concerns, and to actions taken to address them
- Determine how local and state communities have changed over time, and explain the reasons for changes
- Illustrate the ways in which folklore and the actions of famous historical and fictional characters from New Jersey contributed to the American national heritage
- Compare the technologies of the community now to the technologies of the community of the past
- Contact local officials and community members to acquire information and/or discuss local issues
- Select a local issue and develop a group action plan to inform school and/or community members about the issue
- Communicate with students from various countries about common issues of public concern and possible solutions
- Plan and participate in an advocacy project to inform others about environmental issues at the local level and propose possible solutions

## **Unit 2: Human Exploration and Adaptation**

In this unit, students will learn to think analytically about how humans adapt to and impact the environment, and how humans from different cultural backgrounds forge relationships.

In Unit 2, students will know

- Personal, family, and community history is a source of information for individuals about the people and places around them
- The cultures with which an individual or group identifies change and evolve in response to interactions with other groups and/or in response to needs or concerns
- People view and interpret events differently because of the times in which they live, the experiences they have had, the perspectives held by their cultures, and their individual points of view
- Beliefs and values influence the way people act

In Unit 2, students will understand

- Physical geography, human geography, and the human environment can interact to influence or determine the development of cultures, societies, and nations.
- Scientific and technological developments over the course of history have changed the way people live, as well as how governments and economies function.
- Interpretations of past events inform our understanding of cause and effect, and continuity and change, as well as influence our beliefs and decisions about current policy issues.
- Active citizens recognize the consequences of human interactions with environment and take actions to promote positive outcomes.

In Unit 2, students will be able to

- Illustrate how an individual's beliefs, values, and traditions may reflect more than one culture
- Illustrate how differences and events may be interpreted differently by people with different cultural or individual perspectives

- Illustrate how and why it is important that people from diverse cultures collaborate to find solutions to community challenges

### **Unit 3: Maps and Globes**

In this unit, students will discover how simple geographic skills and tools help humans understand spatial relationships.

In Unit 3, students will know

- Spatial thinking and geographic tools can be used to describe and analyze the spatial patterns and organization of people, places, and environments on Earth
- Regions form and change as a result of unique physical/ecological conditions, economies, and cultures
- Patterns of settlement across Earth's surface differ markedly from region to region, place to place, and time to time

In Unit 3, students will understand

- Physical geography, human geography, and the human environment can interact to influence or determine the development of cultures, societies, and nations.
- Active citizens recognize the consequences of human interactions with environment and take actions to promote positive outcomes.

In Unit 3, students will be able to

- Compare and contrast information that can be found on different types of maps, and determine when the information may be useful
- Use physical and political maps to explain how the location and spatial relationships of places in New Jersey, the United States, and other areas, worldwide, have contributed to cultural diffusion and economic interdependence
- Illustrate how and when it is important to use digital geographic tools, political maps, and globes to measure distances and to determine time zones and locations using latitude and longitude
- Compare and contrast characteristics of regions in the United States based on culture, economics, politics, and physical environment to understand the concept of regionalism

#### **Unit 4: Economics in Our Community**

In this unit, students will recognize that economics is a driving force for the occurrence of various events in societies

In Unit 4, students will know

- In an interconnected world, increased collaboration is needed by individuals, groups, and nations to solve global problems
- People make decisions based on their needs, wants, and the availability of resources
- Certain materials and skills are necessary to run a successful business
- Interactions among various institutions in the local economy influences policymaking and societal outcomes
- Availability of resources affect economic outcomes
- Financial instruments and outcomes assist citizens in making sound decisions about money, savings, spending, and investment
- Creativity and innovation affect lifestyle, access to information, and the creation of new products and services

In Unit 4, students will understand

- Economic, political, and cultural decisions can promote or prevent the growth of personal freedom, individual responsibility, equality, and respect for human dignity.
- Individuals, groups, and societies apply economic reasoning to make difficult choices about scarce resources. All of which, have consequences.
- Scientific and technological developments over the course of history have changed the way people live, as well as how governments and economies function.
- Active Citizens make informed and reasoned economic decisions and accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions and/or inactions.

In Unit 4, students will be able to

- Distinguish between needs and wants and explain how scarcity and choice influence decisions made by individuals, communities, and nations
- Illustrate why incentive vary between and among producers and consumers
- Describe how supply and demand influence price and output of products
- Illustrate the role of specialization in the production and exchange of goods and services
- Describe the role and relationship among households, businesses, laborers, and governments within the economic system
- Explain how the availability of private and public goods and services is influenced by the global market and government
- Illustrate how production, distribution and consumption of goods and services are interrelated and are affected by the global market and events in the community
- Compare and contrast how access to and use of resources affects people across the world differently
- Illustrate the role of money, savings, debt, and investment in individuals' lives
- Recognize the importance of setting long-term goals when making financial decisions within the community
- Determine the qualities of entrepreneurs in a capitalistic society
- Develop and implement a group initiative that addresses an economic issue impacting children

## **V. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES**

Social studies education relies on a variety of instructional techniques to meet the continuum of learners' interests, learning profiles and readiness levels. Differentiation is the commitment and mechanism through which the developmental needs of a range of readiness levels are met. Differentiated instruction is accomplished through pre-assessment and ongoing formative assessment. Differentiation in content, product and/or process addresses the needs of exceptionally able students, and scaffolding of varying degree is provided to support less ready students in meeting worthy and appropriately rigorous learning outcomes. Instructional objectives, strategies and materials emphasize relevance, authenticity, and student-centered learning.

Instructional techniques in social studies education include the following:

- Direct instruction and modeling/thinking aloud of social studies skills
- Direct instruction and modeling/thinking aloud of applications of social studies skills
- Partnership talk
- Whole class discussion

- Small group strategy lesson
- Individual or group conferencing
- Inquiry based experiences

## **VI. ASSESSMENT**

Assessment in science instruction is anchored by formative and summative assessment that provides both timely and relevant feedback to students and staff. Best practices in the science classroom are numerous and may include:

- Pre-assessment of skills, knowledge, and understandings
- Formative (ongoing) assessment through regular checks
- Periodic teacher-student conferences to assess development of skills, knowledge, and understandings
- Teachers' observation of students' independent inquiry skills
- Teachers' observation of students' independent problem solving
- Performance assessments that require students to apply concepts, skills, and problem-solving strategies to real-world problem-based scenarios
- Written responses to unit questions
- Summative assessments such as quizzes, tests and projects