



K-6 Social Studies Program

The Quality Social Studies Program

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Rationale

Education must always be defined within the context of a particular society, primarily because education is responsible for maintaining the cultural heritage and improving self and society. This means attending to the interrelated goals of education for self-development, citizenship, and employment. In a democratic republic, education is even more critical since our system is built upon the concept of “enlightened citizens.” Such individuals are in touch with our cultural heritage. They possess a working knowledge of the economic, political, and social factors that make up the human ecosystem in which we all must function. They understand the principles of rule of law, legal limits to freedom, and majority rule with minority rights. They possess the attitudes of fair play, cooperation, and (a demand for) quality in the character and work of themselves and others. Without a conscious effort to teach and learn these things a free republic will not long endure. Thus our first priority, our first public policy goal, is to ensure our survival as a free nation through the development of enlightened citizens.

Within this context, the school plays a dominant role; and within the general school curriculum the social studies is the most fundamental program at all grade levels. This responsibility is placed here because no other curriculum area is better organized to assume this task.

The Curriculum Goals

The purpose of social studies is the development of reflective, democratic citizenship. It does this primarily through the study of the content and methods of history, geography, civics, economics, and the other social studies, as well as selected content from law, philosophy, and the humanities. Social Studies also deals with local and global concerns and issues, as well as questions about economic, political and cultural well-being. Social Studies addresses six educational goals:

- **Content** (acquisition of knowledge and skills)
- **Citizenship** (loving critic of the republic and community)
- **Character** (practicing the intellectual virtue)
- **Problem Solving** (reflective thinking and policy making)
- **Learn How to Learn** (understanding the joy and work of learning)
- **Cultural Heritage** (understanding the concept of “many in one”... diversity within a powerful conception of unity)

