

District of Columbia Social Studies Standards: Grassroots Information Packet

The District of Columbia periodically revises its statewide social studies standards. These standards govern social studies instruction in all District of Columbia public schools. The revision of statewide standards is completed by the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and the District of Columbia State Board of Education. The OSSE appoints a Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee; the State Board selects the members of the Social Studies Standards Technical Writing Committee. The Advisory Committee is responsible for drafting guiding principles which direct the State Board and OSSE on how the state standards ought to be revised and updated. The Writing Committee helps the OSSE to revise and develop the District of Columbia’s social studies standards in accordance with these guiding principles. The District of Columbia State Board of Education is responsible for adopting finalized standards. The general public is involved throughout the standards revision process; members of the public have the opportunity to offer input on existing District of Columbia social studies standards through a survey released by the Advisory Committee, drafts of guiding principles under consideration by the Committee, and drafts of proposed revisions to existing social studies standards. Furthermore, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and State Board of Education may also choose to conduct public hearings during a revision cycle.

Below we explain and list in sequential order:

1. Current District of Columbia social studies standards and their current website location
2. How often District of Columbia is required to review and revise its social studies standards
3. State laws and administrative codes governing social studies instruction in District of Columbia public schools
4. Which state agencies and groups are responsible for writing and adopting social studies standards
5. The electoral or bureaucratic relationships these agencies have with the general public in District of Columbia
6. What opportunity District of Columbia community members and educators have to offer feedback and comment during a standards’ revision cycle

1. Current District of Columbia social studies standards and their current website location

[District of Columbia K-12 Social Studies Standards](#) [Adopted 2006]

a. Website Location

- i. [District of Columbia State Board of Education \(SBOE\) Website](#)

b. District of Columbia Social Studies Resources

- i. [DC Social Studies Standards Guiding Principles](#)

2. How often District of Columbia is required to review and revise its social studies standards

District of Columbia Academic Standards Revision Schedule: The District of Columbia's administrative code does not indicate a mandatory academic standards revision schedule that requires the district to review and revise its standards every certain number of years.

3. District Education Administrative codes regulating social studies instruction in District of Columbia public schools

a. District of Columbia Administrative Code: Office of the Superintendent of Education

- i. [Rule 5-A2203.3](#) [*Academic Requirements*]

4. Which state agencies and groups are responsible for writing and adopting social studies standards

a. Which agency writes the District of Columbia’s social studies standards?

Standards’ review and revision is completed by the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent and the District of Columbia State Board of Education. The Office of the State Superintendent writes and proposes revised social studies standards ([DC Code §38-2601.01](#)); the State Board of Education advises the Superintendent on state academic standards during the revision process ([DC Code §38-26520](#)). The Board and Office of the Superintendent appoint two different committees during a standards’ revision cycle.

- i. **Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee:** This Committee is responsible for drafting guiding principles; guiding principles make recommendations to the State Board and OSSE on how the state standards should be revised and updated. Committee members are District of Columbia community members, OSSE representatives, and DC representatives of educational institutions.

1. For more information, see:

- a. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#)

- b. [OSSE 2020 Social Studies Standards Revision Process Plan](#)

- ii. **Social Studies Standards Technical Writing Committee:** This Committee reviews and revises District of Columbia’s social studies standards and submits a revised draft to the State Board of Education. Committee members are K-12 social studies educators from DC Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools, as well as local and national technical experts in social studies.

1. For more information, see:
 - a. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Revision Information Page](#)
 - b. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#)

b. Which agency adopts the District of Columbia’s social studies standards?

The District of Columbia State Board of Education approves Columbia’s academic standards ([DC Code §38-26520](#)).

5. The electoral or bureaucratic relationships these agencies have with the general public in District of Columbia

a. How are the members of the Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee appointed?

The District of Columbia State Board of Education selects Advisory Committee members through an application process; The Board solicits applications through all Board social media channels, individual email blasts to all public school principals, local ANC representatives, and constituents of all 8 wards. The application is formally opened during a public Board meeting.

- i. See:
 1. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#)
 2. [OSSE 2020 Social Studies Standards Revision Process Plan](#)

b. How are the members of the Social Studies Standards Technical Writing Committee appointed?

The Writing Committee is launched by the Office of the Superintendent and consists of K-12 social studies educators from DC Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools, as well as local and national technical experts in social studies.

i. See:

1. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Revision Information Page](#)
2. [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#)

c. How are the members of the District of Columbia State Board of Education appointed?

The nine members of the Board are elected to four-year terms; four members are appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the District of Columbia Council, five members are elected. Four of the 5 elected members are elected from the 4 school districts. One member is elected at-large as the President of the Board ([DC Code §38–2651](#)).

d. How is the District of Columbia Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed?

The Superintendent is appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the District of Columbia Council ([DC Code § 38–2601](#)).

6. What opportunity District of Columbia community members and educators have to offer feedback and comment during a standards' revision cycle

a. Where does public input occur during the District of Columbia's standards revision process?

During a revision cycle, the Advisory Committee solicits public input on existing social studies and drafts 19 guiding principles; guiding principles make recommendations to the State Board and OSSE on how the state standards should be revised and updated. Once completed, these principles are distributed for public comment and are then presented and voted on at a State Board public meeting. If approved, these principles will determine how the Technical Writing Committee will revise and rewrite standards.

- i. See: [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#)

After the Social Studies Standards Technical Writing Committee has finished writing revised standards, these standards are released to the public for review and comment.

- ii. See: [OSSE 2020 Social Studies Standards Revision Process Plan](#)

Members of the public are kept up-to-date on the standards' revision process and any developments within this process, including public hearing dates and committee members through the [District of Columbia OSSE Social Studies Standards Information Page](#).

Furthermore, all State Board of Education meetings are open to the public; meeting dates, notices, calendars, and agendas are provided on the [District of Columbia State Board of Education Website](#).