

Maine Social Studies Standards: Grassroots Information Packet

The state of Maine regularly revises its statewide social studies standards on a five-year cycle. These standards govern social studies instruction in all Maine public schools. The revision of statewide standards is directed by the Maine Department of Education’s Standards and Instructional Support Team. With the help of the Maine State Board of Education, the Department appoints a Steering Committee and Writing Committee from Maine classroom teachers, professors, and district administrators as well as members of social studies organizations. The Writing Committee is responsible for revising Maine’s social studies standards whereas the Steering Committee reviews public input on proposed standards and provides guidance to the Writing Committee. The Maine State Legislature approves statewide academic standards. Before the final adoption of standards takes place, however, the general public has the opportunity to review and comment on proposed revisions to existing social studies standards through public comment periods conducted by the Maine Department of Education and public hearings conducted by both the Department and the Maine Education and Cultural Affairs Legislative Committee.

Below we explain and list in sequential order:

1. Current Maine social studies standards and their current website location
2. How often Maine is required to review and revise its social studies standards
3. State laws and administrative codes governing social studies instruction in Maine 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 Maine
6. What opportunity Maine community members and educators have to offer feedback and comment during a standards’ revision cycle

1. Current Maine social studies standards and their current website location

[Maine K-12 Social Studies Standards](#) [Adopted [spring 2019](#)]

a. See: [Maine DOE Social Studies Standards Overview Information Page](#)

b. Website Location

i. [Maine Department of Education \(MDOE\) Website](#)

2. How often Maine is required to review and revise its social studies standards

Maine Academic Standards Revision Schedule: The Maine Commissioner of Education is required to conduct a review of the content standards and performance indicators by content area on a 5-year cycle which began in the 2015-2016 school year ([M.R.S Title 20-A §6209](#)).

3. State laws and administrative codes governing social studies instruction in Maine public schools

a. Maine Legislation

i. See: [NAS Compilation of State Statutes concerning Social Studies Instruction for each US State](#)

ii. [M.R.S. Title 20-A §4706](#) [*Instruction in American history, African American studies, Maine studies, Maine Native American history and the history of genocide*]

b. Maine Department of Education Administrative Code

- i. [Me. Admin. Code. §071-127-3](#) [*General Requirements K-12*]
- ii. [Me. Admin. Code. §071-127-5](#) [*Elementary School Course of Study*]
- iii. [Me. Admin. Code. §071-127-6](#) [*Middle School Course of Study*]
- iv. [Me. Admin. Code §071-127-7](#) [*Secondary School Course of Study and Diploma Requirements*]
- v. [Me. Admin Code Chap. 132](#) [*Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction*]

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

a. Which agency writes Maine’s social studies standards?

The Maine Department of Education’s Standards and Instructional Support Team directs the standards revision and writing process.

- i. **Steering Committee:** The Committee reviews all comments submitted during the initial public comment period, develops a revision process for social studies standards in each standards revision cycle, and advises writing committees as they revise and write new social studies standards. The Maine State Board of Education is responsible for appointing only one member of the Committee; members range from classroom teachers and professors, to district administrators, and leadership roles in social studies based organizations.

- ii. **Writing Team:** The team revises Maine's social studies standards based on guidance from the Steering Committee. Members are pk-12 public school teachers who represent Maine's cultural and geographical diversity.

1. For more information, see: [Maine Social Studies Standards Revision Process](#)

b. Which agency adopts Maine's social studies standards?

The Maine State Legislature adopts revised statewide social studies standards.

- i. See: [Maine Social Studies Standards Revision Process](#)

5. The electoral or bureaucratic relationships these agencies have with the general public in Maine

a. How are the members of the Maine State Board of Education appointed?

The Board consists of 9 members and 2 nonvoting student members, one junior and one senior in high school. All members are appointed by the Governor, reviewed by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education, and confirmed by the Maine State Legislature ([M.R.S. Title 20-A §401](#)).

b. How is the Maine State Commissioner of Education appointed?

The Commissioner is appointed by the governor, reviewed by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education, and confirmed by the Maine State Legislature ([M.R.S. Title 20-A §251](#)).

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

a. Where does public input occur during Maine's standards revision process?

At the onset of the revision cycle, the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) conducts a public comment period and public hearings in order to receive feedback on existing statewide social studies standards.

After the MDOE files the standards revision document as proposed rules with the Maine Secretary of State, the Department will hold a public hearing followed by another public comment period on proposed revisions to social studies standards.

Maine DOE prepares and submits provisional adoption of standards revision to the Secretary of State and Legislative Council. The Legislature will refer the rule as a legislative document to the Education and Cultural Affairs Legislative Committee where they will be given an LD Resolve to revise during session; the Education and Cultural Affairs Legislative Committee will hold a public hearing and work session before sending the proposed rules on to the full legislature.

- i. See: [Maine Social Studies Standards Revision Process](#)