

Montana Social Studies Standards: Grassroots Information Packet

The state of Montana revises its statewide social studies standards according to a schedule regularly made and provided by the Montana State Board of Education (SBE) and Office of Public Instruction (OPI). These standards govern social studies instruction in all Montana public schools. The revision of statewide standards is directed by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. As part of the revision process, the Montana OPI is required to create independent negotiated rulemaking committees; these committees are responsible for helping the OPI review and update Montana’s statewide social studies standards. Committee members are selected by the Office of Public Instruction after being nominated by the public. When the negotiated rulemaking process has completed, the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction makes a recommendation for adoption of proposed content standards to the Montana Board of Public Education. Before this final adoption takes place, however, the general public has the opportunity to review and comment on proposed revisions to existing social studies standards through public hearings conducted by the Montana OPI.

Below we explain and list in sequential order:

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

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

[Montana K-12 Social Studies Standards](#) [Adopted November 5, 2020]

a. Website Location

- i. [Montana Office of Public Instruction \(MOPI\) Website](#)

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

[Montana Current Academic Standards Revision Cycle](#): Montana does not have a legally mandated content standards review timeline which requires the state to revise its standards every certain number of years; rather the Board of Public Education is only required to review and revise statewide standards on a ‘recurring schedule,’ with ‘regular intervals.’ This schedule is made and provided by the Board and Office of Public Instruction, with input from representatives of accredited schools and then posted on the [Montana Office of Public Instruction website \(Montana BPE Administrative Rule 10.53.104\)](#).

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

a. Montana Legislation

- i. *See:* [NAS Compilation of State Statutes concerning Social Studies Instruction for each US State](#)
- ii. [Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-111](#) [*Instruction in public schools*]
- iii. [Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-112](#) [*Sectarian publications prohibited and prayer permitted*]
- iv. [Mont. Code Ann. Part 14: Cultural Integrity Commitment Act](#)
 1. [Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-1402](#) [*Legislative findings – purposes*]
 2. [Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-1404](#) [*Indian language immersion programs – funding – flexibility*]

b. Montana Department of Education Administrative Code

- i. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.53.102](#) [*Indian Education*]
- ii. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.120.101](#) [*Organizational Rule – Organization of the Montana Historical Society*]
- iii. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.55.1601](#) [*Social Studies Program Delivery Standards*]
- iv. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.55.902](#) [*Basic Education Program: Middle Grades*]
- v. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.55.904](#) [*Basic Education Program Offerings: High School*]
- vi. [Mont. Admin. Rule 10.55.905](#) [*Graduation Requirements*]

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

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

The Montana Office of Public Instruction is the agency responsible for maintaining, reviewing, and updating the state’s accreditation standards ([Mont. Code Ann. §20-2-121](#)); among accreditation standards are academic content standards.

As part of the revision process, the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is required to create independent negotiated rulemaking committees. These committees consider issues to reach consensus on the proposed amendments to accreditation and content standards. The negotiated rulemaking process is required by [Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-101](#).

b. Which agency adopts Montana’s social studies standards?

The Montana State Board of Education is charged with adopting statewide academic standards; at the conclusion of the negotiated rulemaking process, the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction makes a recommendation for adoption of proposed content standards to the Montana Board of Public Education ([Mont. Code Ann. §20-7-101](#)).

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

a. How are the members of Montana’s rulemaking committees appointed?

Rulemaking Committee members are selected by the Office of Public Instruction after being nominated by the public. During a revision cycle, the Montana Office of Public Instruction will make nomination forms for the negotiated rulemaking committees available to the public. Members of these committee(s) are required to represent the diverse circumstances of schools of all sizes across the state and include representatives from the following groups: school district trustees, school administrators, teachers, school business officials, parents, taxpayers.

i. For more information, see:

1. [Montana OPI Content Standards Revision Information \(pdf\)](#)
2. [Montana Negotiated Rulemaking Process](#)

ii. Any questions can be directed to:

Content Standards and Instruction,
Montana Office of Public Instruction,
opicsi@mt.gov

b. How are the members of the Montana State Board of Education appointed?

The members of the Montana Board of Education are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state Senate.

- i. For more information, see: [Montana State Board of Education Information Page](#)

c. How is the Montana State Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed?

The Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction is elected every 4 years ([Montana State Constitution, Article VI](#)).

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

a. Where does public input occur during the standards revision process?

Nomination forms for the negotiated rulemaking committees are made available to the public. The committees are required to represent the diverse circumstances of schools of all sizes across the state and include representatives from the following groups: school district trustees, school administrators, teachers, school business officials, parents, taxpayers ([Mont. Code. Ann. §20-7-101](#)).

- i. For more information, see: [Montana Negotiated Rulemaking Process](#)

Furthermore, the Montana OPI is required to hold public hearings in order to receive feedback before proposed standards are adopted; in the past, the Montana OPI has notified the public through [DOE Notice Files](#), such the one most recently released in 2020.

- ii. For more information, see: [Montana OPI Content Standards Revision Information \(pdf\)](#)

- iii. Any questions can be directed to:

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