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Ryan Douglas New

University of Kentucky, ryanryannew@gmail.com

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1965-6571>

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Ryan Douglas New, Student

Dr. Kathy Swan, Major Professor

Dr. Ryan Crowley, Director of Graduate Studies

STANDARDS DO NOT HAPPEN IN A VACUUM: LOCAL, STATE, AND
NATIONAL INFLUENCES ON KENTUCKY ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THE
SOCIAL STUDIES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
Ryan Douglas New
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Kathy Swan, Professor of Social Studies Education
Lexington, Kentucky
2022

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1965-6571>

ABSTRACT

STANDARDS DO NOT HAPPEN IN A VACUUM: LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL INFLUENCES ON KENTUCKY ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

This dissertation includes three articles that focus on local, state, and/or national influences on the development and implementation of state standards for social studies. Each article provides insights into how external influences at various levels can mediate the enactment, understanding, and/or adhering of state-level standards.

Article One, “The State of Social Studies Standards: What Is the Impact of the C3 Framework?” (2021) is a national case study that examines the impact the C3 (College, Career and Civic Life) Framework had in influencing the development of fifty state standards and the District of Columbia. The C3 framework pulls together content, concepts, and skills to support social studies standards development across the country. Using an inductive qualitative approach to analysis, this article revealed that the C3 Framework has had a substantial but varied influence on thirty-two states. Analysis of findings offer a heuristic for understanding the variation in influence that the C3 Framework has in its ninth year of existence. This article also makes clear the need for further study into how the C3 Framework, through varied state-level approaches, influences curriculum development, instructional approaches, and professional development.

Article Two, “Policy Letter to Kentucky Representative Tina Bojanowski: What is my response?” is an explanatory, evidence-driven policy letter to a state representative in response to lobbying efforts by a Kentucky organization to undermine and reconsider the adoption of Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. As a member of the Interim Joint Committee on Education, Representative Bojanowski sought to better understand the claims made against the KAS for Social Studies and to address implications about the standards process, curriculum, and assessment. As a co-creator of the standards and a curricular lead for the largest and most diverse district in the state, the author of this dissertation was in an ideal position to submit an argument-based response to the Representative. The policy letter submitted to Rep. Bojanowski traced state statutes, clarified misconceptions, contextualized concerns, demonstrated clear connections between standards and Jefferson County Public Schools curriculum, and helped inform representatives and the Kentucky Department of Education about the practice-based realities of altering the standards. Consequently, the letter was shared with the Kentucky Board of Education, as well as the rest of the Kentucky Education Committee. As an authentic example of how evidence-based research can and should inform practice, Article Two serves as an illustrative policy document for practicing instructional, curricular, and district leaders and administrators.

Article Three, “Bringing application of state standards and local policy processes to the implementation of local curriculum development: How can we implement new standards while adhering to Jefferson County Public Schools’ Racial Equity Policy?” uses a content analysis approach to examine how a single district’s policy can influence

the development of curriculum while simultaneously aligning to standards. Guided by a zone of mediation theoretical lens, this article outlines how normative, technical, and political forces mediate an equity-oriented educational policy in ways that transform curriculum. In so doing, article three reveals the need for curriculum writers to think ambitiously and creatively to design state level policies in ways that local contexts can adapt while maintaining integrity to initial policy intentions.

KEYWORDS: Civic education, Social Studies, Academic standards, Racial equity policy, C3 Framework, Inquiry-Based Learning

Ryan Douglas New
(Name of Student)

05/15/2022
Date

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By
Ryan Douglas New

Dr. Kathy Swan

Director of Dissertation

Ryan Crowley

Director of Graduate Studies

06/07/2022

Date

DEDICATION

To my mom, Glenna; wife, Andrea; and kiddos, Penelope and Ethan who love me unconditionally. Let's continue being kind and asking questions.

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We all know the difficulty and pressure of trying to clearly and beautifully articulate how others have bettered us. We all know that we are better when we reason together, share values, and shoulder collective struggle. Students, fellow teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and professors inspired and guided my development. I am transformed by those who showed patience, kindness, and love.

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Thank you to my students. I should have trusted and leaned on you all. You were there for me, and it was through your energy and curiosity that helped me become the

best teacher I could be. I want to thank a former student, Wesley Wei. Every teacher deserves a student like you. Every person deserves a friend like you.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Research Problem.....	2
1.3 Purpose	3
1.4 Positionality.....	3
1.5 Research Questions	4
1.6 Methodologies and Documents Analyzed.....	4
1.7 Reporting	5
CHAPTER 2. ARTICLE 1.....	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Significance of Study	8
2.3 Research Question.....	9
2.4 Methods of the Study.....	9
2.5 Background on the C3 Framework Analysis.....	10
2.6 Findings – Quantitative Data.....	12
2.7 Implications	22
CHAPTER 3. ARTICLE 2.....	25
3.1 Introduction to Education Policy Letter Requested by State Representative Tina Bojanowski	25
3.2 Preparation and Methods for Policy Letter.....	26
3.3 Jim Waters’ Letter to Members of the Interim Joint Committee on Education	28
3.4 Establishing Position for Responding to Representative Bojanowski	30
3.5 Explaining the statues and process for enacting Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies.	31
3.6 Establishing the Purpose of Social Studies, Social Studies Standards, and Social Studies Assessment.....	39
3.7 Understanding the Process of Enacting KAS for Social Studies	42
3.8 The Difference Between State Standards and Curriculum.....	46
3.9 Comparing Kentucky standards processes to other states.....	54
3.10 Former KBE Member Gary Houchens’ Previous Support and Arguments for Adopting KAS for Social Studies	59

3.11	Summarizing the major points for State Representative Tina Bojanowski.....	61
3.12	Understanding Why this Policy Letter Requested by State Representative Tina Bojanowski Matters.....	62
CHAPTER 4. ARTICLE 3.....		63
4.1	Introduction	63
4.2	What state policies influence the development of curriculum?.....	65
4.3	What local policies influence the development of curriculum? The zone of mediation in Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)	68
4.4	What methods did we use to create a framework to align KAS for Social Studies while adhering to JCPS’s Racial Equity Policy.	70
4.5	How do Developing Black Historical Consciousness Principles help frame curriculum?.....	76
4.6	How can KAS for Social Studies and Black Historical Consciousness Principles deliver the “rich curriculum” of the Racial Equity Policy?.....	79
4.7	What are the implications for using Black Historical Consciousness Principles as a curricular frame?.....	88
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUDING REFLECTION.....		92
APPENDIX.....		97
REFERENCES		100
VITA.....		108

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 (continued) Use of the C3 Framework by State as of June 1, 2021	13
Table 2.2 Distribution of Students based upon C3 Framework Level.....	15
Table 2.3 Kentucky Department of Education, 2019. Diagrams that articulate the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc Dimensions and the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies for Social Studies practices	20
Table 3.1 Kentucky Department of Education, 2018, Revised August, 2018 Social Studies Standards Revision Timeline Overview	32
Table 3.2 Kentucky Department of Education, 2019	47
Table 3.3 Concept and Practice: 8th Grade History Disciplinary Standards	48
Table 3.4 Example of JCPS Curriculum Supporting Question “How did Hamilton and Jefferson’s economic views create conflict?.....	50
Table 3.5 JCPS Supporting Questions for Unit 5, JCPS Curriculum	51
Table 3.6 Mississippi 4th Grade Civics Standards and Objectives	57
Table 3.7 Grade 4: Disciplinary Clarification and Instructional Support.....	58
Table 4.1 Racial Equity Policy alignment to Disciplinary Standards from KAS for Social Studies.....	73
Table 4.2 (continued) Racial Equity Policy alignment to Inquiry Standards from KAS for Social Studies.....	74
Table 4.3 (continued) King’s Black Historical Consciousness Principles	77
Table 4.4 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Questioning Standards for Compelling Questions with Black Historical Consciousness Principles.....	80
Table 4.5 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Questioning Standards for Supporting Questions with Black Historical Consciousness Principles.....	81
Table 4.6 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Using Evidence Standards with Black Historical Consciousness Principles	83
Table 4.7 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Communicating Conclusions Standards with Black Historical Consciousness Principles and Supporting Questions	84

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Use of the C3 Framework by State (map version) as of June 1, 2021 15

Figure 2.2 New York State Education Department, 2016. Diagram that articulates the Social Studies practices in the New York..... 18

Figure 4.1 Kentucky Department of Education (n.d.) Promoting Student Equity Through Standards Implementation 67

Figure 4.2 Scaffolded Theoretical Unit using KAS for Social Studies Inquiry Standards... 87

Figure 4.3 Scaffolded Unit using KAS for Social Studies Inquiry Standards and Black Historical Consciousness Principles 88

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity... The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it - at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change.

James Baldwin "A Talk to Teachers," 1963

1.1 Overview

John Dewey best captured the reciprocal value of education and democracy when he said that “democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife,” (Dewey, 1916 p. 139). Put simply, democratic citizenship must be learned and classrooms provide the best opportunities for this education to take place. Classrooms are microcosms of society and with the right teachers, curriculum, and support, become laboratories for democracy. While there have been attempts to standardize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for a democracy since the nation’s founding, the way to do so has been, and still is, contested.

Even if parents, politicians, and most importantly, educators agreed on how, what, and why of teaching for democratic citizenship, there are practical challenges that face any policy and curriculum. Historically, schooling has been managed locally, with some state oversight, and little federal interference. Standards based education reform from the 1980s and 1990s took center stage in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB). With the development of Common Core State Standards in 2010 and federal incentives like President Obama’s 2012 “Race to the Top,” nationalizing standards were all but cemented for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

The C3 Framework was the answer to “What about Social Studies?” Representatives from state education groups, professional organizations, and educators from across the country created a framework to reclaim the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for civic life. While not mandated by state or federal legislation or accompanied with financial incentives, the C3 “provided guidance to states on upgrading state Social Studies standards” and reinvigorated calls for students “to be actively engaged in civic life.” (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013 p. 6). State standards writers, for the first time, now had a framework...but only if they wanted one. And so began the first choice, among many, for enacting, understanding, and adhering to state standards. However, the work of developing standards is not a straightforward process and requires action at multiple levels. Thus, standards work is not for the faint of heart.

1.2 Research Problem

The purpose of this research is to analyze the local, state, and national policies and frameworks that influence the enacting, understanding, and adherence to Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies. First, I wanted to see the impact of the C3 Framework on the development of Social Studies standards across the nation. Previous research mentioned the development of, and impact on, individual states or curriculum development. This research sought to categorize the ways states, including Kentucky, voluntarily adopted the C3 Framework. Second, I wanted to provide real examples of addressing misunderstandings around standards and curriculum, which are too often conflated by stakeholders. Failure to understand these differences, as well as the policies that create them, leads to confusion and poor decision making. Finally, I wanted to explore

how to implement KAS for Social Studies while adhering to the local Jefferson County Public Schools' Racial Equity Policy. While scholarship correctly points to the pervasiveness of Eurocentric and white curriculum, there is no universally accepted approach to building a Black history curriculum. This research analyzed the Racial Equity Policy, KAS for Social Studies, and LaGarrett King's Developing Black Historical Consciousness Principles to inform and bring coherence to curricular decisions.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this analysis was to develop an understanding of the local, state, and national decisions that influence the enacting, understanding, and adherence to Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies. By exploring decision influences at varying levels, this analysis attempts to determine the types of challenges faced by educators who must enact, understand, and adhere to state and local policies in tandem with developing curriculum. Moreover, this analysis offers suggestions for categorizing standards and policies as well as curricular examples that demonstrate congruence.

1.4 Positionality

My role as a Social Studies educator expands beyond the classroom and reflects the local, state, and national levels represented within this work. Currently, I am the K-12 Instructional Lead for Social Studies for Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) in Louisville, Kentucky, the 29th largest school district in the nation. My job duties include helping the district transition to and implement academic standards, carry out district policies, advise the district about Social Studies education, and provide evidence based

curricular and instructional support to teachers, professional learning communities and departments. I have twice written standards for the state of Kentucky--in 2014 when standards were not adopted, and 2018-19 when they were. Additionally, I am working with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to help design and vet the Kentucky Summative Assessment state testing. I have worked for the Kentucky Department of Education and been President of the Kentucky Council for Social Studies. The three articles that follow illustrate the process of defining a new framework for Social Studies curriculum development, the process of trying to implement it, the misunderstandings that can develop, and a process of resolving them to produce high quality curricular design.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the development of the three articles:

1. What was the impact of the C3 Framework on the development of state standards across the nation?
2. How do you help state legislators understand Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies?
3. How might Kentucky's largest urban district align new state standards while adhering to the district racial equity policy when creating curriculum?

1.6 Methodologies and Documents Analyzed

For all three articles I used a content analysis approach outlined by Merriam's definition to "gather as much information about the problem as possible with the intent of analyzing, interpreting, or theorizing about the phenomenon... to develop a typology, a

continuum, or categories that conceptualize difference approaches to the task.” (Merriam, 2001 p. 38-39). I used an inductive qualitative approach for “coding raw data and the constructing categories that capture relevant characteristics” of state Social Studies standards and JCPS’s racial equity policy (Merriam, 2001 p. 160).

There are three key types of documents analyzed in the three articles. The first includes a) state policies that both govern the process for standards development and establish who is responsible for the development of curriculum b) policies from the Kentucky Board of Education and c) local district policies that determine needs and directions germane to the community. The second are state Social Studies standards that establish learning outcomes for what states want their students to know and be able to do. The final are frameworks and curricular examples that help make sense standards while adhering to state and local policies. The following show specific articles:

- In article 1, I used Social Studies state standards documents from all 50 states and the District of Columbia as well as the C3 Framework.
- In article 2, I used KAS for Social Studies, Kentucky and Massachusetts educational statutes, and curricular examples from Jefferson County Public Schools.
- In article 3, I used KAS for Social Studies, Kentucky educational statutes, Racial Equity Policy of Jefferson County Public Schools, and Black Historical Consciousness Principles

1.7 Reporting

My reported findings are represented in three articles:

1. The State of Social Studies Standards: What Is the Impact of the C3 Framework?
2. Policy Letter to Kentucky Representative Tina Bojanowski: What is my response?
3. Bringing application of state standards and local policy processes to the implementation of local curriculum development: How can we implement new standards while adhering to Jefferson County Public Schools' Racial Equity Policy?

These articles highlight and contextualize the choices educators, districts, and policy makers make about standards at local, state, and national levels. Taken collectively, they offer possible approaches and implications of enacting, understanding, and adhering to Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies.

CHAPTER 2. ARTICLE 1

The State of Social Studies Standards: What Is the Impact of the C3 Framework?

2.1 Introduction

On Constitution Day, September 17, 2013, the National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) published the *College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*. The document was written by a team of academics with specialties in Social Studies education and its disciplines in consultation with state education agencies, professional organizations, and teachers from across the country (Swan & Griffin, 2013). This collaboration produced a watershed moment for Social Studies. Publication of the C3 Framework demonstrated that Social Studies educators could come together and work ambitiously toward a common goal and that they could produce a framework reconciling the “turf wars” that have hampered previous Social Studies standards and reform efforts (Evans, 2004).

Up until the publication of the C3 Framework, most Social Studies state standards provided an inventory of content and/or broad concepts for students to either memorize or analyze (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017a). These standards made few teachers and professional groups happy (Vogler & Virtue, 2007). Although some standards documents may have received an “A” or “B” from the Fordham Institute for their attention to historical detail, others were critiqued for their lack of enduring ideas that the C3 framework now binds together (Stern et al., 2021, June). Simultaneously, the broad adoption of the *Common Core for English Language Arts* struck fear in the hearts of Social Studies educators because it

stripped away all content and concepts and focused solely on the disciplinary processes that enabled historical study (Lee & Swan, 2013).

And yet, the collaborators on the C3 Framework were not deterred. They took on the literacy aims of the Common Core as well as the perennial content versus skills tension in the field and integrated them into the Inquiry Arc. The Inquiry Arc frames Social Studies with four distinct, but interrelated dimensions: (1) developing questions and planning inquiries; (2) applying disciplinary concepts and tools; (3) evaluating sources and using evidence; and (4) communicating conclusions and taking informed action. Together, these dimensions link content, concepts, and skills and marshal them toward the core purposes of Social Studies: college, career, and most importantly, *civic* life. Although no standards effort will satisfy everyone, the C3 Framework effort showed promise.

2.2 Significance of Study

It has been eight years since the publication of the C3 Framework. The intent of the document was to provide states with “voluntary guidance for upgrading existing Social Studies standards” (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013, p. 6). It was time to evaluate how the C3 is being used by states and what its impact has been on state standards. Unlike the Common Core, the C3 Framework clearly stipulated that it was a framework and not a set of standards to be adopted as is. The authors wrote on the first pages,

This Framework does not include all that can or should be included in a set of robust Social Studies standards, and intentionally preserves the critical choices around the selection of curricular content taught at each grade level as a decision best made by each state...The concepts expressed in the C3 Framework illustrate the disciplinary

ideas, such as political structures, economic decision making, spatial patterns, and chronological sequencing, that help organize the curriculum and content states select (National Council for the Social Studies, p. 6).

In other words, state education agencies would need to take the broad disciplinary concepts and tools laid out in Dimension 2 (e.g., Constitution, economic scarcity, geographical modeling, and chronological sequence) and add specificity to that content (e.g., how a bill becomes a law or the difference between a map and a globe).

2.3 Research Question

In this article, I did a content analysis of the 50 Social Studies state standards documents and the District of Columbia guided by my own compelling question:

What is the impact of the C3 Framework on state Social Studies standards?

As part of my analysis, I examined the standards that use the C3 Framework and as well as the ways that the state standards authors approached the use of the Inquiry Arc, its dimensions, and the indicators within. Because of the decentralized nature of departments of education along with the soft language of “implementation” in the C3 Framework itself, I expected to see a wide variation in approaches when states sought to update their Social Studies standards, particularly among states that chose to use the C3 but then adapted it for their local context.

2.4 Methods of the Study

I used an inductive-content analysis to examine the extent to which states and the District of Columbia have incorporated the C3 Framework into their standards. Content

analysis is a research method which engages in a “systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” that are present in a defined body of content (Neuendorf, 2017). The content analyzed is the 51 state Social Studies standards documents. State standards reflect unique priorities, political contexts, and legal requirements within each state. These factors result in a patchwork of documents that vary widely in length, tone, specificity, and formatting. Some states included appendixes and ancillary materials within the standards document, while others published these materials separately. State-wide initiatives also influenced the construction of new Social Studies standards. For example, some states (e.g., Nevada, Iowa) must account for financial literacy within the Social Studies standards and so their documents added financial literacy within their standards. Other states gave attention to state history (e.g., Kentucky, Illinois) and included this content within their standards. Additionally, each state has its own approach to developing writing teams and writing standards. Given the variety present in processes that states use and the unique contexts that shape their work, I focused on the standards themselves and did not analyze ancillary materials, whether published as appendixes or separate documents.

2.5 Background on the C3 Framework Analysis

In order to guarantee an accurate timeframe, I completed the content analysis begun by June 1, 2021. The process of analysis involved an initial, deductive sorting of the standards into three broad categories reflecting no evidence of a connection to the C3 Framework, some connection, or considerable connection. I fine-tuned these categories through recursive inductive analysis. Then I sorted the initial three categories into a more

nuanced classification system where I examined the standards documents for evidence of alignment with the C3 Inquiry Arc and the four Dimensions of the C3 Framework. New or novel approaches were subsequently expected and taken into account representing the ideas within the C3 Framework in the state standards documents. This analysis resulted in the development of four final analytic categories, termed “levels,” as a way of reflecting the extent to which each state has incorporated ideas from the C3 Framework within their standards. We also created nine categories nested within the four levels to further clarify differences between state approaches to using the C3 Framework.

- **Level N/A:** States that have not undergone (n=5) or are currently undergoing (n=6) Social Studies standards revision
- **Level 1** = States that did not cite (n=8) the C3 Framework as part of their Social Studies standards document
- **Level 2** = States that cited (n=2), endorsed (n=2), or excerpted (n=12) use the C3 Framework in their Social Studies standards document
- **Level 3** = States that framed (n=4), modeled (n=11), or adopted (n=1) the C3 Framework in their Social Studies standards document.

In addition to classifying all 51 standards documents in one of the nine categories and four levels, I selected one or two states whose standards document exemplify each category and described how the document reflects the characteristics of that category. States in Levels N/A and 1 were relatively simple to classify. Levels 2 and 3 required more careful consideration.

The categories that were most challenging to code were the subcategories within Level 3. In this analysis, I focused on:

- 1) the treatment of the four dimensions of the Inquiry Arc (e.g., where it appears in the document, whether it stayed intact, and renaming of the dimensions);
- 2) the inclusion of specific indicators and the extent to which they were differentiated for grade level; and,
- 3) any innovations to the presentation of the standards document (e.g., modifications in language, addition of skills). In the next section, Table 2.1 accounts for all 50 states and the District of Columbia’s Social Studies standards documents and how each state document was categorized as well as how our analysis of exemplified each category.

2.6 Findings – Quantitative Data

The findings of the content analysis of state Social Studies standards features four levels, each with one or more categories to delineate the various ways states did and did not use the C3 Framework to inform state Social Studies standards (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1). The distribution of states across the four levels is generally consistent, but a majority of states fell into Levels 2 and 3. In all, 32 of 51 standards documents include, at minimum, a reference to the C3 Framework. These 32 states represent 61% of all children enrolled in public schools in the United States (Table 2.2) (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Twenty-seven of those 30 states included ideas from the C3 Framework, incorporated the structure of the C3 Framework, or modeled or replicated aspects of the C3 Framework. One state, Vermont, went so far as to adopt the C3 Framework without modification.

Table 2.1 (continued) Use of the C3 Framework by State as of June 1, 2021

Level (# of states in level)	Category Description	Number of States	States in Each Category (Listed alphabetically, then chronologically)
N/A (n=11)	States that have not undergone Social Studies standards revision since the publication of the C3 Framework.	5	New Mexico (2009), Pennsylvania (2009), Alabama (2010), Louisiana (2011), Florida (2014)
	States that are currently undergoing Social Studies standards revision and have not formally adopted new standards as of June 1, 2021.	6*	New Hampshire (2006), *Washington DC (2006), Rhode Island (2008, 2012), Virginia (2015), Minnesota (Draft 2021), Montana (Draft 2021)
Level 1 (n=8)	States that do not cite the C3 Framework in Social Studies standards or in any accompanying documents, including works cited/references.	8	Alaska (2016), Georgia (2016), Idaho (2016), Delaware (2018), Ohio (2018), Texas (2018), Wyoming (2018), Indiana (2020)
Level 2 (n=16)	States that cited the C3 Framework as one of the documents consulted in a standards writing and adoption process.	2	Mississippi (2018), Maine (2019)
	States that endorsed the use of the C3 Framework by presenting it as a complimentary resource for implementing their Social Studies standards.	2	California (2016), New York (2016),
	States that excerpted one or more ideas (e.g., questions, taking informed actions) from the C3 Framework.	12	South Dakota (2015), Missouri (2016), Utah (2016), Tennessee (2017), Oregon (2018), Nebraska (2019), North Dakota (2019), Oklahoma (2019), Washington (2019), Colorado (2020), Kansas (2020), South Carolina (2020)
Level 3 (n=16)	States that framed their Social Studies standards with the C3 Framework's Inquiry Arc.	4	West Virginia (2016), Massachusetts (2018), Maryland (2020), New Jersey (2020),

	States that <u>modeled</u> their Social Studies standards on the C3 Framework.	11	Arkansas (2014), Connecticut (2015), Illinois (2016), Iowa (2017), Hawaii (2018), Nevada (2018), Wisconsin (2018), Arizona (2019), Kentucky (2019), Michigan (2019), North Carolina (2021)
	States that <u>adopted</u> the C3 Framework as their Social Studies standards.	1	Vermont (2017)

Figure 2.1 Use of the C3 Framework by State (map version) as of June 1, 2021

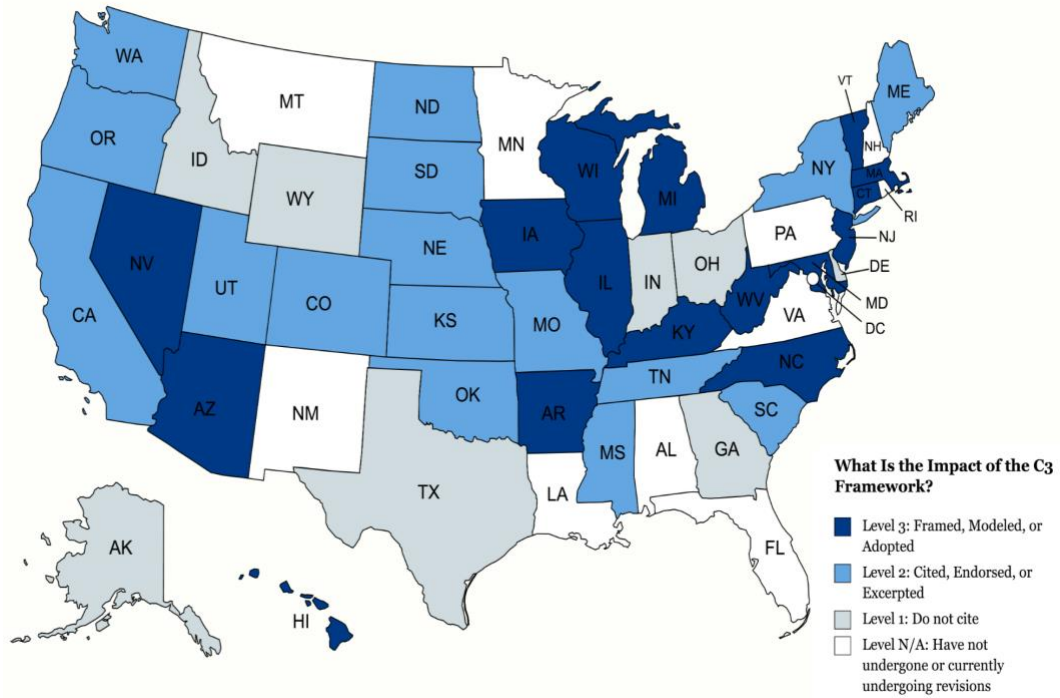


Table 2.2 Distribution of Students based upon C3 Framework Level

C3 Framework	Total States	Total Students	Percentage
Level N/A*	11	9,121,300	18%
Level 1	8	10,629,400	21%
Level 2	16	17,441,500	34%
Level 3	16	13,462,000	27%
Totals	50 (+DC)	50,654,200	100%

*Level N/A: States that have not undergone (n=5) or are currently undergoing (n=6) Social Studies standards revision.

Five states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania) **have not undergone** a Social Studies standards revision process since the publication of the C3

Framework and thus have not had an opportunity to consider how the document might influence their Social Studies standards.

Five states (Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Virginia) and the District of Columbia are **currently undergoing** Social Studies standards revision and have not officially adopted new standards at the time of data collection on June 1, 2021. These states were not placed into categories despite early drafts in several states clearly showing the mention and/or influence of the C3 Framework. For example, in the first draft of Minnesota's new Social Studies standards, the writers acknowledge that the C3 Framework "guided the writing of standards and benchmarks...and will be based upon the C3 Framework's Dimensions" (Minnesota Department of Education, 2020). However, shifts and changes often occur as standards move through committees, public comment periods, and internal reviews with stakeholders so we coded these states according to their current standards and labeled them as N/A.

Level 1: States that did not cite (n=8) the C3 Framework as part of their Social Studies standards document

Eight states (Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Ohio, Texas, and Wyoming) **do not cite** the *C3 Framework* in recently adopted state Social Studies standards or in any accompanying documents, including works cited pages. Social studies standards in these states typically focus on the content ideas within the disciplines of history, civics, geography, and economics. Some of the state standards reference disciplinary skills (e.g., historical thinking, spatial thinking, economic decision making) and, in some cases, general critical thinking or literacy skills. For example, Delaware state Social Studies standards include the *Common Core Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies* to address broad reading and writing skills in Social Studies (Delaware Department of Education, 2018).

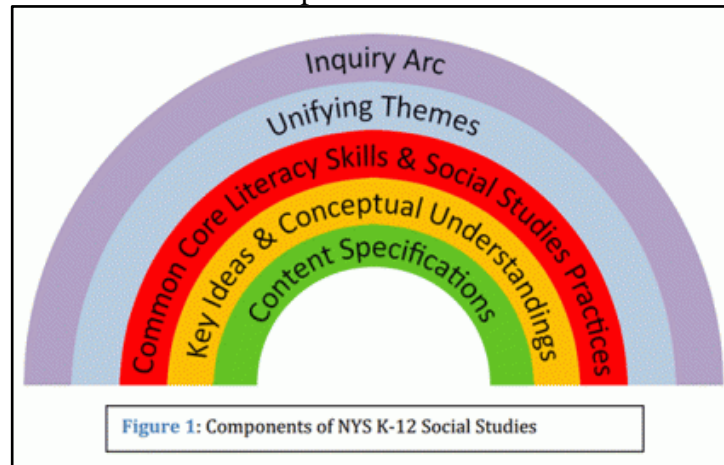
Level 2: States that cited (n=2), endorsed (n=2), or excerpted (n=12) use the C3 Framework in their Social Studies standards document

Two states (Maine and Mississippi) **cited** the C3 Framework as one of the documents consulted in a recent standards writing and adoption process. These citations are found in the document’s introduction, appendices, and/or works cited page. For example, Mississippi’s Social Studies standards noted the C3 Framework along with other national and state standards documents to gain “sufficient understanding of the direction of Social Studies education” (Mississippi Department of Education, 2018). The reference to the C3 Framework as a key document to inform standards shows recognition of its value, even if the language and structure of the Inquiry Arc are absent within the state Social Studies standards.

Two states (California, and New York) **endorsed** the use of the C3 Framework by presenting it as a complimentary resource for implementing their Social Studies standards. California’s *History-Social Science Framework* noted the C3 Framework as an “important step forward in our ongoing commitment to ensure that all California students are prepared for college, twenty-first century careers, and citizenship” (California Department of Education, 2016). The writers of the New York’s *K-12 Social Studies Framework* integrated the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc into a graphic illustrating the component of the New York Framework placing the C3 Framework as the highest-level organizing component with other components (e.g., key ideas and conceptual understandings and content specifications) all nesting within the C3’s Inquiry Arc (Figure 2.2). While there are no other specific ideas from the C3 Framework in the New York standards document, it is important to note that these standards were adopted in 2014, a few months after the publication of the C3 Framework, which may have made it unlikely for a more integrated

approach to inquiry.

Figure 2.2 New York State Education Department, 2016. Diagram that articulates the Social Studies practices in the New York



Twelve states (Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Washington) **excerpted** one or more ideas (e.g., compelling questions, taking informed action) from the C3 Framework but did not incorporate the Inquiry Arc into their Social Studies standards. These states varied broadly when excerpting ideas within the C3 Framework. Washington made extensive use of compelling questions by embedding hundreds of “sample questions” within the standards (Washington State Department of Education, 2019). Colorado’s *Academic Standards in Social Studies* include what they call “Inquiry Questions,” and the expectation that students will “determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration the different opinions people have about how to answer the questions” (Colorado Department of Education, 2020). In South Carolina’s *Social Studies College-and Career-Ready Standards*, there are consistent references to the idea of inquiry situated broadly within the study of the four core Social Studies disciplines that make up the C3 Framework’s

Dimension 2 (civics, economics, geography, and history). For example, each individual content standard within the document is accompanied by an explanatory statement that “encourages inquiry” into the ideas presented within the standard (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020).

Level 3: States that framed (n=4), modeled (n=11), adopted (n=1) the C3 Framework in their Social Studies standards document.

Four states (Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and West Virginia) **framed** their Social Studies standards using the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc. West Virginia’s *College and Career Readiness Standards for Social Studies* represent the four dimensions of the C3 Framework at each grade level in four “College and Career Readiness Indicators” (West Virginia Department of Education, 2016) including:

- Develop questions through investigations
- Apply disciplinary concepts and tools
- Evaluate sources and use evidence and
- Communicate conclusions and take informed action.


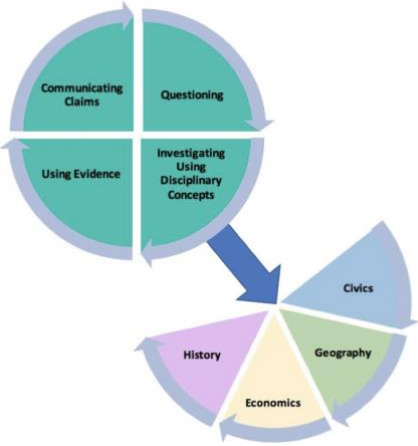
Although these indicators are not differentiated by grade band, they are presented as bulleted ideas at the beginning of each grade level to frame disciplinary standards. The Massachusetts’ *History and Social Science Frameworks* has seven practices which reflect the Inquiry Arc of C3 Framework, although with more variation and detail (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018). Like West Virginia, these practices stay consistent across the grade Social Studies standards:

- Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.

- Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.
- Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.
- Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.
- Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.

Eleven states (Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Hawaii, Nevada, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, and Wisconsin), **modeled** their Social Studies standards on the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc differentiating these skills into grade-band indicators. In *Kentucky’s Academic Standards for Social Studies*, all four dimensions of the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc are included intact but are renamed as inquiry practices with shortened titles (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Kentucky Department of Education, 2019. Diagrams that articulate the C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc Dimensions and the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies for Social Studies practices.

<i>C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc including four dimensions</i>	<i>Kentucky’s Academic Standards for Social Studies Inquiry Practices</i>
 <p>C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries • Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts (Civics, Economics, Geography, and History) • Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence • Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action 	

Kentucky’s four inquiry practices are further described in the document where each practice is differentiated at grade level. For example, in kindergarten students are expected to “ask compelling questions about their community” and in the 12th grade, students are expected to “generate compelling questions to frame thinking, inquiry and/or understanding of key disciplinary concepts” (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). Although students are not expected to develop supporting questions in kindergarten, by high school the standards state that students would be expected to “generate supporting questions to develop knowledge, understanding and thinking relative to key concepts framed by compelling questions” (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). Similarly, the North Carolina standards include grade-banded inquiry strands reflective of the C3 Framework that describe specific inquiry skills expected of students. Like Kentucky, these indicators are differentiated, increasing in sophistication and scope. For example, in Kindergarten students are expected to “demonstrate an understanding of facts, opinions, and other details in sources.” (North Carolina State Board of Education, 2021). By high school, students are expected to “differentiate between facts and interpretation of sources” (North Carolina State Board of Education, 2021). These efforts of differentiation, integration, and explanation were key attributes for state standards in this category, distinguishing the standards from Level 3A.

One state (Vermont) **adopted** the C3 Framework as their Social Studies standards without any modifications to the document:

In 2017, the Vermont State Board of Education adopted the *College, Career, and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards (C3)* to guide the teaching

and learning of civics, economics, geography, and history within Vermont. (State of Vermont Agency of Education, 2017).

2.7 Implications

Measuring the impact of one document on another (much less 51 others) presents a challenge. The term “impact” implies a range of effects--from none to full adoption. This analysis above clearly demonstrates that outcome. But it also demonstrates the subtle ways that the C3 Framework has influenced the standards-based content and skills represented in well over half of the states.

One implication is that the C3 Framework has had a significant impact. Examining the numbers alone, the C3 Framework has influenced state-level Social Studies policies. However, the impact is as varied as there are states. No two states’ standards look the same, but the commonalities and distinctions (as evident in the findings section) are equally illuminating.

A common feature of the states that attended to the C3 Framework is the inclusion of Dimension 2 (Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools). State standards writers took seriously the focus on disciplinary concepts and skills exemplified in the NCSS document. States selected these standards to reflect their various priorities, but attention to the C3 Framework approach to describing content and skills is evident.

The findings section above also highlights the different state-level treatments of the C3 Framework. Some states simply nodded in the direction of the C3 Framework, while others pulled selectively from the ideas and/or language expressed in the C3 Framework;

nearly one-third of the states, however, made a significant effort to incorporate major elements into their standards.

A third implication of this study is that, although standards are a clearly recognized element of a state's Social Studies policy, they are not all that matters. At this point, several states have supplemented their state standards with a range of other materials. Those materials range from the curriculum exemplars in the New York State Toolkit to the state-level curriculum hubs on C3Teachers.org. In addition to state-level supplementary materials, many school districts--either individually or in collaboration--have developed resources for their teachers that support and extend their state standards. Additionally, there are state-level testing programs in nearly half of the states (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Those programs range from tests based on the civics portion of the US Naturalization Service Test to comprehensive exams that assess all areas of Social Studies. State-level standardized tests are often cited as a profound influence on teachers' practices; the empirical evidence for that claim, however, is disputed (Grant, 2010; Fitchett & Heafner, 2010).

One last implication of this study is that policy matters. The relationship between policy and practice, state standards and the teachers' pedagogy, is uncertain at best (Grant, 2010; 2001). The decentralized nature of American schooling, the generally vague wording of standards documents, and the mixed messages that standards and state-level tests can send means that teachers have considerable autonomy over their classroom practices. They may embrace a new set of standards, they may pick and choose among those standards, or they may ignore those standards on the assumption that another new set will arrive in a few years.

However, the fact that the relationship between standards and practices is fickle need not mean that standards are irrelevant--particularly if those standards push in novel, ambitious, and meaningful directions. Prior to the C3 Framework, most state Social Studies standards reflected a wide and disparate set of people, places, events, and ideas that may or may not have skills attached to them. Social studies was relegated to a series of information to be learned and subsequent assessments reflected rote memorized information with little attention to the skills or even purpose of Social Studies.

By placing inquiry squarely and substantially at the center of standards revision efforts, the C3 Framework, and the states that embraced it, push in two important directions. First, those standards give even more support and encouragement to teachers who are trying to ratchet up the power of their pedagogy. Ambitious teachers (Grant, 2003) in the past have too often faced derision and resistance from their colleagues and administrators to accept conventional schooling outcomes. With state standards that promote inquiry-based teaching and learning, those teachers stand on far firmer ground.

Administrators who understand and embrace the ideas represented in their C3-inspired state standards have a leverage point with which to encourage change. There are no guarantees in education, however, and a host of factors could intervene allowing traditional teachers to maintain their practices. However, if the impact of the C3 Framework on state standards grows, then the potential for substantive change in Social Studies classrooms will continue to multiply.

CHAPTER 3. ARTICLE 2

Policy Letter to Kentucky Representative Tina Bojanowski: What is my response?

3.1 Introduction to Education Policy Letter Requested by State Representative Tina Bojanowski

On September 10, 2020, the president and CEO of Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions, Jim Waters, contacted members of the Kentucky Interim Joint Committee on Education with a letter entitled “Letter from Former KBE [Kentucky Board of Education] Board Members on Social Studies Standards.” (Waters’ Letter, 2020). The following chapter is an explanatory, evidence-driven policy letter to Kentucky State Representative Tina Bojanowski in response to lobbying efforts by a Kentucky organization to undermine and reconsider the adoption of Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies. As a member of the Interim Joint Committee on Education, Representative Bojanowski sought to better understand the claims made against the KAS for Social Studies and to address implications about the standards process, curriculum, and assessment.

As a co-creator of the standards and a curricular lead for the largest and most diverse district in the state I was in an ideal position to submit an evidence-based response to the Representative. The policy letter ultimately submitted to Representative Bojanowski traced state statutes, clarified misconceptions, contextualized concerns, and helped inform representatives and the Kentucky Department of Education about the practice-based realities of altering the standards. Consequently, the letter was shared with the Kentucky Board of Education, as well as the rest of the Kentucky Education Committee.

Mr. Waters' letter represented the last-ditch effort by one organization of individuals to change standards. This organization was vocal against the standards both in public comment of the standards and on social media. Despite their efforts, the Kentucky Board of Education unanimously passed the standards in February of 2019 (Kentucky Board of Education, 2019, February 6). Ironically, and perhaps hypocritically, the same KBE members who voted unanimously to pass the standards partnered with Mr. Waters to recall the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. Why did members of KBE in February 2019 suddenly want to change standards they passed in September of 2020? To what degree did the fact that Governor Andy Beshear replaced all the KBE members with his own board in December of 2019 play into their decision to recall the standards they approved is unknown but provides a helpful context of the on-going political nature of the standards adoption process (Elahi, 2019). To help Representative Bojanowski, I addressed in my own letter Mr. Waters' series of claims and evidence wherein he misrepresented the purpose of Social Studies and the adoption of Social Studies Standards, fundamentally misunderstood the difference between standards and curriculum, and the false equivocation between the statutes that govern standards and curriculum adoption across states.

3.2 Preparation and Methods for Policy Letter

The nature of the request required me to address Mr. Waters' major points. I used an inductive qualitative approach for "coding raw data and the constructing categories that capture relevant characteristics" (Merriam, 2001 p. 160). First, I divided the letter into its constituent explicit claims. In Mr. Waters' letter below, these relevant characteristics included verifying Kentucky statutes governing the adoption process, mentioning

comparisons between Kentucky and three other states—Indiana, Massachusetts, and Mississippi—and proposed lack of discipline specific standards items. Second, I looked for implicit claims stated within the letter including his representation of the purpose of Social Studies and how curriculum and standards were defined. For example, Mr. Waters seemed to conclude that the purpose of Social Studies was to know things, versus to develop disciplinary skills or to develop citizens. Additionally, the continued conflation of curriculum and standards, while apparent to educators, misrepresents the function of each and could confuse the role each served in the educational process. Using the explicit and implicit claims I created categories that specifically addressed both the claim and reasoning Mr. Waters presented.

There are times I made marginal changes to the original letter but kept the major arguments intact. I have updated spelling and grammatical errors. I have created tables to demonstrate the visuals I hyperlinked in the original. I have also added a short summary at the start of each section to remind readers of Mr. Waters' points in his letter. Additionally, there are three individuals that I refer to within this policy letter—Jim Waters, Richard Innes, and Gary Houchens. Mr. Waters' is the president and CEO of the Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions (BIPPs). He wrote the letter I'll be addressing. Included in his letter is Richard Innes, an education policy analyst. Finally, Dr. Gary Houchens, professor, a former member of the Kentucky Board of Education who advocated for and helped pass KAS for Social Studies, but then joined with other former members of KBE who are mentioned in Mr. Waters' letter. Finally, the letter had a place and time that needs context and an on-going timeline to show my choices and what I was responding to. Each subsection has a brief summary for that section.

3.3 Jim Waters' Letter to Members of the Interim Joint Committee on Education

This section includes Mr. Waters' complete letter. Take note of who the letter addresses, claims made, evidence provided, hyperbolic language used, and his call to action.

September 10, 2020

Dear Members of the Interim Joint Committee on Education,

I'm forwarding a letter to you and the other members of the Interim Joint Committee on Education along with the co-chairs of the Administrative Regulation Review Sub-Committee co-signed by eight former Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) members outlining their concerns regarding the commonwealth's current Social Studies standards which they approved in early 2019.

Due to some unsatisfactory developments following the release of the standards which make the many deficiencies in the standards much more evident, those former board members are now asking the legislature to recall, 704 KAR 8:060, the adopting regulation for the standards, for review. That review will almost undoubtedly lead to a legislative finding of deficiency regarding the regulation and return the standards to the Kentucky Department of Education for much-needed improvement.

It's difficult to overstate the problems with the standards. For one, the amount of detail omitted in the standards is staggering as Richard Innes, our education analyst, has addressed in past blogs and written testimony papers by offering meaningful comparisons between the Social Studies standards for Kentucky and those used by Indiana and Massachusetts.

Richard has now completed an even-more startling comparison between the Kentucky standards and those for Mississippi, a state not historically well-regarded for its

education quality. However, even Mississippi's standards contain important basic material all students should know but which is omitted from Kentucky's standards, including the Mayflower Compact, Lewis and Clark Expedition and the lives of important historical figures like Abraham Lincoln. (Please see the attached table [not included here] which contains other important historical figures and events mentioned in Mississippi's standards but regrettably missing in our own.)

The new standards also are woefully complete [*sic*]. For example, the "Disciplinary Standards" for high school never made it into the final version of the Social Studies standards. They exist today only in a separate, non-standards document which has no legal basis for creating either uniform minimum-content requirements across Kentucky or justification for items to appear on KPREP assessments.

The lack of specific details in Kentucky's Social Studies standards are also leading to some very ill-advised supporting materials for the standards which clearly push a very biased and highly ideological point of view that seriously undermines a full understanding of the true nature of the United States itself.

For these reasons and many more, I urge you then to lead your committees to schedule hearings into the current situation. Certainly, you should hear from as many of the actual board members who voted for these standards as can be assembled under our current COVID-19 shaped restrictions.

In addition, a formal review of 704 KAR 8:060 is essential. We anticipate that once the committees hear the full story about what's happening as a result of these deficient standards, they will recognize the need to find the regulation deficient so the standards can be sent back for a lot more badly needed work.

Thank you for your consideration of this important policy matter, and for your service to our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Jim Waters, President and CEO

Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions

3.4 Establishing Position for Responding to Representative Bojanowski

This section lays my professional position to establish my expertise and experiences with Social Studies standards, curriculum, and instruction. I also make it clear that I'm speaking about the collimation of my experiences and not as a representative of Jefferson County Public Schools.

9/12/20

Ms. Bojanowski,

Thank you for reaching out to comment on the letter by Mr. Waters (copied at the bottom of this letter). I have a lot of experience within Social Studies. As a high school teacher, doctoral student in curriculum and instruction, recipient of the 2017 National Outstanding Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year, 2014 KCSS Teacher of the Year, former president of the Kentucky Council for the Social Studies, writer of the new standards for Social Studies, and reviewer of the new Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) assessment by KDE/Pearson, I have been part of every major Social Studies initiative in the state. As the Instructional Lead for Social Studies at Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), I have championed the merits of civic education and have constructed a curriculum that is used by our teachers and many districts across the state. I have worked with teachers from all parts of Kentucky and receive daily emails to talk more

about the standards and Social Studies pedagogy. You can access our work from JCPS at www.jcpssocialstudies.com. We've made it open and available as one possible example, but of course, it is up to each locally controlled Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council to determine the curriculum for their school. My goal is simple, to transform our classrooms into Democratic Classrooms that seek to provide the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to build a healthy civic society. ***Finally, I write to you today as Ryan New, and not as a representative of JCPS.***

3.5 Explaining the statutes and process for enacting Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies.

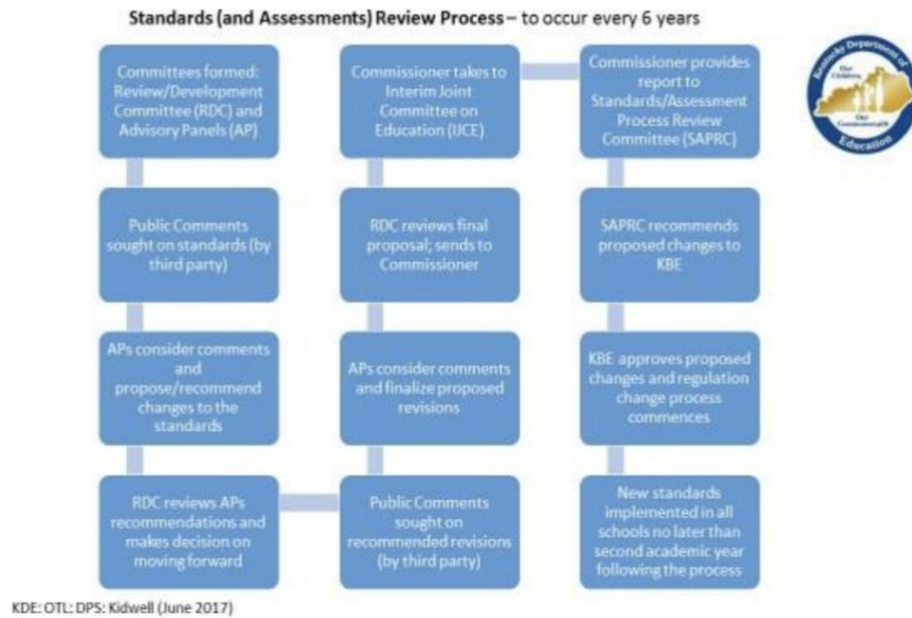
This section addresses one of the key points of Mr. Waters' letter, i.e., that the Social Studies were and are problematic and that the Interim Joint Committee on Education needs to intervene. This section addresses Mr. Waters' misrepresentation of how standards were adopted. Included in my letter are the process, governing statutes, and public comments by several stakeholders.

The letter by Mr. Waters is not accurate and creates a false controversy. There appears a misunderstanding of the standards process, the difference between standards and curriculum, and about the difference between how our state works versus other states around standards development. Mr. Waters' group has been against the standards from the very beginning and, having been unsuccessful in their efforts, have now tried to upend our standards implementation midstream. I'll detail, as well, the time, energy, and money it takes to roll out standards and how their efforts are an affront to quality, research based Social Studies education. I also believe that changing this process in the middle, when we

are seven months from state assessment and especially during a period of virtual learning, will establish a dangerous precedent for educational standards and the process outlined 704 KAR 8:060 and detailed in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Kentucky Department of Education, 2018, Revised August, 2018
Social Studies Standards Revision Timeline Overview

- **January/February** – Standards committee call for participation; open current social studies standards for public comment/feedback
- **March** – Initial Social Studies AP meeting
- **April** – Initial Social Studies RDC meeting; second Social Studies AP meeting
- **May** – Joint subcommittees meet to review and revise the draft standards; Social Studies RDC meets for the second time
- **June** – Joint subcommittees meet to review and revise the draft standards
- **July/August** – Open draft standards for public comment/feedback
- **September/October** – Social Studies APs meet for the third time; Social Studies RDCs meet for the third time
- **October/November** – Commissioner takes to Interim Joint Committee on Education for review
- **November** – Standards/Assessment Review and Process Committee reviews
- **December** – First reading by the KBE
- **February** – Second reading by KBE



The process laid out in Table 3.1 by Senate Bill 1 (2017) was followed—from the development of standards, review process, to adoption. Our standards were written *by and for* Kentucky teachers. References to other states implies that those states better know our students. This is an idea that I, as an educator who works with teachers and students, reject.

Interestingly, I would assume that a libertarian think tank, promoting itself on its website as

“Kentucky’s first and only free-market think tank and is an affiliate of the State Policy Network (SPN), which was founded by South Carolina entrepreneur Thomas Roe in 1992 at the urging of Ronald Reagan and has grown to a powerful movement of 64 independent state think tanks which are securing lasting social change at the state and local level.” (Bluegrass Institute, n.d.)

might value the efforts at the state level for developing standards written by Kentucky teachers per regulation developed by Kentucky state lawmakers and local curriculum developed and approved by local SBDMs. Instead, this group promotes more state control over curriculum, going against state statute, and forgoing the efforts of state educators and lawmakers.

Those former KBE members included in the letter are responsible for its passage and know well the procedures and statutes, having initially followed them to adopt the standards. A first question, then, is why suddenly this change of heart, one that calls into question the laws and work of teachers, and demands such urgent attention? Telling is a quote that comes from Mr. Innes’s blog:

“Bottom Line: When a leading member of the board of education that passed the Social Studies standards now admits those standards are very problematic, it’s time for our legislators to get involved. The standards are adopted by regulation, and any member of the Administrative Regulation Review Committee, and maybe even a member of the subject matter committee, which in this case would be the Interim

Committee on Education, can call for a review of that adopting regulation. After review, the committee can find a regulation deficient and send it, and in this case the Social Studies standards incorporated by reference, back to the Kentucky Board of Education for more work” (Innes, 2020, September 1).

Admitting that you made a mistake after following the law, then calling into question the very laws that were followed is disingenuous on the part of those former KBE members now calling for new revisions. It is true that the Interim Joint Committee on Education can call for a review of regulations and the standards but can’t amend the regulation. Their statutes help ensure the process determined by statute is followed by KDE, which it was. Furthermore, Mr. Waters’ group had opportunities to express their concerns, which they did, through the public comment periods, both through surveys and allowances during monthly KBE sessions. Standards writers and reviewers looked at these comments and addressed them to the satisfaction of KBE, which voted unanimously, *twice*, to adopt the standards.

Therefore it is frustrating to see former KBE members signing off on something they advocated to adopt. In full transparency per KRS 158.6453, which called for a transparent revision process, *Kentucky Teacher* published articles explaining the process to the public. In an article on October 16, 2018, then Kentucky Commissioner and form Governor Matt Bevin appointee Dr. Wayne Lewis, applauded the thousands of comments, the acknowledgment that 86% of those who left comments felt confident in the standards without any modification, but recognized the on-going work needed to improve the standards per public comment and additional stakeholders’ requests:

“While Social Studies standards have been contentious in the past, I believe that this advisory panel has done a nice job of creating standards that will benefit our students for years to come,” said Lewis. “I’m excited that so many Kentuckians have reviewed and commented, but this is not the end of the process. I look forward to continued input and conversation with stakeholders” (Kentucky Teacher, 2018, October 16).

Months later, After the February vote--the second by KBE--Dr. Lewis expressed his approval of not just the standards, but the process which the standards went through--the same process being questioned by Mr. Waters and others. In a *Kentucky Teacher* article from May 16, 2019, Dr. Lewis applauded the process and the vital role of teachers in the process:

“We have, in fact, followed the law to the letter,” Lewis said. “These revised standards have been written, not by the Kentucky Department of Education or the Kentucky Board of Education, but they have been written by teams of Kentucky teachers.” (Kentucky Teacher, 2019, May 16)

The standards became law on July 5, 2019. Schools, teachers, and SBDMs immediately began creating curriculum to help prepare students for the shifts to come. KDE, because it cannot promote curriculum, provided guidelines and resources at www.kystandards.org for teachers to help them shift their curriculum and instructional practices to mirror the intent of the standards. Schools have invested large amounts of professional development resources, time, and money in teacher training. In JCPS alone, I estimate that the district has spent at least \$600,000 so far on standards adoption and resources for Social Studies,

not to mention what schools have spent. Educators have already started buying their own resources and are teaching the standards. Pre-service university programs around the state have transitioned methods courses, vendors have adapted to help meet the needs of the standards, and students are already being taught. Is Mr. Waters and those KBE members going to address this to the public whose tax revenue is being rightfully used to carry out needs for our students and has followed the letter of the law?

Some of the stakeholders have applauded the mission and realities of the new standards. Dr. Susan Weston from the Prichard Committee--who originally left poor reviews after the first public comment period and later reversed course to advocate for the standards to become law after their concerns were addressed in subsequent standards revisions--wrote the following blog post entitled *Problem-Solving: Our Social Studies Standards Call for Deep Engagement* on August 6, 2019:

“We want Kentucky students to be increasingly able to “Think and solve problems in school situations and in a variety of situations they will encounter in life.” Yesterday’s post looked at how our science standards call for deep work to meet that expectation from our 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act. Now, let’s turn to Social Studies, where our standards value problem-solving that includes attention to diverse perspectives and sustained work to develop shared and democratic decisions” (Weston, 2019, August 6).

Dr. Weston sees the value of moving students away from an antiquarian system of rote memorization of a list to challenging students and teachers to prepare for the demands of a strong and sustained democracy. She sees, like Social Studies teachers across the state, that students learn when they are challenged to think, to question, to investigate, and to do

it collaboratively. We can use these standards to help build Democratic Classrooms that mirror the larger knowledge, skills, and experiences in a democratic society through a series of videos entitled:

- How do I lay the foundations for a Democratic Classroom?
- How to shift to inquiry-based learning?
- How do I scaffold inquiry-based learning?
- How do I approach an inquiry-based lesson?

Conversely, Mr. Waters' opinion that the standards are lacking because they do not comply with "Control + F" searches for keywords (like the Mississippi/Kentucky comparison) is another issue that derails the skills and experiences we want our students to live and breathe in a democracy. It is intellectually lazy and comes without context, argument, or reason. It is true that the standards do not include specific terms, but neither did many of them appear in the 4.1 standards we've moved away from (Kentucky Department of Education, 2010).

Those specific terms are problematic when trying to build standards that align to SB1 (2017)'s charge to "focus on critical knowledge, skills and capacities needed for success in the global economy and result in fewer but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning." (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453). It is a specious argument that a list of people, events, or ideas is the soul of what Social Studies is about. Rote memorization of facts and figures is not reflective of the Civic purpose of Social Studies, germane to the disciplines of history, civics, geography, or economics, the goals of Senate Bill 1 (2017), the vision of Kentucky Standards writers and reviews or the views of KDE or KBE (at the time). They are not even reflective of the depth of knowledge (DOK) level expressed for

the new assessment slated for Spring 2020. This new test, by the way, will be built upon an Assessment Framework, (Kentucky Department of Education, Assessments, Spring, 2020) which also went through public comment, (Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, 2019, June 28) and will be field tested as soon as we have enough in person participation. This is how far we are into this process.

I'm certain that Mr. Innes will tout Dr. John Hattie's effect size (Hattie, 2012) around inquiry-based learning because Dr. Hattie gave it a low effect size on student achievement. Mr. Innes has not investigated the research Dr. Hattie used, which was based upon inquiry in *science* classrooms. Inquiry is in Social Studies' DNA. We've had it all along, considering that the Greek *ἱστορία* (historia) is our word for History. Herodotus, western culture's first labeled historian, wrote his *Histories* (read *Inquiries*) as to why the Greeks were able to defeat the Persians in the Persian wars. These standards return Social Studies to their roots after years of poorly written, "check the box" standards that resulted in the rote memorized multiple choice tests that Mr. Waters and Mr. Innes call for.

I'll wrap up this overview of the value of inquiry-based learning with a quote from *Blueprinting: An Inquiry Based Curriculum*:

“Without a doubt, inquiry-based teaching and learning asks more of teachers and students. Teachers can't simply stand and deliver; students can't simply sit and receive. Inquiry means engagement with ideas and between and among teachers and students...Teachers and students willing to invest in inquiry will face some challenges, but the questions, tasks, and sources with which they engage should help them navigate those challenges successfully.” (Swan, Grant, & Lee, 2019 p. 24).

They are absolutely correct. There is a stark difference between the experiences *guaranteed* between the type of standards we have now and the type of standards that Mr. Waters and former KBE members advocate. Standards represent what we want all students to be able to know and do.

I can speak personally about my former students and my current ones. I want them engaging in the world around them, using inquiry to explore major concepts and practices, and most importantly, having the skills set to navigate their democracy. A list of facts, people, and events will never prepare students for the challenges in their own lives and can erode the needs of our democracy.

3.6 Establishing the Purpose of Social Studies, Social Studies Standards, and Social Studies Assessment

This section addresses Mr. Waters' subtle attempt to define social studies as a series of known information, his unfounded claim that standards are "very biased and highly ideological point of view that seriously undermines a full understanding of the true nature of the United States itself," and concerns around state assessment. I stress in this section the civic goal of the Social Studies, historical problems with relegating Social Studies as a series of information to be memorized, and how the assessment aligns to standards.

"The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." (National Council for Social Studies, n.d.; Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). This mission of NCSS is likewise

used by KAS for Social Studies teachers to reaffirm the purpose of Social Studies. Making better citizens in a democracy is key to our educational charge. Standards that rely upon facts and dates, each of which could be looked-up easily in the information age does not educate better citizens. Citizens need to understand how to use the inquiry process--asking questions, investigating through key disciplines, to use evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action all in order to be more informed, critical thinkers who are working to improve our society.

Having to memorize facts and dates is not enjoyable and never has been. The 1982 article “Why Kids don’t like Social Studies” spells out why Social Studies, even though it is to help engage our students in democratic norms and processes, is among students’ least favorite, emphasis mine:

“Others felt that they spent too much time learning trivial details, memorizing facts, or experiencing routine, predictable teaching methods. Typical responses about routine methods were, *we just take notes, take tests, and watch the news, or It was just read the chapter, do a worksheet, take the test.*” (Schug, Todd, & Beery, 1982 p. 10).

The negative comments by students about Social Studies reaffirms many of the concerns expressed by people in the field for several years. Clearly, many students find Social Studies content to be uninteresting because the information is too far removed from their own experiences, too detailed for clear understanding, or repeats information learned earlier.

This article was written the year I was born and tells a story that reflects concerns from a time before my mother and father were born. The list accompanying Mr. Waters’

letter makes it clear what this group values--listing out facts in the form of people, events, etc. not realizing that real educators don't have time to cover all of those elements in depth. Teaching students to inquire, investigate, reach conclusions and take action is a tough process, made more difficult when trying to cover a list of people and events of the past.

I want JCPS teachers and students to engage in the authentic experience of learning the skills Social Studies offers to better train our students to be thinkers, not remember-ers. Teachers, former KBE members, and the public have made it clear that they want what these new standards provide. Our current standards establish this foundation so that local districts per KRS 160.345, which outlined school-based decision-making councils, make it clear that curriculum should and does happen at the local level through SBDM councils (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.345) can produce quality curriculum to operationalize our standards. Furthermore, Mr. Waters' group has not made clear how these lists would be used, but I can attest that if these curriculum items enter into our standards the assessments that follow will be the same old multiple-choice questions that result in "drill and kill" instructional methods so detested by students and teachers.

Additionally, Mr. Water's inclusion of a list of what is not included does not reflect the totality of Social Studies or the standards. We are not just history teachers, but civics, economics, and geography teachers as well. Per the new standards, our students will learn civics, geography, economics, and history as well as the inquiry process. Note that KDE's Assessment Blueprint makes clear that the inquiry standards are 50% of the state assessment and each discipline is represented equally at 12.5% each (Kentucky Department of Education, Assessment Blueprint, 2019). To advocate for only one discipline completely misses the point of Social Studies and Kentucky's new standards.

Now, imagine adding hundreds of names, dates, and events to a smaller piece of what will be assessed, and one can easily see that students' Social Studies experience becomes a stone skipping across the water. What's more, the DOK 1 (Recall and Reproduction), (Kentucky Department of Education, Assessment Blueprint 2019) which is the lowest level of knowledge assessed states that it is "Limited to a basic demonstration of Social Studies skills rather than a recall of Social Studies facts..." Not only has the public made it clear that they want the standards, but they've also agreed with how the KDE's Social Studies Assessment Blueprint should shape state assessments. The purpose is to teach standards that align to our democratic ethos, not create a Google laden list disconnected from authentic disciplinary learning.

A final word on the Assessment. I was on the focus group and the item review team for the standards aligned assessment. I can attest, but not disclose, that the assessment is aligned to inquiry and disciplinary standards. We have a test where students have to think, not just remember, and they have to understand primary and secondary sources, construct explanations, and construct evidence-based claims. As a point of comparison, the Quality Core ACT, End of Course high school state assessment asked inconsequential questions like "What are the dates of the Civil War?" and "What was James Hargreaves known for?" Finally, we have standards and an assessment that reflects the nature of Social Studies, its disciplines, and the needs of our students.

3.7 Understanding the Process of Enacting KAS for Social Studies

Mr. Waters' letter is addressed to the Interim Joint Committee of Education which ensures that the standards adoption process was followed to the letter of the law. Within

his argument he advocates for changes and approaches that run contrary to state statutes. This section adds more depth into the state statutes that guided both the standards adoption process, and curriculum development.

As aforementioned, here again are the statutes that align to the process that was followed by KAS for Social Studies' adoption on July 5, 2019 and detailed by 704 KAR 8:060 Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. I've referenced these above and throughout this statement, but, again, I want to make this clear.

Our state is *locally controlled* meaning that SBDM's have the power per KRS160.345, KRS 160.290, KRS 158.645 and KRS 158.6541 to create curriculum at the local level. KDE has been clear that they are not curriculum writers because our laws do not grant them this authority. As I'll detail below, Mr. Waters and Mr. Innes continually conflate standards and curriculum. First, let's look at the specific statues outlined by Senate Bill 1 (2017).

Senate Bill 1 (2017) "calls for the KDE to implement a process for establishing new, as well as reviewing all approved academic standards and aligned assessments beginning in the 2017-18 school year" (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453). The current schedule calls for content areas to be reviewed each year and every six years thereafter on a rotating basis. The KDE collects public comment and input on all of the draft standards for 30 days prior to finalization. Senate Bill 1 (2017) called for content standards that:

- Focus on critical knowledge, skills and capacities needed for success in the global economy and
- Result in fewer but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning,

- Communicate expectations more clearly and concisely to teachers, parents, students and citizens;
- Are based on evidence-based research;
- Consider international benchmarks; and
- Ensure the standards are aligned from elementary to high school to postsecondary education so students can be successful at each education level.” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453)

Note the emphasis on more critical knowledge, skills for in-depth standards, success in a global economy, and evidence based. There is nothing in Mr. Water’s letter that suggests he or the former KBE members understands the letter of the statute in their drive to undermine the standards and its established process.

The process for standards creation was followed pursuant KRS 158.6453(2) which “requires the Kentucky Department of Education to implement a comprehensive process for the review of academic standards and assessment with the advice of a standards and assessments review and development committee. This administrative regulation incorporates by reference the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies, which contain the general courses of study and academic content standards of Social Studies, for use in Kentucky's common schools (detailed and bolded for emphasis below)

- (c) 1. The department shall establish four (4) standards and assessments review and development committees, with each committee composed of a **minimum of six (6) Kentucky public school teachers and a minimum of two (2) representatives from Kentucky institutions of higher education, including at least one (1) representative from a public institution of higher education. Each committee member shall teach in the subject area**

that his or her committee is assigned to review and have no prior or current affiliation with a curriculum or assessment resources vendor.

- (c) 2. One (1) of the four (4) committees shall be assigned to focus on the review of language arts and writing academic standards and assessments, one (1) on the review of mathematics academic standards and assessments, one (1) on the review of science academic standards and assessments, and one (1) **on the review of Social Studies academic standards and assessments.**
- (d) 2. Three (3) advisory panels shall be assigned to each standards and assessments review and development committee. One (1) panel shall review the standards and assessments for kindergarten through grade five (5), one (1) shall review the standards and assessments for grades six (6) through eight (8), and one (1) shall review the standards and assessments for grades nine (9) through twelve (12). 3. Each advisory panel shall be composed of at least one (1) representative from a **Kentucky** institution of higher education and a **minimum of six (6) Kentucky public school teachers who teach in the grade level and subject reviewed by the advisory panel to which they are assigned and have no prior or current affiliation with a curriculum or assessment resources vendor.**
- (g) 2. KRS 158.6453 The review process implemented under this subsection shall be an open, **transparent process that allows all Kentuckians an opportunity to participate. The department shall ensure the public's assistance in reviewing and suggesting changes to the standards and alignment adjustments** to corresponding state assessments by establishing a Web site dedicated to collecting comments by the public and educators..."
(Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453)

As referenced above, these standards went through all the necessary steps to become the standards they are today. *Kentucky* teachers were the writers, *Kentucky* institutions of higher education and public institutions were reviewers, and the public was afforded multiple public comment periods. Mr. Waters' group had an opportunity to

comment, and they did. *Kentucky* teachers, as standards writers--not Mississippi or Massachusetts teachers were able to take those comments and address the perceived needs. *Kentucky* institutions and stakeholders across the state reviewed and left comments about our work. The *Kentucky* Board of Education voted twice to pass it. They became and should remain law until six years have passed and they're eligible for review again in six years as outlined by Senate Bill 1 (2017).

3.8 The Difference Between State Standards and Curriculum

This section highlights Mr. Waters' and Mr. Innes' constant conflation between standards (whose process is determined at the state level) and curriculum (which is determined by local site-based decisions making councils - SBDMs). I then provide examples of how standards translate into curriculum. I also highlight egregious claims by former Kentucky Board of Education member Gary Houchens that misrepresent inquiry standards.

Mr. Waters' letter does not distinguish between standard and curriculum often conflating their purpose and meaning.

- Standards are what we want students to know and be able to do.
- Curriculum is how students are taught and the resources, contexts, and experience to make standards meaningful.

Our standards, based upon the fewer, more in-depth charges of Senate Bill 1 (2017), focus on larger disciplinary concepts and practices that are instrumental in laying a foundation for understanding the facts, dates, and events so often cited by Mr. Waters'

peers. To have fewer standards, you have to consider those larger concepts and practices essential to the disciplines we represent. The concepts and practices from the newly adopted KAS for Social Studies are shown in Table 3.2. These are the large concepts we want students to use as lenses through the inquiry process (i.e., questioning, using evidence, communicating conclusions).

Table 3.2 Kentucky Department of Education, 2019
2019 Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Practices

Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Practices			
Civics (C)	Economics (E)	Geography (G)	History (H)
Civic and Political Institutions (CP)	Microeconomics (MI)	Migration and Movement (MM)	Change and Continuity (CH)
Roles and Responsibilities of a Citizen (RR)	Macroeconomics (MA)	Human Interactions and Interconnections (HI)	Cause and Effect (CE)
Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles (CV)	Specialization, Trade and Interdependence (ST)	Human Environment Interaction (HE)	Conflict and Compromise (CO)
Processes, Rules and Laws (PR)	Incentives, Choices and Decision-making (IC)	Geographic Reasoning (GR)	Kentucky History (KH)
Kentucky Government (KGO)	Kentucky Economics (KE)	Kentucky Geography (KGE)	

These disciplinary concepts and practices help organize and anchor standards through a K-12 vertical alignment. These disciplinary concepts and practices organize 8th grade history standards which thematically focuses on United States History 1600-1877 (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). Next to each concept and practice you can see the new direction of the history standards, explaining and analyzing major changes and continuities, causes and effects, conflicts and compromises, and how Kentucky fits into a larger narrative. Without these larger understandings lists of individuals and events are without context or meaning. These concepts and practices are just as valid historically as they are for students in a democracy. Focusing on perennial issues enables teachers and students to make deep connections to their own lives. Focusing on individuals and events oversimplifies historical periodization and undermines contemporary connections.

Note in Table 3.3 that lists of people are not necessary because a teacher could never teach these standards without looking at the actions and ideas of abolitionists like Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, but also Kentuckians like John G. Fee or Cassius Clay.

Table 3.3 Concept and Practice: 8th Grade History Disciplinary Standards

Concept and Practice	8th Grade History Disciplinary Standards
<p>H: Change and Continuity</p> <p>H: Cause and Effect</p>	<p>8.H.CH.1 Explain the role changing political, social and economic perspectives had on the lives of diverse groups of people in the Colonial Era.</p> <p>8.H.CH.2 Analyze how social and ideological philosophies impacted various movements in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.</p> <p>8.H.CH.3 Explain how political, social and economic perspectives in the United States led to the rise in sectionalism between 1840-1860.</p> <p>8.H.CH.4 Evaluate the impact technological innovations made on agriculture, trade and commerce in the years leading up to the Civil War between 1840-1860.</p> <p>8.H.CH.5 Explain examples of political, geographic, social and economic changes and consistencies in the different regions of the United States between 1860-1877.</p> <p>8.H.CE.1 Analyze how the political, geographic, social and economic choices of the Colonial Era impacted the Revolutionary Period and Early Republic Period.</p> <p>8.H.CE.2 Analyze the cause and effect of Westward Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction on the diverse populations of the United States.</p>
<p>H: Conflict and Compromise</p>	<p>8.H.CO.1 Explain how colonial resistance to British control led to the Revolutionary War.</p> <p>8.H.CO.2 Describe the conflicts and compromises that shaped the development of the U.S. government between 1783-1877.</p> <p>8.H.CO.3 Analyze how economic, social, ideological and political changes led to sectional and national tensions, inspiring reform movements between 1840-1860.</p> <p>8.H.CO.4 Explain how sectionalism and slavery within the United States led to conflicts between 1820-1877.</p>
<p>H: Kentucky History</p>	<p>8.H.KH.1 Articulate Kentucky's role in early American history from the earliest colonial settlement to 1877.</p> <p>8.H.KH.2 Examine patterns of collaboration and conflict between immigrants to Kentucky and those already in residence from 1775 to 1877.</p>

Where are Kentuckians on their list? In JCPS's curriculum at www.jcpsocialstudies.com not only will students be exposed to what Waters and Innes claim is missing but students will be reading historical actors in their own words. Gone are the days of textbook curriculums which undermine teacher autonomy and student capacity and creativity. Gone are the days of worksheets and questions at the end of the chapter.

For the first time teachers can add locals (historically and contemporary) into the curriculum and this is a big win for Kentucky education and a bigger win for the students and teachers. Now, consider that eighth graders have this as their foundation, coupled with the fact that these represent just 12.5% of the assessment for 8th grade (Kentucky

Department of Education Assessment Blueprint, 2019). Imagine adding in concepts and practices that frame our geography, civics, and economics standards (never discussed by Mr. Waters) and the inquiry standards (questioning, weighting and considering evidence, and explaining and making claims while engaging in democratic processes and procedures). Taken together, this makes for a high-quality opportunity to build a good curriculum.

The JCPS built a high-quality curriculum using the standards which can be found at www.jcpsocialstudies.com. In this 8th grade (United States History 1600-1877) example, we will examine just one history standard, though it is within the context of other disciplinary standards. This comes from the 5th unit, which is framed by the compelling question “How does power create conflict?” (1787-1800s). Here is one supporting question, “How did Hamilton and Jefferson’s economic views create conflict?” that shows not only the curricular elements (top of the image) but the instructional elements as well (bottom) of the page.

Table 3.4 Example of JCPS Curriculum Supporting Question “How did Hamilton and Jefferson’s economic views create conflict?”

CQ: How does power create conflict? (1787-1800)

SQ #6: How did Hamilton and Jefferson’s economic views create conflict?

Disclaimer: Our curriculum reflects the goals of [JCPS's Racial Equity Policy](#) as we [Rethink Social Studies](#) when implementing [KAS for Social Studies](#). Because of the nature of historical sources, some sources may contain historical terms, phrases, and images that are offensive to modern readers. Teachers should select and possibly add new sources for inquiries with the consideration of and/or collaboration with students. Sources should be challenged, disrupted, and evaluated through [disciplinary](#), [critical](#), and [information literacies](#). Instructional practices should include [Source Analysis Tools](#) and [“Safely In and Safely Out”](#) as two practical means for engaging literacies and discussion in Democratic Classrooms. Teachers should consider [planning for strong emotions](#) and reflect upon their [comfort level with different topics](#) in preparation for contentious discussions in Democratic Classrooms

Curriculum: KAS for Social Studies

Question Standard	8.I.Q.2 Generate supporting questions, using the disciplines of social studies, to help answer compelling questions in U.S. history between 1600-1877.
Economic Standard	8.E.MI.1 Describe the impact of supply and demand on equilibrium prices and quantities produced in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.
Economic Standard	8.E.MA.1 Analyze differing perspectives regarding the role of government in the economy, including the role of money and banking.
Using Evidence Standard	8.I.U.E.3 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection to answer compelling and supporting questions.
Communicating Conclusions Standard	8.I.CC.1 Construct explanations, using reasoning, correct sequence, examples and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations related to the development of the United States.

**Adjust inquiry standards based upon student need and teacher discretion.*

Instruction: Inquiry Lesson Aligned to KAS for Social Studies

Questions	<p>Compelling Question: How does power create conflict? (1787-1800)</p> <p>Supporting Question: How did Hamilton and Jefferson’s economic view create conflict?</p> <p>Engaging the Supporting Question: </p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tasks	<p>1. Organizational Task:</p> <p>2. Formative Performance Task:</p>	
Sources	<p>Source A: Thomas Jefferson, <i>Notes on Virginia</i> “Query XIX The present state of manufactures, commerce, interior, and exterior trade?” 1785</p> <p>Source B: Alexander Hamilton’s Final Version of the Report on the Subject of Manufactures, December 5, 1791</p> <p>Source C: Alexander Hamilton, "Opinion on the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States" 1791</p> <p>Source D: Thomas Jefferson "Opinion on the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States" 1791</p> <p>Source E: "Economic Growth in America 1700-1840"</p>	

How did JCPS Social Studies teachers come up with our questions and align them to standards? The curriculum was aligned to standards, researched within Social Studies pedagogy, were reflective of our disciplinary knowledge, and were in the best interest of our students and our state. In Table 3.5, other supporting questions within this unit illustrate

how disciplinary standards align to the supporting questions and scaffold students to the compelling question.

Table 3.5 JCPS Supporting Questions for Unit 5, JCPS Curriculum

Supporting Questions	Investigation: Disciplinary Standards
[2] <u>Why did Anti-Federalists oppose the Constitution?</u>	8.H.CO.2 Describe the conflicts and compromises that shaped the development of the U.S. government between 1783- 1877.
	8.C.CP.3 Explain how a system of checks and balances is intended to prevent a concentration of power in one branch.
[3] <u>How did the addition of the Bill of Rights help ratify the Constitution?</u>	8.H.CO.2 Describe the conflicts and compromises that shaped the development of the U.S. government between 1783- 1877.
	8.C.RR.1 Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to the definition of who is a citizen, expansion of that definition over time and changes in participation over time.
[4] <u>How did the Whiskey Rebellion compare to Shays Rebellion?</u>	8.C.CP.3 Explain how a system of checks and balances is intended to prevent a concentration of power in one branch.
	8.H.CO.2 Describe the conflicts and compromises that shaped the development of the U.S. government between 1783- 1877.
[5] <u>Why did political parties develop?</u>	8.C.RR.1 Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to the definition of who is a citizen, expansion of that definition over time and changes in participation over time.
	8.C.CP.2 Explain the origins, functions and structure of government, with reference to the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights and other founding documents, and their impacts on citizens.
[6] <u>How did Hamilton and Jefferson's economic views create conflict?</u>	8.E.MI.1 Describe the impact of supply and demand on equilibrium prices and quantities produced in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.
	8.E.MA.1 Analyze differing perspectives regarding the role of government in the economy, including the role of money and banking.
[7] <u>How did the Alien and Sedition Acts create internal problems for the United States?</u>	8.C.RR.1 Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to the definition of who is a citizen, expansion of that definition over time and changes in participation over time.
	8.G.MM.1 Interpret how political, environmental, social and economic factors led to both forced and voluntary migration in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.

Notice that when it comes to curriculum, teachers are able to make choices about how these standards will be taught and what resources they use to help students prepare for state assessments. Unlike previous standards, the new KAS for Social Studies provides flexibility for teachers and students to cover different ideas, questions, and investigations. For example, the history standard 8.H.CO.2 *Describe the conflicts and compromises that*

shaped the development of the U.S. government between 1783-1877 is from the “Conflict and Compromise” concept and practice (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). This is not the only place this standard exists in our curriculum because there are enough conflicts and compromises within US History that it merits its own concept. In Table 3.5, I used it to build curriculum around the debate between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists in two different examples (ratification of the Constitution and how the Bill of Rights helped alleviate some Anti-Federalist concerns) and the conflict between tensions created by the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution by looking at two rural rebellions that exemplify the power of each of those respective national governments. Note that these are not listed in the standards, but they don’t need to be because *educators know how to translate standards into curriculum*. I know and trust Kentucky teachers to be quality educators as did Senate Bill 1 (2017).

In building an entire curriculum with the goal of building Democratic Classrooms, lack of evidence for Mr. Waters claim is evident:

“The lack of specific details in Kentucky’s Social Studies standards are also leading to some very ill-advised supporting materials for the standards which clearly push a very biased and highly ideological point of view that seriously undermines a full understanding of the true nature of the United States itself.” (Waters’ Letter, 2020)

First, I do not see, nor have I experienced, what he is referring to. The standards provide many opportunities for teachers to build, something that those outside education may not fully understand. The specific details Mr. Waters refers to are found in the curriculum built from the standards. In this is a small snippet of our curriculum, I’ve

provided specific details and they're open for all to see and use per their SBDM's discretion.

Second, where, precisely, are “very biased and highly ideological points of view”? No teacher is saying there is “ill-advised supporting materials” that “push a very biased and high ideological point of view.” But I can see how an organization built on ideological points of view can reach this conclusion as it is the foundation of their organization to promote its brand. But teachers, higher institutions of learning, community partners, or KDE are not claiming this. Furthermore, to whom should we turn and trust to get a “full understanding of the true nature of the United States itself”? (Waters’ Letter, 2020) This seems overly nationalistic, and our history is not a monolith. *E Pluribus Unum* embodies the contentious nature of histories (plural) that make up our country.

It is likely Mr. Waters might counter by saying this is a small sample or if the standards don’t say it, then how can you guarantee teachers will know or how it can be assessed. To address the first, one can recall from our JCPS website that the curriculum we develop is per our authority to do so. To address the second, that is precisely what the law and Mr. Waters’ organization advocates, local control determines curriculum, which was done, and KDE works with teachers and a vendor to align the assessment to the standards which was also done.

Additionally, former KBE member Dr. Houchens, in an unbecoming, projectionist post entitled “Kentucky teachers are being encouraged to use "inquiry methods" to indoctrinate students in Leftist attitudes,” (Houchens, 2020, August 31) echoes Mr. Waters’ baseless and scaremongering assertion. I counter with educators long respected in Social Studies education. Barton and Levstik wrote in *Teaching for the Common Good*:

“This brings us to a principal advantage of inquiry: It gives us something to talk about ... The kind of pluralistic democracy we envision depends on deliberation among equals in pursuit of shared knowledge and understanding. Without inquiry, this kind of communication is unlikely to take place, but the sources of knowledge and belief are either hidden or unquestioned ... However, inquiry makes the process of knowledge construction more transparent: By laying out questions, evidence, and conclusions in clear view, inquiry allows ideas to be challenged without attacking anyone’s identity or belief system.” (Barton & Levstik, 2009 p. 191)

To be fair, I can see how those outside of education and with little knowledge of Social Studies research might have difficulty understanding what happens inside schools and classrooms. It also completely ignores the national trend established by the publication of the C3 Framework by the National Council for the Social Studies in 2013.

3.9 Comparing Kentucky standards processes to other states

Mr. Waters’ letter makes false comparison between Kentucky and other states’ standards. He does not consider the individual state statutes that determined those standards and he bring up again, the false dichotomy of curriculum and standards. I show the differences between Kentucky’s statutes and process with Massachusetts and Mississippi, two states Mr. Waters mentions.

Surprisingly, Mr. Waters advocates for other state standards. This was already covered. KRS 158.6453(2) clearly dictates that Kentucky teachers write Kentucky standards and this process was followed to the letter of the law per Dr. Lewis’ endorsement (Kentucky Teacher, 2018, October 16) and in KBE’s twice unanimous vote for adoption

(Kentucky Board of Education, 2019, February 6). However, to put it briefly, other states are different because different states have different laws that affect the outcome of policies and procedures.

Massachusetts is not a locally controlled state (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018), their department of education is required by law to establish the standards and curriculum framework for the state. Kentucky laws do not reflect this process, thus any efforts to mirror Massachusetts goes against Kentucky statute. As is evidenced by the laws noted below, it is the state that determines the standards and curriculum. Kentucky has a process to build standards, but it is up to SBDMs to determine locally their school's curriculum. Mr. Innes, mentioned in Mr. Waters' letter as a "policy expert", touts Massachusetts Standards, but our laws do not allow the type of standards he endorses.

Massachusetts has two statutes that govern their standards and curriculum development. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, Section 1D states "The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 directed the state Board and Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop academic standards in core subjects setting forth the 'skills, competencies, and knowledge' that students should possess at each grade or cluster of grades, with high expectations for student performance." (The 192nd General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, General Laws Part I, Title XII, Section 1D).

Additionally, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, Section 1E states that "The law further directs the Board and Commissioner to institute a process for drawing up curriculum frameworks for each of the core subjects, and to update, improve, and refine

the standards and frameworks periodically.” (The 192nd General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, General Laws Part I, Title XII, Section 1E). The state Board of Education determines both a process for standards and the process for developing curriculum frameworks. These are housed and directed at the state level. While Kentucky’s Board of Education determines the process for standards development, it is SBDMs that determine curriculum frameworks.

Mr. Waters’ comparison with Mississippi is again misinformed. He makes the statement that Kentucky isn’t even up to par with a state “not historically well-regarded for its education quality ... but even they [*sic*] contain important basic material all students should know...” (Waters’ Letter, 2020). Mississippi’s state social studies standards, which like Kentucky’s, are adopted at the state level, while curriculum is developed locally. Mississippi has “objectives” that break down the standards, but it is not clear how they are assessed or used as curricula (Mississippi Department of Education, 2018). For example, in the fourth-grade example, in the CI.4.1 Civics Standard, “Describe Mississippi’s entry into statehood,” there are three objectives for teachers to consider when developing curriculum to teach this standard. These “objectives” help teachers break down key elements of the standards, but as you’ll notice in Table 3.6, are not standards themselves.

Table 3.6 Mississippi 4th Grade Civics Standards and Objectives

FOURTH GRADE	
THEME: MISSISSIPPI STUDIES AND REGIONS	
CIVICS	
STANDARD	OBJECTIVE(S)
CI.4.1 Describe Mississippi's entry into statehood.	1. Describe the process by which the Mississippi territory was admitted to the United States. 2. Define political and geographic reasons for changes in location of Mississippi's state capitol. 3. Examine the structure of local government and its relationship to state government.
CI.4.2 Identify people in positions of power and how they can influence people's rights and freedom.	1. Identify elected leaders of the community and state. 2. Examine the rights and freedoms guaranteed to citizens.
CI.4.3 Identify rights and responsibilities as a citizen of your community and state.	1. Examine responsibilities as citizens, such as obeying rules and laws. 2. Discuss active citizenship and adults' responsibility to vote, to understand important issues, to serve on a jury.

Kentucky standards do not use the term “objectives” but “clarification statements” that help teachers make greater meaning of the standards. These clarifications statements included K-8 and were part of the standards document passed by KBE.

As a point of comparison, the Kentucky clarification statements include information to provide possible direction and nuance to the standards (Table 3.7). For example, “4.C.RR.1 Describe the importance of civic participation, and locate examples in past and current events”, is paired with clarifications around voting, electoral processes, public meeting, writing letters to representatives, inclusion of opinions and viewpoints, compromises, etc. (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). Again, these are meant to assist teachers, not replace standards. Mr. Waters’ and Mr. Innes’ lack of educational knowledge has created erroneous claims unsupported with evidence.

Table 3.7 Grade 4: Disciplinary Clarification and Instructional Support

Grade 4: Disciplinary Clarifications and Instructional Support

The disciplinary clarifications include sample ideas of content and concepts to help teachers better understand the expectations of the standards. The identified disciplinary clarifications are possible suggestions; however, they are not the only pathways and are not comprehensive to obtain mastery of the standards.

Civics Disciplinary Strand		
Concept and Practice	Standard	Disciplinary Clarifications
C: Civic and Political Institutions	4.C.CP.1 Describe diverse forms of self-government used by various groups in Colonial America.	Each colony had elected representatives to make most of the decisions, but each was ultimately under the control of the British monarchy. This includes, but is not limited to, town hall meetings held in New England colonies and the first permanent English Colony of Jamestown House of Burgesses.
	4.C.CP.2 Compare the political form of monarchy with the self-governing system developed in Colonial America.	Monarchies often have a more powerful executive as well as less opportunity for everyday people to have a voice in government. In Colonial America, not all voices were heard, for example, women, enslaved people and those who did not own property were excluded. However, more people were involved in government choices than was typical in a monarchy.
C: Roles and Responsibilities of a Citizen	4.C.RR.1 Describe the importance of civic participation, and locate examples in past and current events.	Civic participation may include voting and participating in the election process, attending public meetings and writing letters to representatives. When people are civically engaged, many benefits occur, for example, the inclusion of more opinions and viewpoints within the compromises made to create laws and rules which affect citizens.

Later, clarification statements were added for high school, but are additional documents and not part of the original standards passed. This is what Mr. Waters is referring to when he states:

“The new standards also are woefully complete [*sic*]. For example, the “Disciplinary Standards” for high school never made it into the final version of the Social Studies standards. They exist today only in a separate, non-standards document which has no legal basis for creating either uniform minimum-content requirements across Kentucky or justification for items to appear on KPREP assessments” (Waters’ Letter, 2020).

Mr. Waters is incorrect. High school *has* disciplinary standards and they’re located on pages 139-154 in KAS for Social Studies (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019) but they did not originally have clarification statements. These standards were passed without clarification statements for high school and were instead added as an additional resource

by the Kentucky Department of Education. Clarification statements, like objectives from Mississippi are not needed to create or develop curriculum, but can be an added tool to help teachers make sense of the standards when developing curriculum at the local level. To further demonstrate this point, KBE members who signed off on Mr. Water’s letter did not think they were needed when they unanimously passed the standards—twice (Kentucky Board of Education, 2019).

3.10 Former KBE Member Gary Houchens’ Previous Support and Arguments for Adopting KAS for Social Studies

This section looks specifically at the thought and actions of Dr. Gary Houchens, a former member of KBE who is represented in Mr. Waters’ letter. As a leading member of standards development for KBE, Dr. Houchens strongly advocated for the standards and offered at the time a point-by-point rebuttal to all the major claims Mr. Waters makes. Frustratingly, Dr. Houchens did an about face, came out against the standards and even modified his blog to represent his new thinking. This section highlights those arguments in favor of the standards have not changed.

Though I feel I have been thorough in my response to Mr. Waters’ letter, I think that it is important to look at how former KBE member, Dr. Gary Houchens, responded to the exact same criticism he is now agreeing with. In December of 2018 (when he was a member of the KDE), Dr. Houchens wrote the following in his blog advocating for standards (Houchens, 2018, December 3) and directly addressing the concerns raised by Mr. Innes (then and now) and currently by Mr. Waters. Conveniently for his position, he modified his post from its original—which is telling of his changed position. By using the

Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/web/> I was able to find the un-modified post, whose language is included in the Appendix. In the missing parts Dr. Houchens makes a strong case for the standards, literally answering point by point many of the claims Mr. Waters makes on behalf of him and other former member of KBE.

In many ways, he does a better job of articulating what I've tried to respond to already. In the original, (and I've kept in bold the points he emphasized and I modified grammatical mistakes), he made the opposite case, discussing the differences between curriculum and standards, why assessment wasn't an issue, how it is better than previous standards, that listing people and events is problematic, how there is not lack of specifics, how public comment has been addressed, and how our standards "may rival other state standards frameworks in their comprehensiveness and attention both to content detail but also the much higher levels of historical analysis, inquiry, and application that we want all students to obtain." (Houchens, 2018, December 3) Please read former KBE member's Dr. Houchens' words for yourself to see how his early thinking is antithetical to Mr. Waters' representation (Appendix A). Dr. Houchens addresses the major concerns of Mr. Waters and Mr. Innes. Dr. Houchens was *the* advocate for these changes on the Kentucky Board of Education and helped pushed for adoption. He worked with Kentucky Standards authors (like myself) and the final standards reflect his exact thinking above. A year later, suddenly, he is not only not pleased with the standards, but is now partnering with BIPPs and other KBE members to advocate change.

3.11 Summarizing the major points for State Representative Tina Bojanowski

In summary, there are major misrepresentations about the laws, processes, and meaning of our standards. There is a conflation of curriculum and standards, and too eager a push to adopt standards from other states which is in violation of the law that says our standards must be written by Kentucky teachers. There is an embarrassing revelation of former KBE members who voted unanimously, twice, to adopt the standards. They've gone from unanimously adopting the standards to now unanimously opposing them. How can Dr. Houchens go from these standards "rival other state standards" to these are turning students into "Leftists" and are "incomplete?" These new accusations disregard students, teachers, and schools who deserve consistency. This reversal also reflects a turn away from, rather than toward, supporting students in becoming critical thinkers and current and future contributors to our 21st century democracy. It also suggests little respect for, or regard for, the efforts of so many Kentucky educators, institutions, and community members who helped in this year long process. It also disregards the tens of millions of dollars of training and resources that will go into standards implementation across the state. Therefore it is important to have trust in the process, which every group has, save one.

What is Mr. Waters advocating? Simply put, it appears he wants to make our state standards like Mississippi because they include more people, dates, and events to memorize, and less rigorous opportunity for inquiry and disciplinary and historical thinking and reasoning.

The state finally has standards after years of waiting and a failed effort in 2014. We have had public comment periods and Mr. Waters' group had its say. The state has moved on. *I recommend that Mr. Waters and his group do the same.*

I welcome a formal conversation again in six years when the standards are open for review. Until then, I am more than happy to continue this informal but unnecessary conversation--as are hundreds of Social Studies teachers and many education institutions across the state who are committed to the pursuit of democracy through the teaching of Social Studies.

Sincerely,

Ryan New

Social Studies Teacher

3.12 Understanding Why this Policy Letter Requested by State Representative Tina Bojanowski Matters

This educational policy letter matters for two practical reasons. First, because it was used to inform decisions by both State Representatives and Senators as well as members of the 2020 Kentucky Board of Education to inform policy. Ultimately, Mr. Waters' letter was not successful in persuading the Interim Joint Committee on Education to make changes to Social Studies Standards. Second, it reaffirms the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of teachers in defining and defending the profession. The exact role this letter played is not known, but teacher advocacy is key to help inform all educational stakeholders about the profession. In particular Kentucky teachers helped write the standards and transform the standards into curriculum, and Kentucky teachers use those standards and curriculum to create meaningful instructional practices that enhance student learning—which is where the ultimate impact is felt. The conflict between competing groups is demonstrative of the need for teachers to be advocates of standards, curriculum, and instructional practices that best service their students and their craft.

CHAPTER 4. ARTICLE 3

Bringing application of state standards and local policy processes to the implementation of local curriculum development: How can we implement new standards while adhering to Jefferson County Public Schools' Racial Equity Policy?

4.1 Introduction

Senate Bill 1 (2017) called upon the Kentucky Department of Education to adopt Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies. After nearly a decade and a failed attempt in 2014, Kentucky adopted new Social Studies standards in July 2019. The teachers tasked with writing the standards grappled with several inputs and encountered challenges in their work. They considered their own experience, reviewed state standards from around the country, used the National Council for the Social Studies' *College Career, and Civic (C3) Framework* as a model, had their work reviewed by Kentucky institutions, revised based upon a series of public comments, and wrestled with Kentucky Board of Education members who eventually wrote a letter denouncing the standards, despite unanimously passing them (Kentucky Board of Education, 2019, February 6).

Once standards became law it became incumbent upon individual school districts to create curriculum in line with their Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) councils at each school. District policies and approaches weighed in on how those standards were turned into curriculum as local control enables districts to tailor their curriculum to the needs of their students. Grounded in the context of the largest and most racially diverse district in Kentucky, Jefferson County (Kentucky Department of Education, 2021), I will

examine how a key district policy, targeted at racial equity, shapes the alignment of KAS for Social Studies in the context of teaching and learning.

Developing curriculum that accounts for state and local policies is difficult for pragmatic and idealistic reasons. Practically speaking, standards and district policies do not offer guidance for creating curriculum. Without a guiding framework, curriculum quickly becomes disjointed, superficial, difficult to explain to students, parents, and the community, and nearly impossible to show alignment in meaningful let alone sustaining ways (Nelson & Pang, 2014; Ross, Mathison, & Vinson, 2014).

Additionally, state standards and curriculum creation are mediated by local politics and priorities. Understanding a context's zone of mediation (Welner, 2001) is key to aligning curriculum to state and local policies in equity-oriented ways, while being flexible to the needs of the community and SBDM councils charged with curriculum creation.

It is at this intersection of policies and possibilities that I will explore the following research question:

How might Kentucky's largest urban district align new state standards while adhering to the district racial equity policy when creating curriculum?

To better understand if, and how, standards alignment can support, complement, and/or contradict district priorities, I will use a content analysis approach that examines state standards, state statutes related to local control of curriculum creation, district policies on racial equity, and a new elective course focused on racial equity. In the sections that follow, I will contextualize the state and local policies, do a content analysis of the KAS for Social Studies disciplinary and inquiry standards, examine a new framework for conceptualizing

and aligning to standards, and highlight curricular examples with the potential to bring coherence to the curriculum development process.

4.2 What state policies influence the development of curriculum?

Kentucky's Senate Bill 1 (2017) initiated a process for reviewing academic standards including timelines, participants, transparency of operations, and accountability to a variety of stakeholders including the public, the Kentucky Board of Education, and the Interim Joint Committee on Education. The process set out a timeline and goal for standards creation:

“Beginning in fiscal year 2017-2018, and every six (6) years thereafter, the Kentucky Department of Education shall implement a process for reviewing Kentucky's academic standards and the alignment of corresponding assessments for possible revision or replacement to ensure alignment with transition readiness standards necessary for global competitiveness and with state career and technical education standards” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453).

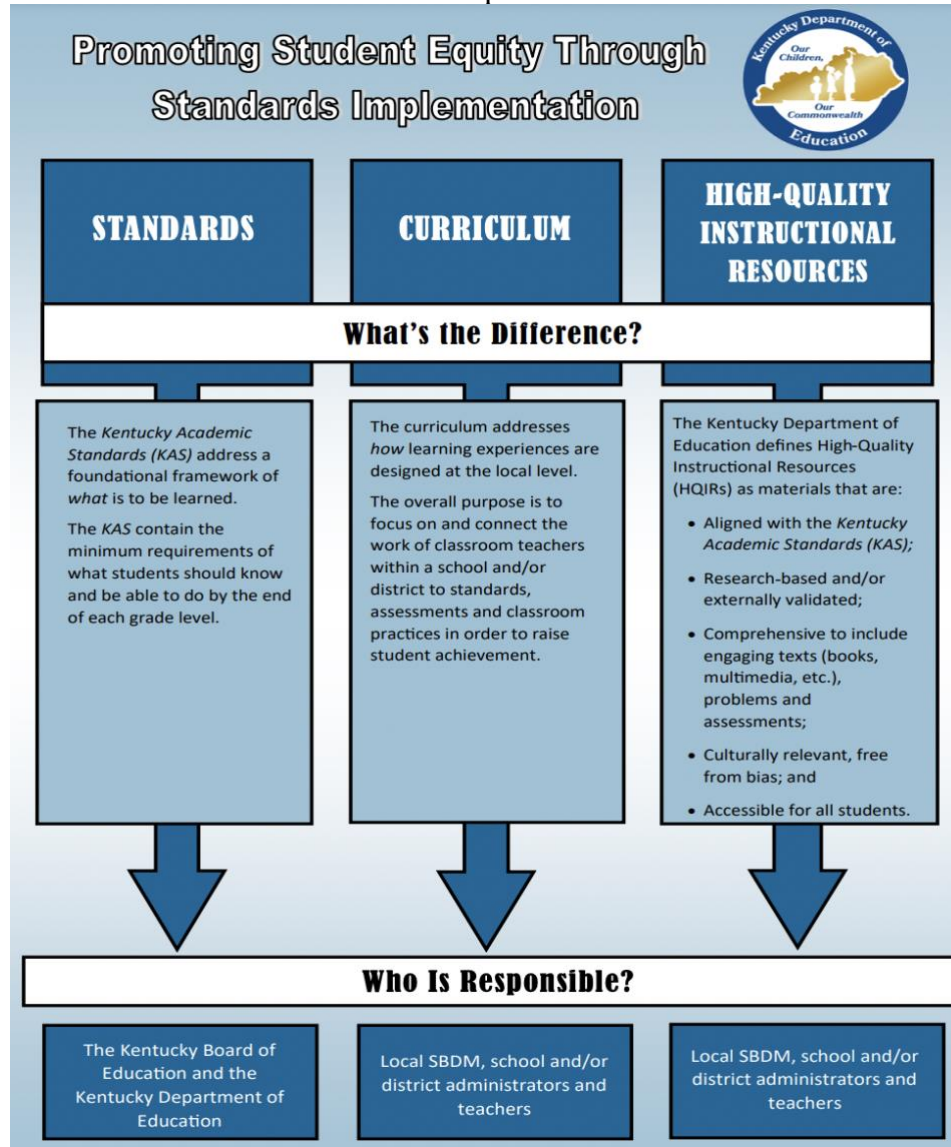
The reviewers included five groups, each with a defined role, which shaped the process and final standards document. The first were review committees composed of Kentucky teachers, represented by different grade levels, who wrote and/or reviewed standards. The second were advisory panels composed of “Kentucky institutions of higher education and...Kentucky public school teachers who teach at the grade level,” who were to “advise and assist” review committee teachers (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453). The first two groups worked back and forth to ensure “alignment and adjustment” until there was a completed standards document ready for the third group, everyday Kentuckians. Two public comment periods ensured an “open, transparent process that allows all Kentuckians an opportunity to participate. The department shall ensure the public's assistance in

reviewing and suggesting changes to the standards...” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453). The fourth group was the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE), which reviewed and provided feedback on the process. Twice in this process KBE had “official readings” and either returned the document back to the committee and advisory panel or voted to adopt it, which it finally did with a “unanimous voice vote” on February 6, 2019 (Kentucky Board of Education, 2019, February 6, 2019). Finally, the Interim Joint Committee of Education ensured that the process outlined in Senate Bill 1 (2017) was followed. Confirming that it had been followed, the standards were formally adopted in July 2019.

While the Kentucky Department of Education is charged with carrying out the development of standards per KRS 158.6453, it is the local SBDM councils that “determine curriculum” and “instructional materials” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.345). The implication is that local teachers and administrators, as well as parent representatives on SBDMs are in a better position to know the challenges and needs of their student populations. The delegation of responsibilities to SBDMs is important to understand who is responsible for developing a curriculum. According to the Model Curriculum Guide for Kentucky Department of Education, the “purpose of curriculum is to focus on and connect the work of classroom teachers within a school and/or district to the standards, assessments, instructional resources and practices in order to raise student achievement. Curriculum includes a vast array of pedagogy, readings, learning experiences, instructional resources, and local mechanisms of assessment, including the full body of content knowledge to be covered, all of which are to be selected at the local level according to Kentucky law” (Kentucky Department of Education, 2022). Figure 4.1 depicts the process as well as who is responsible for creating curriculum aligned with standards (Kentucky Department of

Education. n.d.). Note, however, that while there is no clear process defined for what that curriculum should look like, the responsibility for both curriculum and instruction reside at the local level. In addition, SBDMs must consider local policies alongside state standards, adding additional layers of consideration in the development of curriculum.

Figure 4.1 Kentucky Department of Education (n.d.) Promoting Student Equity Through Standards Implementation.



4.3 What local policies influence the development of curriculum? The zone of mediation in Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)

Local policies reflect local needs. KRS 160.345 requires that local districts develop a rich curriculum to “raise student achievement” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.345). Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) is Kentucky’s largest school district with nearly 100,000 students. One out of every seven students in Kentucky attend JCPS and half of Kentucky’s Black students attend JCPS schools. Additionally, while 53% of students at JCPS are Students of Color, 82% of the teachers are white, which mirrors national trends (Garcia et al, 2021); Schaeffer, 2021). Facing racial disparities in hiring, increased suspensions, gaps in achievement and opportunity, and deficiencies in Social Studies curriculum traditionally whitewashed and Eurocentric (Loewen, 2008; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; James-Gallaway, 2020; King, 2020a), the district developed the Racial Equity Policy to systematically address these systemic concerns and hold itself accountable to the community (King, 2020a, 2020b). Given this context, it is perhaps not surprising that the JCPS racial equity policy passed unanimously by the Jefferson County Board of Education (Jefferson County Board of Education, 2018, May 8) to address “persistent gaps in achievement, learning, expectations, opportunities” for Students of Color “disadvantaged by long-standing inequities in our society... which... reflect historical, social, and institutional factors,” and need the district to have a "systematic approach to ensure ... Students of Color have equitable learning opportunities, experiences, and outcomes.” (Jefferson County Board of Education, 2019, January 8).

The Racial Equity Policy created new dimensions for SBDMs to consider when implementing KAS for Social Studies. It marked a clear and new set of expectations for

district leaders and teachers alike and is arguably one of the most consequential policies adopted by JCPS. The policy is part of the Vision 2020 as one of three major initiatives to reshape JCPS into a more equitable district. From teachers to the superintendent, the policy shapes classroom decisions, budgetary allocations, and hiring policies. Of note, it was passed in the year 2018, before larger national movements emerged across the country against racialized police violence that touched Louisville personally with the killing of Breona Taylor and protests in 2020. In this district context, then, the Racial Equity Policy must be attended to when considering how standards and subsequent curriculum gets understood, enacted, and reconsidered as the community grows and comes to terms with its past and present.

The zone of mediation framework (Welner, 2001) offers a way to understand how educational reform efforts, like new state standards, are experienced in particular sites. Specifically, the zone helps explain how larger political, normative, and technical forces shape a reform's context, and it illustrates how local institutions mediate—reproduce or counteract—these larger forces throughout the implementation process. When a reform proposal enters a site, its feasibility of adoption and process of implementation are largely determined by this context. Normative forces are the often less-than-visible norms or socially embedded and constructed understandings and relations within a particular context. Political forces are just that—the politics of a given place. Technical forces refer to the seemingly straightforward changes in policy that are made, each dependent upon context. As Oakes has long articulated in her examination of de-tracking in schools, “the technical changes in any one practice...will require simultaneous attention to the myriad

other practices that correspond to it” (2005, p. 17). Taken together, they shape and can derail the most well-intended equity-oriented educational policies.

In the context of JCPS, the Racial Equity Policy, and the new KAS standards are considered technical forces. Evident political forces at play include the myriad cultural and civic movements living within the context of Louisville, a city historically and contemporarily known for its civic advocacy for racial justice. Normative forces are myriad, but of relevance to the technical policies in this article. For example, there are many reservations for engaging in issues of race and social justice in the classroom in a district context that has a majority comprised of Students of Color and a majority composed of white teachers (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; DiGiacomo et al., 2021; DiGiacomo et al., in press; Matias & Zemblyas, 2014). Taken together, each of these dimensions constitute the character of JCPS’s zone of mediation and need to be considered when trying to understand how a large educational reform like SB 1 is meeting its desired goals.

This article contributes to an understanding of the interaction between new state standards for Social Studies and a locally based racial equity policy. By leveraging a content analysis (Merriam, 2001) this article provides a crosswalk of sorts to examine if, and how, curriculum can be designed in such a way as to be supportive of both a pressing district policy *and* state-level standards.

4.4 What methods did we use to create a framework to align KAS for Social Studies while adhering to JCPS’s Racial Equity Policy.

My role as the K-12 Instructional Lead for Social Studies is to advise the district in Social Studies materials, support teachers with professional development on curricular and

instructional shifts based upon state standards, advocate for students, teachers, and the community, and champion district initiatives. Without placing racial equity at the center of the work, I cannot morally or ethically fulfil my role in the district. But I am not alone, as others—from the district’s division of Diversity, Equity, and Poverty, to Black Student Unions, to the community--helped advocate and support my position. While I am making many of the final decisions, there is a chorus of supporters echoing the work as we all call for one common voice for anti-racists pedagogy to up-root systemic racism.

The end goal, therefore, was to construct a rich curriculum that aligns with KAS for Social Studies while adhering to the Racial Equity Policy. To build this rich curriculum I had to: (1) identify disciplinary and inquiry standards that addressed the Racial Equity Policy; (2) adopt a framework that can synthesize standards and local policies. For the purposes of this analysis, I will focus on the inquiry and disciplinary standards for middle and high school.

I did a content analysis (Merriam, 2001) of the JCPS Racial Equity Policy to answer the guiding research question:

How might Kentucky’s largest urban district align new state standards while adhering to the district racial equity policy when creating curriculum?

I familiarized myself with the language and desired outcomes of the Racial Equity Policy, inductively generated initial codes, searched for themes, and defined the specific elements related to Social Studies. I started with broad terms like “district, discipline, curriculum, history” to determine explicit connections. Within the following excerpts from JCPS’ Racial Equity Policy, I italicized the key language from the analysis that had

implications for aligning KAS for Social Studies (Jefferson County Board of Education, 2018, May 8):

1. The system-wide plan will *utilize research or evidence-based strategies* at the classroom, school, and *District* levels... (p. 1).
2. *Alter school and district procedures* that create systemic racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes, including ... *disciplinary practices*, ...and access to programs and *courses for enhanced* or accelerated learning. (p.2(b))
3. *Develop rich curriculum resources for schools to implement that more effectively and accurately include the contributions and historical relevance of African-American, Latinx, Asian-American, and other non-white cultures; the experiences of People of Color; and the history of immigration and ethnic diasporas, and their impact on U.S. history, culture, and society* (p. 3b).

While items one and two played a role in the development and implementation, it was item three, that was the most pressing for developing curriculum.

KAS for Social Studies establishes two sets of standards—inquiry and disciplinary—that work together to build skills while investigating concepts and practices (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019). I did a second content analysis (Merriam, 2001), using the language of item three above from the racial equity policy to code the standards. Table 4.1 demonstrates a side-by-side correlation of disciplinary standards for middle and high school standards. One important note is KRS 158.6453’s requirements that the standards process “Result in fewer but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning” (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453). So, while the language of the standards seems broad, i.e., “Africa,” “diverse groups,” “forced migration,” there is greater flexibility for SBDMs to consider the language of the racial equity policy to further define or clarify the

language of the standards. I have italicized the key standards language that connects with the Racial Equity Policy.

Table 4.1 Racial Equity Policy alignment to Disciplinary Standards from KAS for Social Studies

Racial Equity Policy	Disciplinary Standards from KAS for Social Studies
<p>“Develop rich curriculum resources for schools to implement that more effectively and accurately include the contributions and historical relevance of African-American, Latinx, Asian-American, and other non-white cultures; the experiences of People of Color; and the history of immigration and ethnic diasporas, and their impact on U.S. history, culture, and society” (p. 3(b)).</p>	<p><i>Middle Disciplinary Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Economics</u> - 7.E.ST.4 Analyze the interregional trading systems of the <i>Americas, Africa, Asia</i> and Europe between 600-1450 ● <u>Civics</u> - 8.C.RR.2 Analyze expansion of and restriction on citizenship and voting rights on <i>diverse groups</i> in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877. ● <u>History</u> - 8.H.CH.1 Explain the role changing political, social and economic perspectives had on the lives of <i>diverse groups of people</i> in the Colonial Era. <p><u>Geography</u> - 7.G.MM.1 Analyze the push and pull factors that influenced movement, voluntary migration and forced migration in the societies and empires of Afro-Eurasia and the Americas between 600-1600.</p>
	<p><i>High Disciplinary Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Civics</u> - HS.C.CV.2 Assess how the <i>expansion of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights and human rights</i> influence the thoughts and actions of individuals and groups. ● <u>History</u> - HS.UH.CH.1 Examine the ways <i>diverse groups</i> viewed themselves and <i>contributed to the identity</i> of the United States in the world from 1877-present. ● <u>History</u> - HS.UH.CE.5 Evaluate the ways in which <i>groups facing discrimination worked to achieve</i> expansion of rights and liberties from 1877-present. <p><u>World History</u> - HS.WH.CE.3 Assess demographic, social and cultural consequences of <i>forced migration and the expansion of plantation-based slavery</i> into the Americas between 1500-1888.</p>

The inclusion of inquiry standards in KAS for Social Studies, modeled after the Inquiry Arc from the *C3 Framework* (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013), was a watershed moment for Kentucky curriculum development. Previous Kentucky standards (Kentucky Department of Education, 2010) documents focused primarily upon disciplinary standards with little attention to the skills of Social Studies. The Inquiry Arc created a process for authentic, transformational experiences, not just a list of people and events to be memorized (Grant, 2013; Barton & Levstik, 2009; Selwyn, 2014; Beyer, 1971). The Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies adopted in July 2019 were modeled on the *C3 Framework* (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). Kentucky inquiry standards “requires teachers and students to ask questions that drive student investigation of the subject matter and eliminates the “skills vs. content” dilemma in Social Studies as both are needed to successfully engage in inquiry” (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019 p. 13). The following standards from middle and high school inquiry standards create space for teacher and student investigations that adhere to the racial equity policy (Table 4.2). Once again, the key standards language that connects with the Racial Equity Policy are italicized.

Table 4.2 (continued) Racial Equity Policy alignment to Inquiry Standards from KAS for Social Studies

Racial Equity Policy	Inquiry Standards from KAS for Social Studies
“Develop rich curriculum resources for schools to implement that more effectively and accurately include the contributions and historical relevance of African-American, Latinx, Asian-American, and other	<p><i>Selected Middle School Inquiry Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questioning Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8.I.Q.1 Develop <i>compelling questions related to the development of the United States</i> between 1600-1877. ○ 8.I.Q.2 <i>Generate supporting questions using the disciplines of Social Studies to</i>

<p>non-white cultures; the experiences of People of Color; and the history of immigration and ethnic diasporas, and their impact on U.S. history, culture, and society” (p. 3(b)).</p>	<p><i>help answer compelling questions in early U.S. history.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using Evidence Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8.I.U.E.3 Gather relevant information from <i>multiple sources</i> while using the <i>origin, authority, structure, context</i> and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection <i>to answer compelling and supporting questions</i> ● Communicating Conclusions Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8.I.CC.2 Construct arguments by drawing on <i>multiple disciplinary lenses</i> to analyze how <i>multiple perspectives, diversity</i> and conflict and compromise impacted the development of the United States.
	<p><i>Selected High School Inquiry Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questioning Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HS.UH.I.Q.1 Generate <i>compelling questions to frame thinking, inquiry and/or understanding of key civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts.</i> ○ HS.UH.I.Q.2 Generate <i>supporting questions to develop knowledge, understanding and/or thinking relative to key civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts</i> framed by compelling questions. ● Using Evidence Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HS.UH.I.U.E.1 Evaluate the <i>credibility of multiple sources representing a variety of perspectives relevant</i> to compelling and/or supporting questions for civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts. ● Communicating Conclusions Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HS.UH.I.CC.2 Engage in <i>disciplinary thinking and construct arguments, explanations or public communications relevant to meaningful and/or</i>

	<i>investigative questions</i> in United States history.
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The desire for a curriculum that reflects JCPS’ student body, community, and history is reflected in the development of the Racial Equity Policy. The inconsistent attention to Black history, a dearth of historical and contemporary materials, and a push from within the district led me to prioritize Black history in the curriculum. LaGarrett King’s Black Historical Consciousness Principles (BHC Principles) was his solution to the “lack of theoretical framing” about Black history education’s purpose (King, 2020a). Researchers have long criticized lack of attention to Black history education as well as the field’s lack of seriousness around the development of curriculum and instructional approaches (Branch, 2003; Howard, 2003; Chandler & Branscombe; 2015, King, 2017). King’s principles (Table 4.3), therefore, provided a curricular frame for aligning KAS for Social Studies as well as bringing coherence with the Racial Equity Policy.

4.5 How do Developing Black Historical Consciousness Principles help frame curriculum?

King defines “Black historical consciousness as an effort to understand, develop, and teach Black histories that recognize Black people’s humanity. It emphasizes pedagogical practices that seek to reimagine the legitimacy, selection, and interpretation of historical sources. To describe Black historical consciousness is to alter our ideology and redefine Black history. It is to seek alternative principles that effectively explore Black people’s humanity and dismantle the white epistemic historical logic that has long dominated much of K-12 official Social Studies policy” (King, 2020b p. 337). King’s BHC

Principles (see Table 4.3) create space for exploring 1) Power and Oppression, 2) Black Agency, Resistance and Perseverance, 3) Africa and African Diaspora, 4) Black Joy, 5) Black Identities, and 6) Black Historical Contention.

Table 4.3 (continued) King’s Black Historical Consciousness Principles

Black Historical Consciousness Principle	Definition
Power and Oppression	Power and oppression as Black histories are narratives that highlight the lack of justice, freedom, equality, and equity of Black people experienced throughout history. Central to these narratives is how Black people have been victims to racism, white supremacy, and anti-Black societal structures as well as individual actions
Black Agency, Resistance, and Perseverance	Black agency, resistance, and perseverance are Black histories that explain that although Black people have been victimized, they were not helpless victims. These narratives highlight that Black people have had the capacity to act independently, have made their own decisions based on their interest, and have fought back against oppressive structures.
Africa and African Diaspora	Africa and the African Diaspora as Black histories stress that narratives of Black people should be contextualized within the African Diaspora. A course in Black history should begin with ancient African history and connect the various Black histories around the globe.
Black Joy	Black joy narratives are narratives of Black histories that focus on Black people’s resolve during oppressive history. These histories focus on times of happiness, togetherness, and the fight for freedom for generations both past and present.
Black Identities	Understanding Black identities as Black histories promotes a more inclusive history that seeks to uncover the multiple identities of Black people through Black history. History should not only be about Black men who are middle class, Christian, and heterosexual, and able-bodied.
Black Historical Contention	Black historical contention is the recognition that all Black histories are not positive. Black histories are complex and histories that are difficult should not be ignored. Additionally, the principles highlight the differences in Black history. Black people were not a

	monolithic group; they had various ideas of how to solve issues.
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King's principles press curriculum writers to reimagine how they frame curriculum, providing multiple applications for new curricular frames that focus historical and contemporary Black experiences. This frame provides meaning for both KAS for Social Studies as well as the Racial Equity Policy, both of which reflect desired outcomes, but do not provide a curricular path. The language of the BHC Principles provides language for curriculum writers to use when translating, questioning, using evidence, and communicating conclusions standards into curriculum. Making the principles explicit in the standards' application pushes curriculum writers to rethink where, how, and why they include Black history into their curriculum. Additionally, the BHC Principles challenge traditional curriculum that limits Black experiences to enslavement, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement and instead enables students and teachers to explore critical historical developments (King, 2020a; Crowley, 2015).

Second, as an auditing tool, the Black Historical Consciousness Principles become a mirror for curricular gaps and a window of possibility. Too often majority white district and schools will avoid confronting controversial topics that focus on race (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Flanagan & Hindley, 2017) because they do not understand the their students' lived experiences (Gay, 2018, Epstein, & Shiller, 2015; Castro, Hawkman, & Diaz, 2015), because they fear backlash or believe in colorblind approaches (Chandler & McKnight, 2012), or because they don't have access to appropriate curricular materials (Gutierrez, 2021, King, 2017). To avoid Eurocentric trappings, the principles provide the electricity needed to bring historical and contemporary voices to light and provide

opportunities for students and teachers to gain historical consciousness through inquiry. It could bring to light such questions as: What creates Black Joy in the past and present? What did Black agency look and feel like today? How does Black Historical Contention lead to complex struggles between balancing the action and beliefs of pluralistic Black communities over time? Equipped with the principles, Social Studies teachers are encouraged to surface questions relevant to students while adhering to authentic knowledge and skill development with Social Studies concepts and practices.

4.6 How can KAS for Social Studies and Black Historical Consciousness Principles deliver the “rich curriculum” of the Racial Equity Policy?

The following curricular examples demonstrate how the BHC principles frame the process of inquiry from KAS for Social Studies to bring coherence with the Racial Equity Policy’s call for “rich curriculum resources for schools” (Jefferson County Board of Education, 2018, May 8 p. 3(b)). The following sections demonstrate how the BHC principles could frame KAS for Social Studies inquiry practices: Questioning Standards, Using Evidence Standards, and Communicating Conclusion Standards. Finally, I demonstrated the possible scaffolding of a curricular unit that combines KAS for Social Studies and King’s BHC Principles.

1 KAS for Social Studies Questioning Standards and Black Historical Consciousness Principles

Compelling and supporting questions “highlight the content ideas and issues with which teacher and students can engage. As such, they provide the intellectual architecture for an inquiry.” (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017a, p. 50). Compelling questions are designed to be intellectually rigorous and student friendly, which “gets under a student’s skin.” (Grant,

Swan, & Lee, 2017a; Swan, Grant, & Lee 2019) Supporting questions are designed to help ground compelling questions in disciplinary content that scaffolds intellectual complexity (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017a; New, 2016). Compelling questions frame units that give the inquiry motivation and purpose, while supporting questions frame lessons that provide the means and structure. (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017b; Cuenca, 2021).

Black Historical Consciousness Principles were created to give direction for Black studies and to humanize the Black experience within the United States and around the world. (King, 2020b). When compelling questions are framed by Black Historical Consciousness Principles, teachers and students can explore concepts and gain confidence in developing inquiries while also helping students critique systems of power (Mueller, 2017; Crowley & King, 2018; Schur, 2021). The following examples provide possible compelling (Table 4.4) and supporting (Table 4.5) questions that are aligned to KAS for Social Studies, are framed by BHC Principles, and bring coherence to the JCPS Racial Equity Policy.

Table 4.4 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Questioning Standards for Compelling Questions with Black Historical Consciousness Principles.

Questioning Standards from KAS for Social Studies	Black Historical Consciousness Principle	<i>Compelling Question</i> Examples
<p><i>Middle School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.I.Q.1 Develop compelling questions related to the development of the United States between 1600-1877. 	Power and Oppression	How did racist policies divide the country?
	Black Agency, Resistance, and Perseverance	How did Black Americans contest white spaces?
	Africa and African Diaspora	Are we all Africans?
	Black Joy	How did Black Americans create a culture of Black

<p><i>High School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HS.C.I.Q.1 Generate compelling questions to frame thinking, inquiry and/or understanding of key civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts. 		joy in the 1920s?
	Black Identities	How did the Stonewall riots influence the Black LGBTQ+ community?
	Black Historical Contention	How has colorism divided the Black community?

Table 4.5 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Questioning Standards for Supporting Questions with Black Historical Consciousness Principles

Questioning Standards from KAS for Social Studies	Black Historical Consciousness Principle	Supporting Question Examples
<p><i>Middle School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.I.Q.2 Generate supporting questions using the disciplines of Social Studies to help answer compelling questions in early U.S. history. <p><i>High School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HS.C.I.Q.2 Generate supporting questions to develop knowledge, understanding and/or thinking relative to key civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts 	Power and Oppression	How did white supremacist destroy Tulsa’s thriving Black community?
	Black Agency, Resistance, and Perseverance	How do HBCUs create a culture of care and advancement?
	Africa and African Diaspora	How did trans-Saharan trade lead to West African wealth and success?
	Black Joy	How did <i>Shuffle Along</i> embody Black joy and love?
	Black Identities	How did the Million Man March compare to the Million Woman March?
	Black Historical Contention	How does sexism diminish the way we remember women’s leadership roles during the Civil Rights Movement?

framed by compelling questions.		
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2 KAS for Social Studies Using Evidence Standards and Black Historical Consciousness Principles

Using evidence from primary and secondary sources spark curiosity, deliver content, help students develop evidence-based claims while also can expose students to sources that include the perspectives of marginalized and oppressed groups as well as counternarratives (Crowley & King, 2018; Swan, Lee, & Grant, 2018; Chandler, 2015). Historical and contemporary sources from Black history enable students to not just understand the lived experiences of people in the past in their original meaning but enable students to build greater trust in sources with which to find an emotional or personal relationship (Monte-Sano, 2016, Jacobsen et al. 2018). Finding credible sources that enliven multiple perspectives, and that resonate with students, requires teachers to improve upon their cultural responsiveness, content knowledge, and the ability to adapt sources for their students (Ladson-Billings, (1995; Hammond, 2015; Gay 2018).

The middle and high school standards listed below require teachers to not only “gather and select credible and relevant sources,” but the sources must enable students to develop disciplinary literacies (Wineburg, 2001; Jacobsen et al., 2018) as well as recognize multiple perspectives for inquiries. While this helps teachers identify *the how*, the BHC Principles provides *the why* and *what*. What follows are several sources that may not appear in traditional curriculum. However, when making source selection decisions considering the BHC Principles and the Racial Equity Policy they provide rich opportunities to students to explore (Table 4.6). I have included the author, title, and year of the source instead of the complete primary or secondary source.

Table 4.6 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Using Evidence Standards with Black Historical Consciousness Principles

Using Evidence Standards from KAS for Social Studies	Black Historical Consciousness Principle	Source Examples
<p><i>Middle School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.I.U.E.3 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection to answer compelling and supporting questions 	Power and Oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article II and III of the Kentucky Constitution, 1799 Ida A. Brudnick & Jennifer E. Manning, Number of African Americans in Each Congress, <i>Congressional Research Service</i>, 2018
	Black Agency, Resistance, and Perseverance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Harlem Hellfighters Soldiers of the 369th Awarded the Croix de Guerre Medal for Gallantry in Action. 1919 Rev. Peter Williams Jr.: An Oration on the Abolition of the Slave Trade,” 1808
<p><i>High School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HS.UH.I.U.E.1 Evaluate the credibility of multiple sources representing a variety of perspectives relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions for civics, economics, geography, and historical concepts. 	Africa and African Diaspora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeline: Number of Captives Embarked and Disembarked per Year, Slavevoyages.org Alexander Ives Bortolot, Women Leaders in African History: Dona Beatriz, Kongo Prophet, <i>The MET</i>, October 2003
	Black Joy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maggie Jones: “North Bound Blues,” 1925 Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Bury Me in a Free Land”
	Black Identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Margari Hill, <i>The Spread of Islam in West Africa: Containment, Mixing, and Reform from the Eighth to</i>

		<i>the Twentieth Century: SPICE</i> Stanford University, 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Combahee River Collective Statement, 1977
	Black Historical Contention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sierra Leone Company, 1791 <i>Untold Lives Blog</i>, British Library • Marcus Garvey, Objectives of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, 1914

3 KAS for Social Studies Communicating Conclusion Standards and Black Historical Consciousness Principles

The KAS for Social Studies inquiry practice of Communicating Conclusions requires that students address compelling and supporting questions by constructing explanations and arguments built from applying disciplinary lenses that are meaningful, relevant, and show adherence to multiple perspectives. Using inquiry to develop students’ ability to demonstrate historical thinking through argumentative writing is foundational to our profession at elementary through high school (Monte-Sano, 2016; Muetterties, Slocum, & Masterson, 2019). Additionally, Students of Color in particular need opportunities to make tangible steps towards alleviating injustices or championing individuals and groups within the inquiry (Crowley & King; 2018, Swan et al, 2021). Table 4.7 shows the possibilities of designing new language around communicating conclusion tasks that creates academic consequences for questions and sources.

Table 4.7 (continued) KAS for Social Studies Communicating Conclusions Standards with Black Historical Consciousness Principles and Supporting Questions

Communicating	Black	Supporting	Explanations
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Conclusions Standards from KAS for Social Studies	Historical Consciousness Principles	<i>Question Examples</i>	<i>and Claims Tasks Examples</i>
<p><i>Middle School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.I.CC.2 Construct arguments by drawing on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how multiple perspectives, diversity and conflict and compromise impacted the development of the United States. <p><i>High School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HS.UH.I.CC.2 Engage in disciplinary thinking and construct arguments, explanations or public communications relevant to meaningful and/or investigative questions in United States history. 	Power and Oppression	How did white supremacist destroy Tulsa’s thriving Black community?	Explain how white supremacists used power to destroy Tulsa’s Black Community
	Black Agency, Resistance, and Perseverance	How do HBCUs create a culture of care and advancement?	Create a claim that shows why HBCUS represent Black agency, resistance, and/or perseverance
	Africa and African Diaspora	How did trans-Saharan trade lead to West African wealth and success?	Explain how trade established West African wealth and success.
	Black Joy	How did <i>Shuffle Along</i> embody Black joy?	Create a claim of why <i>Shuffle Along</i> embodied Black joy.
	Black Identities	How did the Million Man March compare to the Million Woman March?	Explain how intersectionality helps explain differences between the Million Man and Million Woman marches
	Black Historical Contention	How does sexism diminish the way we remember women’s	Create a claim of why students are less likely to learn about women of the

		leadership roles during the Civil Rights Movement?	Civil Rights Movement
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4 Using KAS for Social Studies to scaffold a unit frame by BHC while adhering to the Racial Equity Policy.

The KAS for Social Studies inquiry standards are meant to work together to build scaffold learning. Figure 4.2 demonstrates the interconnectedness of the Questioning standards, Using Evidence standards, and Communicating Conclusions standards in a theoretical unit. Questioning standards (red) scaffold students' learning by sequencing supporting questions to build student knowledge to answer compelling questions. Communicating Conclusions standards (blue) scaffold students' skill development by sequencing explanations and claims to construct more nuanced and in-depth arguments. Furthermore, Questioning standards are bookended by Communicating Conclusions standards, the former beginning the inquiry, the later concluding it. Using evidence (yellow) helps bridge the gap between the two, creating the inquiry process. This process provides teachers new flexibility to frame curriculum decisions, which is essential for considering local needs of curriculum writers.

Figure 4.2 Scaffolded Theoretical Unit using KAS for Social Studies Inquiry Standards

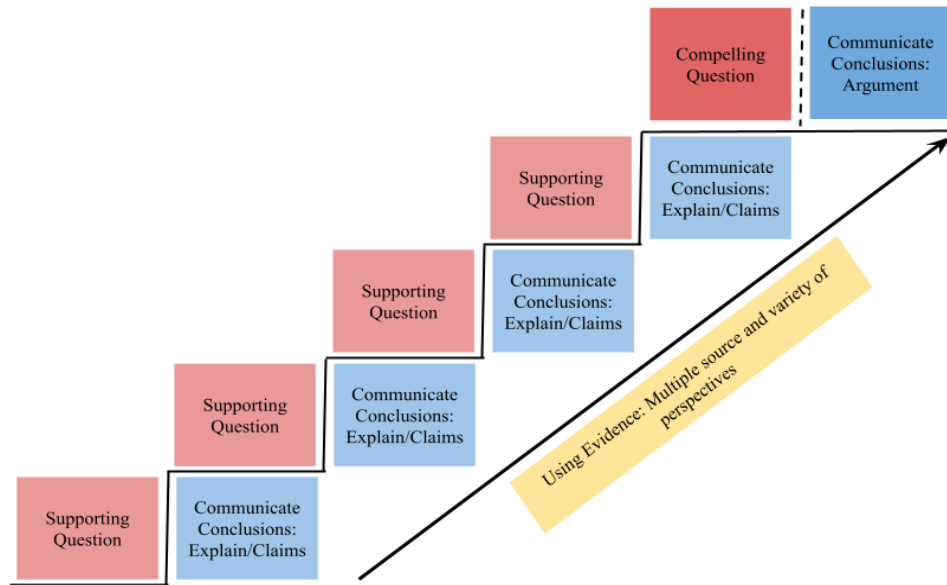
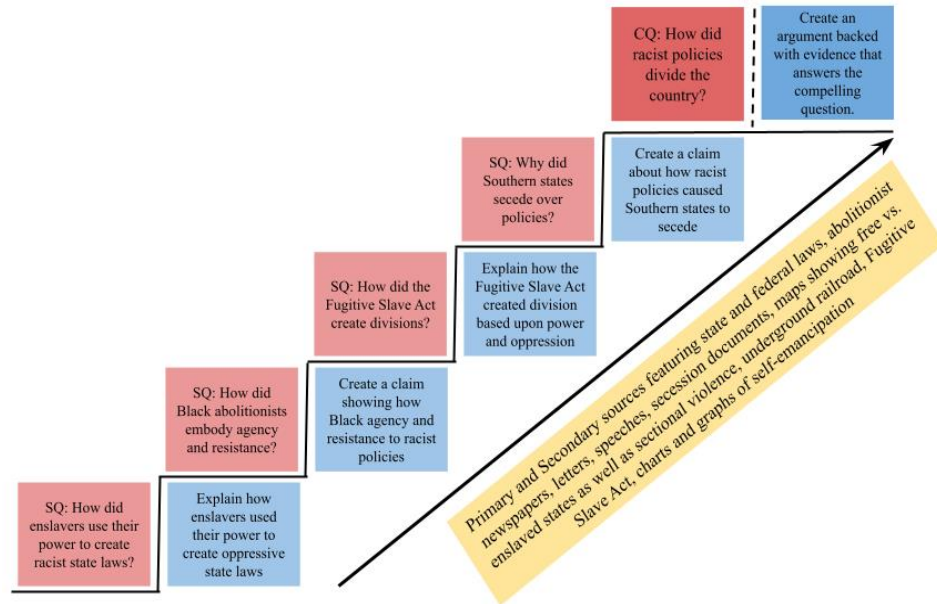


Figure 4.3 shows how (1) power and oppression and (2) Black agency, resistance, and perseverance help frame the unit as well as provide key language for both compelling and supporting questions and explanations, claims, and arguments. These two principles are explicit in the supporting questions (red) and communicating conclusions (blue) and implicit in selecting sources (yellow). Aligned questions and conclusions ensure students and teachers wrestle with the same BHC Principles to begin and end their investigations. These two convergence points provide the substance and direction to the divergent lived experiences of students as well as the discussions and sources used to investigate the inquiry.

Figure 4.3 Scaffolded Unit using KAS for Social Studies Inquiry Standards and Black Historical Consciousness Principles



4.7 What are the implications for using Black Historical Consciousness Principles as a curricular frame?

Curriculum is subject to several factors that are simultaneously outside and within teachers' power. While teachers are the curricular and instructional gatekeepers in the classroom (Thornton, 2005), they must consider and balance state law, standards, and local policies. In JCPS, the Racial Equity Policy required the development of a rich curriculum created within the district to explicitly represent Students of Color and shift away from traditional Eurocentric curriculum. None of these intersecting policies provides a framework to blueprint the shifts necessary to reflect not just the letter of the policy but its spirit as well. King's Black Historical Consciousness Principles when combined with the inquiry standards of questioning, using evidence, and communicating conclusions provide

creative and innovative possibilities for curriculum writing. This pairing of the principles and state standards works for individual lessons, units, or yearly planning.

In this article, KAS for Social Studies, the Racial Equity Policy, and Black Historical Consciousness Principles represent three intersecting axes that have important implications for teachers, curriculum writers and directors, local boards of education, and pre-service programs. When combined, the results represent new and exciting possibilities for curriculum writers to finally represent Black histories without white Eurocentric trappings.

At the first axis, this process shows that while local districts are responsible for curriculum development, each district must adhere to KAS for Social Studies. Like all standards, they represent what we want students to know and be able to do. For Kentucky, this includes disciplinary concepts and inquiry practices, each working to balance the other in investigations. Inquiry standards of questioning, using evidence, and communicating conclusions provide the necessary utility to drive a process for learning. However, we can't inquire about nothing. While disciplinary standards are supposed to ground the inquiry process in civics, economics, geography, and history, there are times they fall short of grounding Black experiences beyond traditional approaches. When directed by the Racial Equity Policy and BHC Principles, the standards provide the utility for moving curriculum closer to district needs while still adhering to state law.

At the second axis, this process validates JCPS' Racial Equity Policy along curricular lines. As one of the goals for the district, it keeps curriculum work focused and centered. As a district employee, my job is to ensure that decisions made around curriculum and instruction align with and exemplify district policies. Additionally, because it is a

collective goal of the district, it gives language to our community to ask questions and monitor progress towards its completion. The language of the Racial Equity Policy helped determine “look-fors” within KAS for Social Studies to help parse out areas covered by state law and areas still needing development. The policy also created an impetus for researching evidence-based methods for addressing historical approaches not framed by whiteness. Without this language there is no driving *need* (emphasis mine) to search for frames like Black Historical Consciousness Principles.

At the third axis, this process validates the Black Historical Consciousness Principles as a frame for *how, what, and why* (emphasis mine) students are learning. First, the BHC Principles provide the research-based methods for bringing coherence to the Racial Equity Policy. Second, they framed and gave greater direction and meaning to investigations using the inquiry standards. Third, they help shape the choices and language for national and local standards writers, local boards of education, SBDMs, and curriculum directors and writers. Finally for white educators, like myself, using the Black Historical Consciousness Principles helped me to develop an inner accountability to internalize and listen to the historical and contemporary Black experience. Again, when paired with inquiry, teachers and students must wrestle and reconcile the same questions, evidence, and conclusions. This culture of inquiry framed by Black Historical Consciousness Principles helps enable teachers to learn from and incorporate student lived experiences in the classroom.

In conclusion, the intersecting elements demonstrate the need to look beyond traditional approaches to curriculum design. This process requires an acknowledgment of the internal and external factors that weigh on curriculum writers and directors. Curriculum

writers must be creative with their approaches while balancing multiple considerations ranging from the student needs, teacher knowledge and skill, resources availability, and often conflicting zones of mediation. This process is necessary and needed to address the systemic racial issues that have long plagued Social Studies.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUDING REFLECTION

Enacting, understanding, and/or adhering to state standards does not happen in a vacuum, but are shaped by local, state, and national decisions by a range of stakeholders. Once adopted, standards continue to be shaped by local policies and national conversations. At worst, standards become politicized and unnecessarily partisan. It seems to become one more place to fight culture wars as to what, and not how, students can learn to become fully informed and active citizens. At best, it is a sign that our country is still figuring out who we want our current and future citizens to be, what we want them to know and do, and why we've invested so much time, money, and energy into education. If John Dewey is correct, that "democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife," (Dewey, 1916 p. 139), then we must make a maximum effort to understand the colliding forces that make up our educational processes.

These three articles highlight the intersecting policies, standards, frameworks, and local curricular decisions that have and continue to influence the implementation of KAS for Social Studies. They show that despite the myriad of possibilities, districts still create curriculum and teachers still teach. At issue, is the degrees to which enacting, understanding, and adhering to state standards help Social Studies educators better inform curricular choices as well as be advocates for their profession. Finally, these articles demonstrate the living, breathing nature of the standards process for Social Studies educators, who do not have the luxury of sitting back or waiting for the full picture to become static, or even slow down.

Recently in Kentucky, Senate Bill 1 (2022) includes an amendment (Senate Bill 138), which is a response in line with a series of anti-Critical Race Theory Bills (Schwartz, 2022) proposed and passed around the country. Granted, the bill is superior in content than other more destructive bills, but it still stands that Senate Bill 1 amends two key statutes cited within this work:

- KRS 160.345, which determines local control. Prior to the amendment it was the SBDM council that was responsible for determining curriculum. Now it is the superintendent alone who determines curriculum after consulting with the council:
 1. The local superintendent shall determine which curriculum, textbooks, instructional materials, and student support services shall be provided in the school after consulting with the local board of education, the school principal, and the school council and after a reasonable review and response period for stakeholders in accordance with local board of education policy. (SB1, 2022)
- KRS 158.6453, which established the guidelines for the standards review process, will now be (re)amended well before its scheduled review period outlined by the standards review process. This will open up the standards process to include twenty-four documents and speeches deemed by the law as foundational to American principles:
 1. Notwithstanding the every six (6) year schedule set forth in subsection(2)(a) of Section 2 of this Act, no later than July 1, 2023, the Kentucky Department of Education shall incorporate

fundamental American documents and speeches into the grade-level appropriate middle and high school Social Studies academic standards and align corresponding assessments (SB1, 2022)

And just like that, national conversations shift not just the process, but the content of standards, which will reverberate throughout Kentucky classrooms and curriculum. What is at issue here is not just what should be in the standards, but how those standards are framed. Perhaps most troubling is the inclusion in the bill of the historically unfounded assertion that:

The understanding that the institution of slavery and post-Civil War laws enforcing racial segregation and discrimination were contrary to the fundamental American promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, but that defining racial disparities solely on the legacy of this institution is destructive to the unification of our nation (SB1, 2022).

While history will better determine this period of educational decision making, it is current evidence that the contents of the work continue to play out, just as they have. I have enormous hope in our teachers as curricular and instructional gatekeepers, (Thornton, 2005). They are, after all, “moral agents, not clerks,” who contribute to conscious formation of people, so “they must be mindful of what they are doing” (Parker, 2003). Teachers, however, will be better prepared to make curricular decisions and to advocate for themselves and their profession if they familiarize themselves with the larger picture of enacting, understanding, and adhering to standards and policies. Educators (myself as one) must continue to grow as learners, be inspired by and use new

frameworks like the C3 Framework and Developing Black Historical Consciousness Principles, adapt to changes and challenges in local and state policies, build coalitions and professional learning communities aimed at unifying the profession, and continue to bring their creative minds to curriculum and instruction.

APPENDIX

Dr. Gary Houchens' Positions Defending KAS for Social Studies (N.B. bold emphasis is mine)

And that's why I [Dr. Houchens] can say without question that **just because some historical figure or event is not named in the state standards does not mean that it will not be taught** or that no Kentucky students will have knowledge of it. I will argue momentarily that persons like George Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr., are **implicitly embedded** in the draft Kentucky standards. But I can also tell you without doubt that 5th and 8th grade Social Studies teachers would be bewildered by the notion that they wouldn't mention George Washington when teaching the Colonial era of American history - which **is** in the standards - simply because he's not **named** in the standards. One simply cannot teach this time period without doing so (and please note that George Washington is also not named in the **current [4.1 standards]** Social Studies standards either).

At any rate, we don't just want students to know who George Washington was as an isolated fact; we want them to understand his role as one of several key figures responding to large, sweeping, cultural, economic, and political forces that shaped the American Founding and continue to inform our civic discussions today. And that **is** in the standards, and will be assessed, as I'll note below. (And I should probably also note that just naming something in the standards is also not a guarantee that it will be taught, and certainly not that it will be mastered by students).

Social studies as both knowledge and skill; these standards are a great improvement

Social studies standards are always fraught with some controversy. This happens in part because the way we present our past is frequently shaped by the way we interpret events, their consequences, and their importance. Social studies educators have long argued over whether their discipline is about imparting a body of content knowledge (facts and dates) or about giving students a set of skills around citizenship and critical thinking (how to engage the governmental process, how to understand historical cause and effect, etc). As I argued recently, I believe these are false dichotomies. There is no such thing as Social Studies skill divorced from Social Studies content. You cannot think critically unless you have something to think about, and what you think about matters immensely. However, it **is** actually possible to memorize a set of facts and dates and not have a meaningful understanding of how they fit together or why they are important for our lives today. And unfortunately that has been the experience of far too many Americans when it comes to their Social Studies education. It is imperative that we impart meaningful content to

students **and** teach them how to think critically about the world and their place in it relative to past events.

Therefore, it is important that standards-writers give attention to both content **and** Social Studies skills. And this is a delicate task. How much content do you embed before you are realistically squeezing out instructional time for going deeper with analysis and application, research and inquiry? And the more specific we become about content, the more challenging it becomes to decide what to include and what not to include. This is all the more difficult still in a state like Kentucky where standards writers must guard against diving too far into curricular choices that should normally belong to local schools.

But because you cannot separate knowledge and skill, the balance may lie in designing standards that ask students to engage in high-level thinking tasks that require a strong depth and breadth of content knowledge - even if you do not name all the specific content knowledge implied by the standard. **And in all of these respects, I believe that the draft Kentucky Social Studies standards are very strong.**

Previously Kentucky's Social Studies standards were organized around "Big Ideas" which were neither sufficiently skill-oriented nor content-specific enough to meaningfully inform instruction. They were also grouped into broad grade level bands, so that teachers in early grades, for example, had essentially zero guidance into which Social Studies skills and concepts they should be teaching (and in far too many places, they just didn't teach much of it with any intentionality).

The new standards are **vastly more comprehensive**. They break the standards down into content and skill for **specific grades** K-8 and then high school. They emphasize **connections to literacy**, which especially in the early grades helps bridge that gap between content knowledge and reading comprehension. And they organize content and skill across the **large strands** of history, geography, civics and economics, integrated with key **inquiry practices** of questioning, investigating, using evidence, and communicating conclusions...

Lots of content is embedded in the standards if not explicitly named; and it can be assessed. We should definitely continue to explore where there may still be insufficient attention to content, but I believe these new standards, if used with integrity by teachers, will ensure a far more organized and intentional delivery of Social Studies skill **and content** for students across all grade levels. And to pick up a point I first mentioned above, I believe that many Social Studies concepts not specifically named in the standards are nevertheless embedded there.

So for example, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and other key figures in the Founding are not noted in the standards. But please notice the much more comprehensive standards that **are** present and which will be subject to assessment on the state Social Studies exam. **It is inconceivable that students could deliver a proficient answer to questions associated with these standards without referring to such important figures:**

- Compare the political form of monarchy with the self-governing system developed in Colonial America (4.C.CP.2)
- Analyze the causes of the American Revolution and the effect **individuals** and groups had on the conflict (5.H.CE.1).
- Explain how colonial resistance to British control led to the Revolutionary War (8.H.CO.1).
- Analyze the impact of the democratic principles of equality before the law, inalienable rights, consent of the governed and the right to alter or abolish the government in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877 (8.C.CV.1).
- Analyze how the political, geographic, social and economic choices of the Colonial Era impacted the Revolutionary Period and Early Republic Period (8.H.CE.1).
- Explain how colonial resistance to British control led to the Revolutionary War (8.H.CO.1).

Is it true that no state Social Studies assessment could ask the question, “Who was George Washington” under these standards? Yes. **But we don’t have to ask such a basic question when the standards ask students to have far more knowledge than the mere fact of Washington’s identity**; when they, in fact, must know him and **far more** to demonstrate mastery of the standard.

I suspect that for most of the specific content items that have been noted as "missing", we could find a place where that concept, figure, or event is implicit in the standards. Just for another example, no student could demonstrate mastery of HS.C.CV.3, “Analyze the impact of the efforts of **individuals** and reform movements on the expansion of civil rights and liberties locally, nationally and internationally,” without reference to Martin Luther King, Jr. They must know him **and many others** to demonstrate mastery.

I will ask Department staff to continue looking for connections between "missing" content items and the standards and to respond before the second reading in February to see if such a process can further illuminate gaps in the standards that may require additional attention. But I am confident that these standards, overall, are not lacking in content specificity, and are in fact a great improvement and **may rival other state standards frameworks in their comprehensiveness and attention both to content detail but also the much higher levels of historical analysis, inquiry, and application that we want all students to obtain** [emphasis mine]. The grade-level overview documents may provide further clarity or opportunity to address any of these missing areas.

I welcome continued feedback on the Social Studies standards as public comment has already made a substantial difference in the work.

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Wineburg, S. (2001). *Historical thinking and other unnatural acts: Charting the future of teaching the past*. Temple University Press.

VITA

Ryan Douglas New

Education Completed

Master of Arts in Teaching University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg, KY (2011)

Masters of Arts in History Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY (2006)

Bachelor of Arts Centre College, Danville, KY (2004)

Professional Experience

Instructional Lead Social Studies

Jefferson County Public Schools, KY, 2018-Present

Social Studies Teacher

Boyle County High School, Danville, KY, 2014-15, 2016-18

Social Studies Content Specialist

Kentucky Department of Education, MOA, Frankfort, KY, 2015-16

Social Studies Teacher

Washington County High School, Springfield, KY (2009-2014)

Head Track and Cross Country Coach Ohio Northern University, ADA, OH, 2008-09

Assistant Track and Country Coach Centre College, Danville, KY, 2006-2008

Recognitions

Meece Award for Excellence in Social Studies Education, *Kentucky Council Social Studies*, 2021

The *National Council for the Social Studies* Outstanding Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2017

Award Semifinalist Valvoline Kentucky Teacher of the Year, Top Three High School Teacher, 2018

Teaching Assistant “Teaching Inquiry with Objects” Smithsonian Museum of American History, 2016

Participant (selected), “Torn Within, Threatened Without: Kentuckians in the Civil War”
Summer Colloquium *Kentucky Historical Society*, 2015

Participant (selected), “Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton’s Vision for America”
Liberty Fund Colloquium, Charlottesville, VA, 2015

High School Teacher of the Year, *Kentucky Council for the Social Studies*, 2014

Participant (selected), “John Adams” *Liberty Fund Colloquium*, Quincy, MA, 2014

Participant (selected), “Kentucky’s Military History” Summer Colloquium *Kentucky Historical Society*, Frankfort, KY 2014

Teacher of the Year, Campbellsville University Teaching for Excellence, 2013

Member, Early College Implementation Committee, Washington County School District
and St. Catherine’s College, 2011-2014

Ohio Athletic Conference Coach of the Year: Men’s and Women’s Cross Country and
Track, Men’s Cross Country, Indoor Track, Outdoor Track, Women’s Cross
Country, Women’s Indoor Track, 2008-2009

Graduate Fellow in History, Eastern Kentucky University, 2005-2006

Robert Powell Jacobs Prize for best student of Greek, Centre College 2004

Publications

New, R. (2021). “How Can an Indigenous Land Acknowledgment Help Our Community
Grow? *Jefferson County Schools SBDM Connections*, Vol 21. No. 1

Writer, Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies *Kentucky Department of
Education*, Frankfort, KY, 2019

Co-Author, World History Digital Education Foundation, “Korea’s Place in Teaching
World History” NCSS and World History Digital Education: 2019

Author, Burns, L.D., Botzakis, S., Cavalcanti, M., Golden, B., New, R., Raby, K., “Using
Sincere Questions to Teach Imperialism in Social Studies” *Teach on Purpose:
Responsive Teaching for Student Success* (p.103-119) New York: Teachers
College Press, 2016.

Writer, Kentucky Academics Social Studies Standards *Kentucky Department of
Education*, Frankfort KY, 2014

Presentations

“Structuring Inquiry for Assessment” *Kentucky Association for Assessment Coordinators*,
2021

- “Single Point Rubric and Standards Based Grading in the Social Studies” *Kentucky Association for Assessment Coordinators*, 2021
- Making Inquiry Possible Behind the Scenes Making Inquiry Possible Teacher Panel
Kentucky Council for the Social Studies, 2021
- “Implementing Anti-racist Education Across the Disciplines,” Panelist, *Education & Civil Rights for the New Decade Virtual Conference*, University of Kentucky, 2021
- “How can inquiry lessons reflect multiple Disciplines?” *Exploring Kentucky’s New Social Studies Standards Conference for K-12 Social Studies Teachers*, 2020
- “How do you construct an Anti-Racist Curriculum? *Jefferson County Public Schools Winter Equity Institute*, 2020
- “How will the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies shift my practice and build literacy?” *Kentucky Educational Development Cooperative Aspire Cohort*, 2020
- “How will the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies shift curriculum and instructional design?” *Kentucky Association for Assessment Coordinators*, 2019
- “How do we need to rethink assessment in social studies?” *Kentucky Association for Assessment Coordinators*, 2019
- “What is a Vote Worth?” Participant Workshop, *National Council for the Social Studies Conference*, Austin, Texas, 2019
- “Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies: Learning Modules--Building a Culture of Inquiry and Taking Informed Action,” *Kentucky Department of Education*, 2019
- “Civic Capstones can Save Social Studies” *National Council for the Social Studies Conference*, San Francisco, California, 2017
- “How do you bring IDM to scale?” *IDM Institute* Raleigh, North Carolina, 2017
- “Teaching Controversy in a History Classroom,” *Kentucky Historical Society Educational Conference*, 2017
- “What Makes a Good Citizen?--Civic Capstone Projects” Civic Symposium *Kentucky Department of Education*, 2017 (Presented at Frankfort, Elizabethtown, Ashland, KY with Students Wesley Wei, Jordan Smith, Emma Nolan)
- “Race Panel and Teaching Social Studies,” Panelist, *University of Kentucky Department of Education*, 2017
- “Using Inquiry and the IDM in Deeper Learning,” Boyle County District Professional Learning, 2016

Co-Presenter, “The Messiness of Inquiry: Implementing Inquiry in Your Classroom.”
Kentucky Council for the Social Studies, 2016

“Taking Informed Action in Your Classroom,” Co-presented with Todd Johnson of the
Kentucky School for the Blind *Kentucky Historical Society Educational
Conference, 2016*

“Building State Hubs for the IDM and C3,” *IDM Institute in Lexington, Kentucky, 2016*
“Implementing Inquiry in a Social Studies District,” Shelby County School
District, 2015 “Modifying Sources for Social Studies,” Ohio Valley Educational
Cooperative Training 2015

“Question Formulation Technique 2.0, Advanced Techniques in Student Generated
Questions,” *Kentucky Council for the Social Studies, 2015*

Keynote, “Understanding Economic Standards within Kentucky Academic Social Studies
Standards,” Keynote: Kentucky Council on Economic Education Summer
Conference, 2015

“Kentucky Academic Social Studies Standards and Instructional Shifts,” *Kentucky
Historical Society Educational Conference, 2015*

Panelist, “Panel Discussion Over the Draft Kentucky Academic Social Studies
Standards,” *Kentucky Council for the Social Studies, 2014*

“Using Simulations for Engagement,” *Kentucky Historical Society Educational
Conference, 2014*

Grants and Awards

Co-Project Director: 2019-2022 “Strengthening Food Literacy, FAHN Sciences
Education and Career Readiness Through Student Inquiry, Experience and Action
in Louisville, KY USDA NIFA SPECA \$150,000

Co-Project Director: 2018-19 “Teaching with Primary Sources,” *Library of Congress*
\$20,000