

Introduction

According to the National Council for the Social Studies,

“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.”¹

Social studies classrooms are the ideal locations to foster civic virtue, apply inquiry practices, consider current issues, engage in civil discourse, and build a civic identity and an awareness of international issues. They are laboratories of democracy where the diversity among learners embodies our democratic goals. In effective social studies classrooms, students are taught to cherish freedom and accept responsibility for preserving and extending it, finding their own best practices for free, independent thinking. These skills, habits, and qualities of character prepare students to accept responsibility for preserving and defending their liberties and empower them to think critically, reason, and solve problems.

The mission of social studies education in Alaska is to promote such skills, habits, and qualities of character in our students through the development of important content knowledge and disciplinary thinking skills. The Alaska Academic Standards for Social Studies guide student exploration of the relationships and interactions among individuals and groups at the local, state, national, and global levels through the disciplines of civics, economics, geography, and history, and the inquiry practices of questioning, investigating, using evidence, and communicating conclusions. The standards are designed to include a breadth of knowledge, not as isolated facts simply to be memorized, but as usable knowledge to be integrated into an understanding of the world.

Therefore, the Alaska Academic Standards for Social Studies are designed to provide Alaska students with the knowledge and skills required to become civically engaged, socially responsible, and culturally aware citizens.

Vision for the Standards

The vision for Alaska’s social studies standards is to use current evidence-based practices, research, and data to collaboratively promote and encourage an excellent education for all students that celebrates the diversity of peoples, cultures, perspectives, voices, and ideologies in Alaska while empowering students to be meaningfully engaged citizens.

¹ The National Council for the Social Studies, “National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Introduction,” Accessed on November 8, 2023. <https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/national-curriculum-standards-social-studies-introduction>

The standards outline the key content, concepts, ideas, and understandings central to the Alaska context that honor and respect diverse perspectives and experiences, including Alaska Native and Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. They support the development of students' habits of mind and skills imperative for active civic participation and discourse through connections to their community, state, nation, and world.

The standards are rigorous and flexible in design to address the diversity of students' experiences. They integrate the Alaska context throughout, ensuring that knowledge, skills, and dispositions progress from kindergarten through 12th grade (K–12). They interweave components of the Alaska Cultural Standards to make sure that social studies learning is relevant, meaningful, and purposeful for all students in Alaska. They were developed by a diverse and experienced group of Alaskan educators, Tribal representatives, and other community partners guided by current evidence-based best practices in social studies education.

Process for Creating the Standards

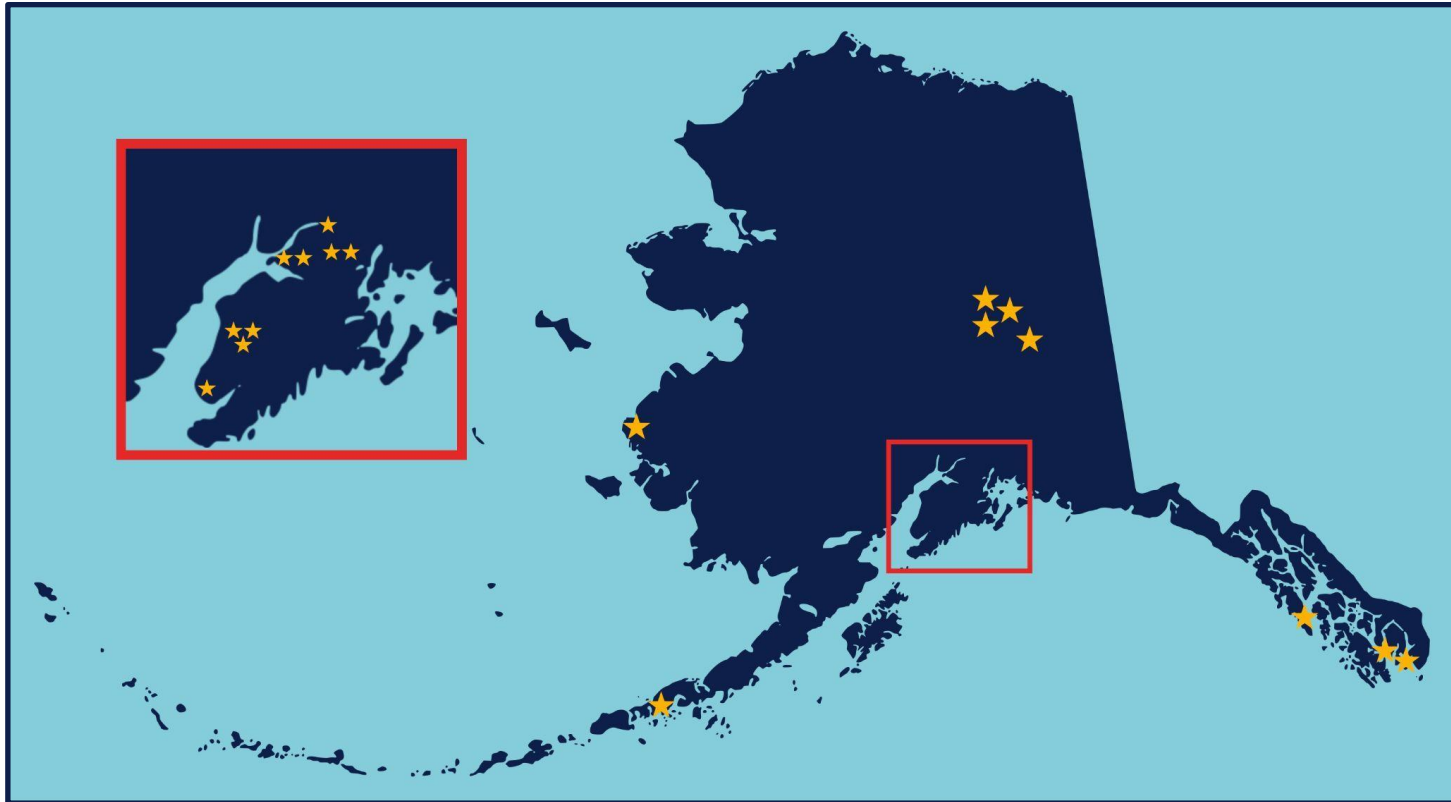
Identifying Representatives for the Work

In order to meet the vision of the standards revision work, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) identified the need for three workgroups of diverse education professionals and/or leaders to support the work: the Guiding Principles Workgroup (GPWG), Alaska History Workgroup (AHWG), and Educator Workgroup (EWG).

The GPWG was composed of approximately 9 individuals, including representatives from organizations such as the Alaska Municipal League, Institute of the North, and Alaska Association of School Boards, along with a superintendent and social studies curriculum coordinator. The function of the GPWG was to develop guiding principles for the standards revision process.

The AHWG was composed of 8 individuals, including educators, education leaders, and representatives of Alaska tribes. This included representation from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Goldbelt Heritage Foundation, and Alaska Native Heritage Center. The function of the AHWG was to develop guidance for the inclusion of state history, Tribal government, and Indigenous histories.

The EWG was composed of 18 educators in Alaska with a wide variety of experience in K–12 social studies education. The function of the EWG was to refine, revise, and develop appropriate standards to meet Alaska's current needs that align with current national standards and reflect the cultural perspectives of Alaska. When choosing writers, the selection committee considered statewide representation for public elementary, middle, and high school educators across Alaska, particularly from different locales and district sizes. Due to natural attrition during the standards revision process, the EWG was composed of 13 main individuals.



Map of educator locations throughout the state

The demographics of the 13 team members were as follows: there were 4 representatives from the Interior, 6 from Southcentral Alaska, 1 from the Southwest, and 2 from the Southeast. Educators represented the following towns/cities: Anchor Point, Soldotna, Anchorage, Eagle River, Chevak, Teller, Metlakatla, Fairbanks, King Cove, Chugiak, and North Pole. Representative's teaching experiences included 2 with 0-5 years experience; 4 with 6-10 years experience; 4 with 11-15 years experience; 1 with 16-20 years experience; and 2 with 20+ years experience. Educator's experience in teaching and/or supporting social studies included 4 with 1-5 years; 7 with 6-10 years; 2 with 16+ years. District sizes represented by educators ranged from 3-100 schools in a district that serve anywhere from 200-42,000 students.

Developing the Standards

Prior to drafting the standards, the GPWG and AHWG convened virtually to craft guiding principles that would serve as a guide for the standards revision work. For this process, each group built their background knowledge on national and state trends, and state policies impacting the social studies standards in Alaska in order to review and identify strengths and gaps in the current Alaska social studies standards. They engaged in a visioning activity in which they brainstormed criteria for determining high-quality social studies standards and identified key knowledge, skills, and dispositions (KSDs) that all students need to master in Alaska.

Next, the groups reviewed current research/best practices, the national landscape of social studies, and various state standards in order to identify key components or “must haves” that could inform the social studies revision work in Alaska. The “must haves” were organized into themes and then written as draft action statements to guide the EWG’s revision of the social studies standards. The EWG had the opportunity to review the preliminary action statements and provide feedback. The action statements, later referred to as guiding principles, underwent two rounds of review by the GPWG and AHWG. Notably, one of the AHWG members shared the guiding principles with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska’s Education Committee for feedback.

Armed with the guiding principles, the EWG began the standards revision process by engaging in tasks similar to those of the GPWG and AHWG, including a review of current research/trends in social studies, visioning activity, identifying key KSDs, and identifying strengths and gaps in the current Alaska standards. Following this review, the EWG was divided into three grade-band groups (K–5, 6–8, 9–12) to revise the standards based on the guiding principles, which were grounded in research and best practices. The EWG worked asynchronously and synchronously within their grade-band groups on revising the standards both in person and virtually. During the process, the grade bands also reviewed standards across the groups to ensure vertical alignment of the standards.

Once an initial draft version of the standards was developed, the GPWG, AHWG, and reflective friends were invited to provide feedback on the standards. Reflective friends were identified by DEED and included educators from different school districts who were not part of the standards revision process, including Anchorage School District, Bering Strait School District, Bristol Bay Borough School District, Lower Kuskokwim School District, and Petersburg City School District.

After another round of revisions per the GPWG, AHWG, and reflective friends’ feedback, a focus group was conducted with additional key community partners interested in the work. These key community partners included a superintendent, two state board members, and an Alaska House representative, along with staff representatives for an Alaska Senator, homeschool superintendent, Association of Alaska School Boards, and Alaska Christians United for Israel. Feedback from the GPWG, AHWG, reflective friends, and community partners was used to update and revise the standards to produce the current version.

Guiding Principles

To assist in the development of the standards, the GPWG developed a series of overarching statements called guiding principles. The guiding principles are subdivided by content and structure. Content guiding principles focus on what students should be able to know and do as a result of studying a specific content area, while structure guiding principles focus on how the standards should be set up (e.g., learning progressions, grade bands).

Content Guiding Principles

- A. Standards should advocate cultural awareness and incorporate diverse cultures, multiple perspectives, and voices that include Indigenous ways of knowing and local Indigenous cultures.
- B. Alaska Native culture, history, perspectives, values, and practices should be thoughtfully incorporated throughout the social studies standards and contextualized within a contemporary global indigeneity framework.
- C. Standards should be grounded in inquiry-based learning opportunities that incorporate various experiential, real-world contexts for students (home, classroom, school, community) and utilize Indigenous ways of learning.
- D. Content standards should employ historical and critical thinking skills, such as knowledge, contextualization, perspective, chronological thinking, synthesis, analysis, research, and interpretation to develop student agency in learning.
- E. Standards should provide opportunities for cross-curricular connections, such as the relationships among science, technology, and society in global and historical contexts, which allow students to explore the development of diverse knowledge.
- F. Standards should provide students with place-based content, including themes related to geographic location, human engagement with and impact on the environment, and a nexus of perspectives within a location, and historic and contemporary movement.
- G. Civics content should incorporate different systems of government (local, state, federal, sovereign tribal) and an analysis of politics and procedures in order for students to become meaningfully engaged citizens in a representative democracy.
- H. Standards should include an economic strand that presents diverse economic systems, including state, federal, sovereign tribal, and unique economies in Alaska, and that analyzes the ecological impact of these systems.
- I. Economic standards should include opportunities to build on students' personal financial literacy and provide them the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions relevant to their lives, communities, and economic systems.

Structure Guiding Principles

- A. Standards are presented with straightforward language that lacks ambiguity, and the structure of the document is easy to navigate.
- B. Standards are developmentally appropriate; grade banded (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12); and progress students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions of each discipline from K–12.

- C. Skills and content standards are arranged under disciplinary strands (history, civics/government, economics, geography), focusing on core concepts or big ideas in each discipline that help students understand and contextualize their community, region, state, nation, and world.
- D. Skills and content standards are arranged under common themes across grade bands.
- E. Standards incorporate and connect to the dimensions and indicators in the College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies State Standards (C3 Framework) throughout K–12.
- F. Standards are grounded in inquiry-based practices and use fundamental or enduring questions that allow students to think critically, demonstrate learning through critical perspectives, and synthesize information in new ways.
- G. Standards within each grade band provide clear performance expectations or benchmarks to guide students' mastery of skills and content knowledge in multiple domains.
- H. Standards ensure a focus on student agency through inquiry and authentic learning opportunities that honor students' intellectual capacity to foster skill development and comprehension that have real-world connections.

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Overview of the Standards

The standards outline the minimum that students in Alaska should learn in each grade band. The standards address a foundational framework of what is to be learned, but they do not address how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used.

Design Considerations

Anchor standards remain the same through all grades and courses and align closely with the dimensions of the C3 Framework. Adopted by NCSS, the C3 Framework is a framework for social studies education that is inquiry based. The C3 Framework notes that it uses the Inquiry Design Model, a distinctive approach to creating curriculum and instructional materials that honors teachers' knowledge and expertise, avoids over-prescription, and focuses on the main elements of the instructional design process.

There are two unique types of anchor standards in the Alaska Social Studies Standards: inquiry standards and content standards.

Curriculum Considerations

Standards are not curriculum. A standard represents a goal or expected outcome of an educational program; they do not dictate the design of a lesson plan or how units should be organized. The standards establish a statewide baseline of what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of a grade band. The instructional program should emphasize the development of students' abilities to acquire and apply the standards. The curriculum must ensure that appropriate accommodations are made for diverse populations of students found within Alaska schools.

These standards are not a set of instructional or assessment tasks, but rather statements of what students should be able to master after instruction. Decisions on how best to help students meet these program goals are left to local school districts and teachers. The curriculum includes the vast array of instructional materials, readings, learning experiences 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 Alaska law.

The AK SS standards address what is to be learned; they do not address how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used. The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) does not designate specific strategies used to teach the AK SS standards. Decisions on how best to help students meet these standards are left to districts, schools and teachers.

However, it is important to consider that all curricula emphasize the development of students' abilities to acquire and apply the standards. Curricular decisions must also consider the diversity of Alaska students and the need to ensure equity and access for all.

To achieve this, Alaska students need curricula that are designed and structured for a rigorous, relevant, and personalized learning experience that includes a wide variety of learning opportunities. Some examples to consider include the following.

Place-Based Education (PBE). One noteworthy consideration is the idea of place. To be an effective social studies teacher, educators must develop a deep understanding of the place they are working in and find ways to make that place central to their classroom practice. Knowledge of place and the cultural competency that goes along with it, is primarily gained through building relationships with students, parents, and the wide variety of people who make up a school and its surrounding community. In addition, it is developed when teachers become critically familiar with the schools and communities in which they work. This includes going out and experiencing Alaska's natural environment and learning about the various ways in which the history, economics, geography, and politics of Alaska give context to contemporary social studies teaching and learning.

Project-Based Learning (PBL). It is important that students sometimes take an extended period to delve deeply into a problem or an investigation that addresses the inquiry questions they seek. The inquiry and social justice standards of the AK SS Standards, when paired with appropriate disciplinary content, naturally support students in these deeper learning experiences. In social studies, these investigations often have a civic purpose; to improve their communities, nation, or world. The experiential nature of PBL often takes the students beyond the four walls of the classroom, whether through the use of technology or by physically walking out their school doors. As a result of these learning experiences, students gain both deeper content knowledge and critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. This process will enable them to be successful in their workforce and/or higher education pursuits and as engaged members of their community.

How to Read the Standards

The Alaska Social Studies Standards are categorized by anchor standards. Anchor standards provide lenses through which the essential skills and disciplinary knowledge of inquiry and action are practiced and applied.

When appropriate, the standards also include themes and topics meant to serve as ancillary support to the standards. Below is a description of each:

- **Themes:** A cluster of standards around a large idea in a course. Themes help to organize the entire course into smaller chunks. There can be anywhere from 3-12 themes in a grade or course.
- **Topics:** An organizational feature that further defines the area of study within a theme. There are often two or more topics under each theme.

<i>Theme 2: Age of Exploration, Exploitation, and Colonialism</i>		
Time Period: 1400s–1750s		
Topic	Anchor Standard <i>The student demonstrates an understanding of...</i>	Content Standard <i>Therefore, the student is able to...</i>
Gathering and Evaluating Sources	Inquiry Anchor Standard 2 Evaluate Sources and Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● SS.8.2.2.1 Identify primary and secondary sources related to European exploration and colonization, considering their reliability and potential bias.● SS.8.2.2.2 Analyze a variety of primary sources about exploration routes, encounters, and cultural exchanges.
	History Anchor Standard 21 Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● SS.8.2.21.1 Compare and contrast perspectives through primary and secondary source research.

Example of a Theme and Topic included in addition to the anchor and content standards.

Standards Coding

The coding of the Alaska social studies standards uses the following format:

Example: SS.K-2.9.2

This example is drawn from the K-2 grade civics anchor standards standards and can be read from left to right as SS (Social Studies), K-2 (grade band, kindergarten to grade 2), 9 (Anchor standard 9: Civics), and 2 (standard number). Anchor standards are color-coded by the inquiry/content area presented.

When applicable, some standards will be further divided into leveled content standards, detailing components of a standard students are expected to know at each grade level. The standard coding does not change for each grade level requirement.

Inquiry Anchor Standards

Standards 1-5 are inquiry anchor standards. These standards are meant to be used in concert with the content standards throughout the course of study, whenever appropriate. Working both individually and collaboratively, students engage in inquiry about important issues in social studies classes. Students utilize the inquiry process to analyze foundational knowledge, develop questions, apply tools to engage in research, weigh evidence, develop and communicate conclusions, and take informed action.

Table 1: Inquiry Anchor Standards

Anchor Standard 1	Develop Questions and Plan Inquiries
Anchor Standard 2	Evaluate Sources and Evidence
Anchor Standard 3	Develop Claims
Anchor Standard 4	Communicate and Critique Conclusions
Anchor Standard 5	Informed Civic Discourse and Engagement

Content Anchor Standards

Standards 6-25 are Content Anchor Standards: Content standards define what students should know or be able to do in a specific grade or course. They emphasize the way each discipline provides foundational knowledge and skills essential to inquiry and action. There are four main content areas in these standards: Civics, Economics, Geography, and History.

Table 2: Content Anchor Standard

Civics

Anchor Standard 6	Civic and Political Institutions and Systems
Anchor Standard 7	Participation and Deliberation
Anchor Standard 8	Processes, Rules, and Laws
Anchor Standard 9	Alaska's Governments
Anchor Standard 10	Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities of Citizens

Economics

Anchor Standard 11	Economic Systems, Models, and Markets
Anchor Standard 12	Decision-Making and Personal Finance
Anchor Standard 13	The National Economy
Anchor Standard 14	The Global Economy
Anchor Standard 15	Alaska Economies: State, Local, and Tribal

Geography

Anchor Standard 16	Human Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture
Anchor Standard 17	Global Interconnections: Changing Spatial Patterns

Anchor Standard 18	Geographic Representations and Reasoning
Anchor Standard 19	Human Populations: Spatial Patterns and Movement
Anchor Standard 20	Geography of Alaska

History

Anchor Standard 21	Perspectives
Anchor Standard 22	Historical Sources and Evidence
Anchor Standard 23	Change, Continuity, and Context
Anchor Standard 24	Historical Thinking
Anchor Standard 25	Alaskan History

Table 3: Anchor Standards Definitions

Anchor Standard:	Anchor Standard Definition
Civics	
Civic and Political Institutions and Systems	Knowledge of law, politics and government are essential to understanding the important institutions of society and the principles these institutions are intended to reflect.
Participation and Deliberation	Civics teaches the principles—such as adherence to the social contract, consent of the governed, limited government, legitimate authority, federalism, and separation of powers—that are meant to guide official institutions such as legislatures, courts, and government agencies. It also teaches the virtues—such as honesty, mutual respect, cooperation, and attentiveness to multiple perspectives—that citizens should use when they interact with each other on public matters. Principles such as equality, freedom, liberty, respect for individual rights, and deliberation apply to both official institutions and informal interactions among citizens. Learning these virtues and principles requires obtaining factual knowledge of written provisions found in important texts such as the founding documents of the United States. It also means coming to understand the diverse arguments that have been made about these documents and their meanings. Finally, students

	understand virtues and principles by applying and reflecting on them through actual civic engagement— their own and that of other people from the past and present.
Processes, Rules, and Laws	Determining how groups of people make decisions, govern themselves and address public problems is a key component of functioning in a democratic republic. People address problems at all scales, from a classroom to the agreements among nations. Public policies are among the tools that governments use to address public problems.
Alaska's Governments	Alaska's government influenced the history and culture of the citizens of Alaska. These standards promote understanding of the functions of local government where applicable.
Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities of Citizens	Exemplifying the characteristics of productive citizenship includes adherence to and understanding of the social contract, consent of the governed, limited government, legitimate authority, federalism and separation of powers. It also includes civic dispositions, such as honesty, mutual respect, cooperation and attentiveness to multiple perspectives, citizens should use when they interact with each other on public matters. It means understanding the diverse arguments made about the underlying principles and founding documents and their meanings.

Anchor Standard: Economics	Anchor Standard Definition
Economic Systems, Models, and Markets	Economic systems include developing the understanding how people voluntarily exchange goods and services when both parties expect to gain as a result of the trade. Markets exist to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. When buyers and sellers interact in well-functioning, competitive markets, prices are determined that reflect the relative scarcity of the goods and services in the market. The principles of markets apply to markets for goods and services, labor, credit, foreign exchange, and others. Comparison of benefits and costs helps identify the circumstances under which government action in markets is in the best interest of society and when it is not.
Decision-Making and Personal Finance	People make decisions about how to use scarce resources to maximize the well-being of individuals and society. Economic decision making involves setting goals and identifying the resources available to achieve those goals. Alternative ways to use the resources are investigated in terms of their advantages and disadvantages. Since most choices involve a little more of one thing and a little less of something else, economic decision making includes weighing the additional benefit of an action

	against the additional cost. Investigating the incentives that motivate people is an essential part of analyzing economic decision making.
The National Economy	Changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources influence current and future economic conditions and standard of living. All markets working together influence economic growth and fluctuations in well-being. Monetary and fiscal policies are often designed and used in attempts to moderate fluctuations and encourage growth under a wide variety of circumstances. Policies changing the growth in the money supply and overall levels of spending in the economy are aimed at reducing inflationary or deflationary pressures; increasing employment or decreasing unemployment levels; and increasing economic growth over time. Policies designed to achieve alternative goals often have unintended effects on levels of inflation, employment, and growth.
The Global Economy	Economic globalization occurs with cross-border movement of goods, services, technology, information, and human, physical, and financial capital. Understanding why people specialize and trade, and how that leads to increased economic interdependence, are fundamental steps in understanding how the world economy functions. While trade provides significant benefits, it is not without costs. Comparing Those benefits and costs is essential in evaluating policies to influence trade among individuals and businesses in different countries.
Alaska Economies: State, Local, and Tribal	Alaska's economy is diverse, including a combination of metropolitan, rural, and tribal economies. The state economy is primarily driven by the goods and services produced in the state, including oil production, fishing, federal and state (both civilian and military) expenditures, research and development, and tourism. These standards promote economic skills and reasoning where applicable.

Anchor Standard: Geography	Anchor Standard Definition
Human Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture	Interconnections occur in both human and physical systems. All of these interconnections create complex spatial patterns at multiple scales that continue to change over time. Human Interactions and interconnections speed the diffusion of ideas and innovations, intensifying spatial integration and transforming regions. Global-scale issues and problems cannot be resolved without extensive collaboration among the world's peoples, nations and economic organizations.

Global Interconnections: Changing Spatial Patterns	Global interconnections occur in both human and physical systems. Earth is a set of interconnected ecosystems of which humans are an influential part. Many natural phenomena have no perceptible boundaries. For example, the oceans are one dynamic system. The atmosphere covers the entire planet. Land and water forms shift over geological eons. Many life forms diffuse from place to place and bring environmental changes with them. Humans have spread across the planet, along with their cultural practices, artifacts, languages, diseases, and other attributes. All of these interconnections create complex spatial patterns at multiple scales that continue to change over time. Global-scale issues and problems cannot be resolved without extensive collaboration among the world's peoples, nations, and economic organizations. Asking and answering questions about global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.
Geographic Representations and Reasoning	Creating maps and using geospatial technologies requires a process of answering geographic questions by gathering relevant information; organizing and analyzing the information; and using effective means to communicate the findings. Once a map or other representation is created, it prompts new questions concerning the locations, spaces, and patterns portrayed. Creating maps and other geographical representations is an essential and enduring part of seeking new geographic knowledge that is personally and socially useful and that can be applied in making decisions and solving problems.
Human Populations: Spatial Patterns and Movement	The size, composition, distribution and movement of human populations are fundamental and active features on Earth's surface. Causes and consequences of migration are influenced by cultural, economic and environmental factors. Past, present and future conditions on Earth's surface cannot be fully understood without asking and answering questions about the spatial patterns of the human population.
Geography of Alaska	The promotion of geographic knowledge and skills specific to Alaska is essential to understand the places and environments throughout Alaska . These standards promote investigative and problem-solving skills both inside and outside of the classroom where applicable.

Anchor Standard: History	Anchor Standard Definition
Perspectives	History is interpretive. Even if they are eyewitnesses, people construct different accounts of the same event, which are shaped by their perspectives—their ideas, attitudes, and beliefs. Historical

	<p>understanding requires recognizing this multiplicity of points of view in the past, which makes it important to seek out a range of sources on any historical question rather than simply use those that are easiest to find. It also requires recognizing that perspectives change over time, so that historical understanding requires developing a sense of empathy with people in the past whose perspectives might be very different from those of today.</p>
Historical Sources and Evidence	<p>Historical inquiry is based on materials left from the past that can be studied and analyzed. Such materials, referred to as historical sources or primary sources, include written documents, but also objects, artistic works, oral accounts, landscapes that humans have modified, or even materials contained within the human body, such as DNA. These sources become evidence once they are selected to answer a historical question, a process that involves taking into account features of the source itself, such as its maker or date. The selection process also requires paying attention to the wider historical context in order to choose sources that are relevant and credible. Examining sources often leads to further questions as well as answers in a spiraling process of inquiry.</p>
Change, Continuity, and Context	<p>Chronological reasoning requires understanding processes of change and continuity over time, which means assessing similarities and differences between historical periods and between the past and present. It also involves understanding how a change in one area of life relates to a change in other areas, thus bringing together political, economic, intellectual, social, cultural and other factors.</p>
Historical Thinking	<p>Historical Thinking requires understanding and evaluating change and continuity over time, and making appropriate use of historical evidence in answering questions and developing arguments about the past. It involves going beyond simply asking, "What happened when?" to evaluating why and how events occurred and developments unfolded. It involves locating and assessing historical sources of many different types to understand the contexts of given historical eras and the perspectives of different individuals and groups within geographic units that range from the local to the global. Historical thinking is a process of chronological reasoning, which means wrestling with issues of causality, connections, significance, and context with the goal of developing credible explanations of historical events and developments based on reasoned interpretation of evidence.</p>
Alaskan History	<p>Alaska history has been influenced and has influenced many factors throughout history. The focus on Alaskan history is on the study of the environment, indigenous and immigrant residents, and institutions of Alaska, with specific study of the social, economic, and political history of Alaska, and educational institutions and laws that affect the people of Alaska. The Alaska history standards give perspective and meaning to the people, ideas, and events that</p>

shaped the state. These standards address clear Alaska connections in the history standards where applicable.

Anchor Standard: Inquiry	Anchor Standard Definition
Develop Questions and Plan Inquiries	The development of enduring questions is essential to the study of each social studies discipline. Enduring questions are open-ended, compelling and centered on significant unresolved issues. Enduring questions focus on real world issues and concerns, these questions deal with curiosities about how things work, interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts, and unresolved issues that require students to construct arguments in response. Compelling questions have no one answer.
Evaluate Sources and Evidence	Whether students are constructing opinions, explanations, or arguments, they will gather information from a variety of sources and evaluate the relevance of that information. In this section, students are asked to work with the sources that they gather and/ or are provided for them. It is important for students to use online and print sources, and they need to be mindful that not all sources are relevant to their task. They also need to understand that there are general Common Core literacy skills, such as identifying an author's purpose, main idea, and point of view, that will help in evaluating the usefulness of a source.
Develop Claims	In contrast to opinions and explanations, argumentation involves the ability to understand the source-to-evidence relationship. That relationship emphasizes the development of claims and counterclaims and the purposeful selection of evidence in support of those claims and counterclaims. Students will learn to develop claims using evidence, but their initial claims will often be tentative and probing. As students delve deeper into the available sources, they construct more sophisticated claims and counterclaims that draw on evidence from multiple sources. Whether those claims are implicitly or explicitly stated in student products, they will reflect the evidence students have selected from the sources they have consulted.
Communicate and Critique Conclusions	A student's ability to communicate their own conclusions effectively and listen carefully to the conclusions of others can be considered a capstone of social studies disciplinary practices. Traditional products such as essays, reports, tables, diagrams, graphs, multimedia presentations and discussions can be used to share conclusions with a variety of audiences.

	<p>In a world of ever-expanding communication opportunities inside and outside their school walls, students should also be able to utilize newer media forms in order to share their conclusions and hear the voices of those whose conclusions may be different.</p>
Informed Civic Discourse and Engagement	<p>Civic discourse focuses on developing the skills around how to communicate with one another around the challenges of public issues in order to enhance both individual and group understanding. It also involves enabling effective decision making aimed at finding consensus, compromise, or in some cases, confronting social injustices through dissent. Civic engagement involves working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference.</p>

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References

Foundational Documents of the Alaska Social Studies Standards

Several documents served as a foundation for the Alaska Social Studies Standards. Among these was the C3 Framework, a national social studies framework published by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in 2013 that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The C3 Framework highlights an Inquiry Arc that is informed by inquiry skills and four major disciplines in social studies: civics, economics, geography, and history. A full copy of the C3 Framework can be accessed at <http://www.socialstudies.org/C3>.

Additional foundational documents that informed the standards include the following:

- Center for Civic Education. (2014). National Standards for Civics and Government. Retrieved from <http://www.civiced.org/standards>
- Council for Economic Education. (2010). Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics, 2nd Edition. Retrieved from <https://www.councilforeconed.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/voluntary-national-content-standards-2010.pdf>
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- National Center for History in the Schools. (1996). United States history content standards for grades 5–12. In National Standards for History. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles. Retrieved from <https://phi.history.ucla.edu/nchs/united-states-history-content-standards/>
- Social Studies or Social Science standards and frameworks from the following states: Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington state

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