The 2020–21 school year presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges due to the disruption to instruction in spring 2020 as well as the uncertainty as the school year unfolds. Educators know that every school year there are students who require support in addressing unfinished learning from prior grades, a challenge that will be felt more prominently in the 2020–21 school year. It is vitally important that educators are supported to make deliberate instructional choices that allow all students to effectively engage with grade-level work.

The most effective and equitable way to support students in their learning is to ensure that the vast majority of time is spent engaging with grade-level content, remediating with precision and accelerating as needed. It is entirely possible to hold high expectations for all students while addressing unfinished learning in the context of grade-level work. Since time is a scarce commodity in classrooms — made more limited by anticipated closures and remote or hybrid learning models in the fall of 2020 — strategic instructional choices about which content to prioritize must be made.

Assessing students at the start of the year will identify learning gaps and provide data to inform grade level instruction — as well as incorporating both remediation and acceleration along the way. Diagnostic assessments determine student strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Diagnostic assessments allow teachers to adjust the curriculum to meet the unique needs of all students. While some concepts have greater emphasis in a particular year, all standards deserve a defined level of instruction. Neglecting concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

The focus areas detailed in each Social Studies domain center around Long Term Transfer Goals that enable students to independently use their learning to:

- Support the ideals of civic rights and responsibilities as set forth in the Preamble of the United States Constitution in regard to their local, state, nation and international relationships with actions and deeds. (Civics and Government)
- Make economic choices which impact self and others in personal, local, state, national and international governments. (Economics)
- Make decisions at personal, local, state, national, and international levels which will impact freedoms and liberties of self and others (Geography)
- Study the past struggle of balancing liberty and freedom to influence decisions that will impact their future at personal, local, state, national and international levels. (History)

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1 Adapted from 2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/literacy and Mathematics, Student Achievement Partners/Achieve the Core. May 2020
CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Areas of Instruction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principles and Documents of Government</strong></td>
<td>5.1.9.B./5.1.W.B./5.1.9.C.B/5.1.12.B Employ historical examples and political philosophy to evaluate the major arguments advanced for the necessity of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Laws and government</td>
<td>5.1.9.D/5.1.U.D/5.1.C.D/5.1.12.D Evaluate state and federal powers based on significant documents and other critical sources. •Declarations of Independence •United States Constitution •Bill of Rights •PA Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individual rights</td>
<td>5.2.9.A/5.2.U.A/5.2.W.A/5.2.C.A, 5.2.12.A Evaluate an individual’s civil rights, responsibilities, and obligations in various contemporary governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>5.2.9.B/5.2.U.B/5.2.W.B/5.2.C.B/5.2.12.B Examine the causes of conflicts in society and evaluate techniques to address these conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Civics rights and responsibilities</td>
<td>5.3.9.B/5.3.U.B/5.3.W.B/5.3.C.B/5.3.12.B Compare and contrast policy-making in various and contemporary world governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict and resolution</td>
<td>5.3.9.E/5.3.C.E/5.3.12.E Evaluate the fairness and effectiveness of the United States electoral processes, including the electoral college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How Government Works</strong></td>
<td>5.3.9.H/5.3.C.H/5.3.12.H Evaluate the role of mass media in setting public agenda and influencing political life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Elements of the election process</td>
<td>5.4.9.B/5.4.C.B/5.4.12.B Evaluate the effectiveness of foreign policy tools in various current issues confronting the United States (e.g., diplomacy, economic aid, military aid, sanctions, treaties).</td>
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<td>• Media influences</td>
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# HISTORY FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

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## Focus Areas of Instruction

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<td>8.3.9.C/8.3.U.C/8.3.C.C/8.3.12.C Evaluate how continuity and change in U.S history are interrelated with the world. •Belief systems and religion •Commerce and industry •Technology •Politics and government •Physical and human geography •Social organizations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.4.9.C/8.4.W.C/8.4.C.C/8.4.12.C Evaluate how continuity and change have impacted the world today. •Belief systems and religion •Commerce and Industry •Technology •Politics and government •Physical and human geography •Social organization</td>
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<td><strong>World History</strong></td>
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<td>6.2.9.B/6.2.12.B Analyze the effect of changes in the level of competition in different markets.</td>
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<td><strong>Geographic Literacy</strong></td>
<td>7.1.12.B Assess how physical changes to a region may have global impact.</td>
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<td>• Global impact of physical changes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical and Human Characteristics of Places and Regions</strong></td>
<td>7.2.12.B Analyze the significance of physical processes in shaping the character of places and regions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interrelationships</td>
<td>7.3.12.A Analyze the human characteristics of places and regions using the following criteria: Population Culture Settlement Economic activities Political activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Significance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions Between People and the Environment</strong></td>
<td>7.4.12.B Analyze the global effects of human activity on the physical systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Global Effects</td>
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