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Informed Citizens Debate the Death Penalty 10 Day Curriculum Unit

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Unit Overview

In brief

Recently, capital punishment has been under increased scrutiny. Efforts to abolish or impose a moratorium on the death penalty are multiplying. Many people, including bar associations, members of Congress, and leaders of religious organizations are raising concerns about the application of the death penalty, and new ballot initiatives are making an appearance. Several states have called for studies of the fairness and justice of the death penalty.

Centered on a controversial issue of great public concern, this unit is designed to facilitate critical thinking, citizen responsibility and voice, and writing and cooperative group work.

In this unit, students will be introduced to issues and opinions concerning capital punishment in a Web/classroom/group-work environment. Their research reports will be publicly debated in a legislative/town meeting, where a decision on the issue will be made.

Students will begin this unit by reviewing and rendering a decision on four actual death penalty cases. They will then research the Web site in groups to examine critically the concept and practice of capital punishment, engage in a role play simulation, present their findings to a group representing a legislative body that will consider their presentations, and determine whether their state should support, abolish, or impose a moratorium on the death penalty.

Rationale

The purpose of this unit is to prepare students to take on the roles of responsible and informed citizens, and to work cooperatively in a safe classroom environment where differences of opinion can be productively expressed in the process of coming to a decision on a serious matter. As citizens in a democracy, students will struggle with their own opinions in creating a public position regarding fairness and justice as it relates to capital punishment. The group work will give students first-hand experience in dealing with the dynamics of democratic decision-making based on the assumption that public opinion trickles up via grass roots efforts, opinion polls, and citizen voice. As students examine who is eligible to serve on a capital case, review and discuss four actual cases including the stories of the victims involved, explore arguments for and against the death penalty including expert testimony, review the current methods of execution, and interpret demographic information provided on the site, the issues of fairness and justice will be at the forefront.

Outcomes

Students will thoughtfully consider the central issues concerning the death penalty, utilizing information provided on the Web site. They will also engage in critical self-reflection on the issue and learn to negotiate their personal positions as they work in groups for the purpose of creating public policy. Students will do their own research, produce a report, and debate group research findings via a role-play scenario with appropriate support for their positions, culminating in a class decision to support, abolish, or impose a moratorium on the death penalty. In addition to their group's report, the suggestions they offer and the class's final decision, students will also reflect on their own position at the beginning and at the end of the unit through personal essays.

Themes

Citizen agency and voice; issues of fairness and justice with regard to capital punishment; examination and negotiation of individual and collective opinions; the democratic decision-making process; personal/persuasive essay writing.

NCSS Standards addressed:

(See National Council on Social Studies Standards Appendix, and Michigan Standards Appendix.)

Time:

2 weeks +

Materials needed:

- 1.) Computer lab with Internet capabilities
- 2.) PowerPoint software or poster board and related display materials (for group presentations)
- 3.) Death Penalty Main Site:

Primarily:

- Based on your beliefs, would you be chosen to serve as a juror on a capital case? (to help examine their initial perspectives and prepare them for the cases they will be given)
- Four Death Penalty Case Studies (to serve as real life examples for their deliberation, reports and discussion)
- Arguments and expert testimony for and against the death penalty (to explore the various positions and use of evidence)
- Methods of Execution (to use as evidence of cruel and unusual punishment or as humane methods of terminating a life)
- State-by-State Data (to use in investigating issues of fairness and justice - especially regarding differences between states and ethnicity)

Secondarily:

- History of the death penalty (to provide historical context, thematic illustration of past and present public opinion, and to serve as evidence for reports)
- Stages in a capital case (to show the process, from commission of the crime through trial, sentencing, and appeals)
- Current events (to make connections between the simulations and issues influencing current public opinion)

Assessment: Initial and final position paper; know/want to know notes; reflection papers on group work dynamics; group research projects and role-play presentations.

Procedure and Lesson Plan Outline

Introduction to the topic and position paper #1

Day 1: (Note: The day before you introduce this unit to students, tell them they will need a separate three ring notebook for the next two week unit, in which they will keep their notes, assignments, and research materials. This will be their Death Penalty Notebook.)

To begin the unit, ask your students to divide a piece of paper into two sections and have them write the following questions at the top of each section:

1. What do you know about the death penalty?
 2. What would you like to know about the death penalty?
- (Give them approximately 15 minutes to complete this task.)

After they have completed this task, ask them to draw a line at the bottom of each section and date it. As they progress through the unit, they

may revisit this activity - adding new information, answering the questions they initially may have had, adding new questions, etc. (Have them revisit this activity on day 4, before they start their group research.)

Divide the board in half and write down their collective responses and questions. Consider using a transparency, so you can keep these reactions for later. If you use the board, copy down the responses. This will provide you with a pre-assessment about what they know. Encourage them to take notes - this will be the second entry in their know/want to know notes.

After this task is completed, discuss what students wrote and clarify issues as necessary, but try to avoid answering the questions to which they may find answers on the web site.

Explain the purposes of the unit and the plans for the next two weeks. (See **Themes** and **Rationale** above for direction).

For homework, have the students write an initial position essay.

Requirements:

- A) State your position/views about the death penalty.
- B) Provide at least three reasons for your position. (Estimated length of this assignment: 3 pages)

Computer Lab / Introduction to the Web site; "Are you eligible survey"

Using the *teacher overview site descriptions*, briefly go over the entire site as a class.

Day 2: Allow them to explore and become familiar with the site. (15 minutes or so)

Have the students complete the "Would you be chosen to serve on a jury" survey and independently take notes on their reactions and questions. Take some time to discuss who may be eligible based on their beliefs about the death penalty and who is not from the information provided on the site.

Explain that whether or not they would be eligible, during the next class period everyone will review and decide an actual case.

Computer Lab / Introduction to the Web site; "Are you eligible survey"

Divide the class into 5 groups (see Appendix for grouping strategies and responsibilities).

Day 3: Explain the individual and collective roles that the group members will play.

Review the major points from the previous day's discussion regarding eligibility.

Hand out printed copies of the cases (without the final outcomes) to all group members - one case per group. The cases on the Web site include information about the crime, the defendant, the victim, aggravating circumstances, and mitigating circumstances. The final outcomes of the cases do not appear on the student version of the Web site. Teachers can find the final outcomes at the end of the Teacher Overview for the courtroom cases.

Since only four cases are provided, two groups will receive the same

case. Make sure that the duplicate case is not case study #4 (the McMillian case) because that case is an example of what turns out to be conviction of someone innocent of the crime. Because this is rare, it's better to duplicate one of the other three cases.

Explain that differences of opinion are a part of everyday life and that as a citizen group they represent a cross-section of the public. In their groups have each student review their case and share their positions. Have the speaker or writer take notes that will later be presented to the class. They must first discuss their opinions about the case and then render a decision. Use a secret ballot collected by the facilitator. Have them discuss their decision, briefly, and prepare their short presentation. Explain that in some states, in the advent of a deadlock, or hung-jury, the case would have to be retried with a different jury to reach a unanimous decision. However, in the interest of time the case will remain deadlocked.

Have each group briefly share with the class the main points of their case and the decisions/reasons that they reached. A general class discussion will certainly emerge. At the end of the period, pass out printed copies of the final outcomes of each case to the class.

Homework: A brief paper (2 pages) on what happened in their groups; conflicts, negotiations, compromises with regard to their decision. (Some potential leading questions for this assignment might be: How did your personal opinions conflict with or support those of other group members (In other words, how did you situate your voice)? How did you feel differences of opinion were expressed and handled? What were the differences in opinion and how were they supported/not supported?)

Introduce the simulation and research project and role play exercise

Simulation Introduction

Day 4:

(Make it clear to the students that the simulation concerns issues of ethics and justice.)

To begin the simulation, first discuss your state's position with regard to capital punishment. Note that opinions and laws have changed over time. (You may draw on the *History Section* of the site to make this point.) If your state does not currently have the death penalty, it may introduce new legislation to enact it. On the other hand, if your state does have the death penalty, it may introduce new legislation to impose a moratorium, or abolish it. The point to make here is that informed public opinion has the power to change legislation. In this simulation, students will be introduced to this process.

Introduce the simulation by reading the following:

Your state legislature is reconsidering its position on capital punishment. In the spirit of the democratic experiment in the United States, legislators are calling for citizen input in rendering a decision. Legislators are holding an open legislative hearing on the death penalty. Your group, motivated by various political and social reasons assigned

below, has chosen to attend this hearing. As citizens concerned with the issues of fairness and justice, you have the responsibility to act as the voice for your community and its position. This Web site will provide a substantial amount of information with regard to the death penalty, but you are also encouraged to draw on current events and publications concerning the issue.

Note: This research will culminate in a role-play toward the end of the unit.

After the research is complete, each group will determine how they will make their case in a role-play scenario based on their research. Students should keep this in mind as they do their research.

- 5 principal groups (A sixth is added for a larger class size) will examine 4 propositions drawn from the argument and rebuttal section of the site. (One group will serve as legislators who make a final decision on whether or not the death penalty should be supported, abolished, or whether a moratorium should be imposed, with appropriate support for their decision.)
- Select a proposition for each group (drawn out of a hat). The roles and propositions for each group are below. These should be printed out and given to the group facilitator. Grading rubrics for group work activity are in Appendix B. These rubrics should also be available to the group facilitator.
- *Note: Although students are given specific propositions to investigate and a specific role to play, they are not limited to these positions in general class discussions. Students should be encouraged to pass through the inquiry process: beginning with assessing what they currently know, learning more about the death penalty through the simulation and the Web site, and then re-examining their views given their investigations and the new knowledge they acquire.*

Group #1 Role: Law Enforcement Community

You are members of the law enforcement community - police officers, detectives, prosecutors, etc. You are primarily concerned with preventing crime. If criminals are left on the streets, your jobs will be tougher, your task is to research the following proposition:

Proposition: The Death Penalty prevents future murders.

You should read over all of the information given on *both* sides of the issue, including expert testimony and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful. As people charged with enforcing the law and preventing crime, you should decide which arguments are most persuasive to you. You should be prepared to argue this at the legislative hearing when it convenes. As a group, you should prepare a written

statement of beliefs to present to the legislative hearing and a visual product to illustrate your points (either poster board or PowerPoint).

Group#2 Role: Families of Victims

You represent the families of the victims in the case studies you read. One of your loved ones was killed in that case. You need to bring some resolution to this terrible tragedy. Do you believe that the accused must be killed to make up for your loss or for justice to be served (a life for a life) or is it sufficient to lock the person up for life? Your task is to research the proposition:

A just society requires the death penalty for the taking of a life.

You should read over all of the information given on *both* sides of the issue, including expert testimony and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful. As people who have lost a loved one in a violent crime, you should decide which arguments are most persuasive to you. You should be prepared to argue this at the legislative hearing when it convenes. As a group, you should prepare a written statement of beliefs to present to the legislative hearing and a visual product to illustrate your points (either poster board or PowerPoint).

Group #3 Role: Families of the Accused

You represent the families of the people accused of the crimes in the case studies that you read. You do not know whether they are guilty or innocent. All you know is that a member of your family is accused of a terrible crime and faces the loss of his/her life because of it. Your task is to research the following proposition:

The risk of executing the innocent precludes the use of the death penalty.

You should read over all of the information given on *both* sides of the issue, including expert testimony and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful. As family members of an individual who may face the death penalty, you should decide which arguments are most persuasive to you. You should be prepared to argue this at the legislative hearing when it convenes. As a group, you should prepare a written statement of beliefs to present to the legislative hearing and a visual product to illustrate your points (either poster board or PowerPoint).

Group #4 Role: Multicultural Task Force (MTF)

You represent a civil rights organization that advocates equal justice for all people, without regard to race. You are against discrimination and arbitrariness in the justice system. If your group collectively advocates the death penalty, how might it be applied more fairly with regard to race? If your group does not advocate the death penalty and views it as being applied unfairly, what racial issues can you find to support your position? Your task is to research the following proposition:

The death penalty is applied unfairly and should not be used.

You should read over all of the information given on *both* sides of the issue, including expert testimony and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful. As a group that advocates equal justice for all people, you should decide which arguments are most persuasive to you. You should be prepared to argue this at the legislative hearing when it convenes. As a group, you should prepare a written statement of beliefs to present to the legislative hearing and a visual product to illustrate your points (either poster board or PowerPoint).

Group #5 Role: (Optional)Youths for Justice (YFJ)

You are a group that advocates basic human rights for all people, especially juveniles. You are concerned with how young people are affected by the justice system. Are juveniles treated fairly when the death penalty is administered? Consider this question carefully and then select **one** of the following propositions to investigate, given your group's focus:

The death penalty prevents future murders.

A just society requires the death penalty for the taking of a life.

The death penalty is applied unfairly and should not be used.

You should read over all of the information given on *both* sides of the proposal your group has selected, including expert testimony and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful.

As people who want to see justice for America's youth, you should decide which arguments are most persuasive to you. You should be prepared to argue this at the legislative

hearing when it convenes. As a group, you should prepare a written statement of beliefs to present to the legislative hearing and a visual product to illustrate your points (either poster board or PowerPoint).

Group #6 Role: Legislators

You are the members of the legislature in your state. As representatives of both individual citizens and of the state as a whole, your job is to enact legislation that represents the best overall approach to capital punishment in your state. While the other groups are researching specific areas, your group should investigate all of the following arguments on the Web Site:

Deterrence, Retribution, Innocence, Arbitrariness and Discrimination, and any other sections of the Web site that might be useful.

Make sure you are aware of *both* sides of each of these arguments. When the groups make their presentations at the legislative hearing, you should be ready to ask questions. You should make up your mind how you will vote after listening to all of the arguments. (Remember that you will have to support your final answer. It is *certain* that some people will disagree with you, so be prepared to justify your position).

Before this research begins and after the groups have received their roles and propositions, revisit their *know/want to know* notes. Consider revisiting the *know/want to know* activity during the research process. This provides an excellent time for you to evaluate the performance of your groups/facilitators, contributes to their ongoing thinking regarding this issue, and helps you identify emergent themes.

Computer Lab and group research

Unlimited accesses to the computer lab. As a teacher you should
Days 5 & 6: monitor the sites the students are accessing and the activities in which they are involved. Utilize the *know/want to know* to guide their inquiry.

Group organization of reports and role play preparation

Meet briefly with the facilitators to remind them that tomorrow they
Day 7: will be making their presentations. Also remind them that they represent various constituencies and have a vested interest in the outcome. Remind them also of the requirements stated on the rubrics. It is important for the students to know that a good presentation flows well, is well thought-out,

matches the visual aid provided, and has some emotional investment. Allow them this time to prepare, since there will be no preparation time on Day 8. Consider explaining how a legislative hearing works.

Role play presentations and legislative decision (This may take two days)

Arrange the room so that there is a large table at the front (if no table is available, arrange the desks so your legislators face the room) and the desks sit in a semi-circle facing the front. There should be a separate place for the presenter to stand, as well as a place for the visual products (either a television if you are using PowerPoint, or an easel if you are using poster board).

Day 8:

Remind students that they will all prepare their own position papers when this is over, and that the information from the presenters may help them in preparing their views.

Choose groups randomly to go first, second and so on. Allow each group to make its presentation and answer any questions from the legislative committee. It is important to note that other groups may want to rebut what the speaker has said or to ask questions - don't allow this; however, encourage them to take notes for the general discussion/debriefing on the last day.

After all the speakers have presented and given the legislators their written position statements, have the legislators go to the hallway or some other conference area to deliberate. (Given time constraints, this may have to take place the following day.) There they should discuss what they have seen and heard, and make a determination for your state regarding the death penalty. While the legislators are deliberating, discuss with the students remaining in the room where they stand on the death penalty. Should your state enact the death penalty? Why or why not? If so, what methods of execution would they want to have? If not, have them revisit the compelling arguments against the death penalty. There will be further discussion after the legislators announce their findings.

Legislators announce their decision - a debate and discussion will emerge. Drawing on what they have learned during the course of the unit, the simulation, the arguments presented and the notes they have taken during the presentations, revisit the themes that have emerged.

Post reflection essay exam (using DP notebook)

Essay exam: Allow for some flexibility with regard to this essay so students can situate their own personal positions, reflect on what they have learned, and support their positions with compelling arguments. It is difficult to anticipate a format for this essay, since the specificity of the emergent issues may differ between classroom contexts and student populations. However, the essay should address two important themes of the unit: 1) their position with regard to the death penalty through the lens of fairness and justice, and 2) the group decision-making process in dealing with a controversial issue. Assessment should be based on how well students make and support their positions/arguments using information provided on the Web site, as well as the arguments made by their peers during the simulation and class discussions. The Research

Report Rubrics Appendix contains suggested grading rubrics for the research reports.

Debriefing and Discussion

Share opinions and group work dynamics in dealing with a controversial issue in a democratic fashion; discuss issues of fairness, justice and the democratic decision-making process. **Day 10:** Much of this will be drawn from what students have written on the previous day, the issues that emerged as a result of the simulation, and their experiences with working in groups concerning a controversial issue. This may also be a time when you may reflect, along with your students, on the effectiveness of the unit, the Web site, group work, and student interaction. Your comments to us are encouraged.

Appendix A

Group work roles

As many of you know, the selection of group composition can be a difficult task. Depending on the dynamics of your class, you may decide to have the students select their own groups. If you choose this approach, make sure that students understand the responsibilities of each group member, as well as the collective responsibilities of the group. Groups may also be selected randomly, or composed by you. The latter is our suggestion, given the complexity of the group dynamics for this unit. Given the open-ended nature of the research and role-play simulation, teacher guidance is of the utmost importance.

Logistics of group work: Emphasize that this is a cooperative endeavor, where individual opinions should be respected - the students are acting as a citizen research team.

Have the groups identify roles that each member will play (roles may be doubled up, with exception of the role of the facilitator - only one person should hold this role):

- Speaker (the primary, although not the only, presenter of the group research; participates in the team)
- Facilitator (keeps the group on task, focuses questions, oversees issues of quality and time management; responsible for individual and group assessment)
- Writer (coordinates the written work of research and the production of the final group brief to be presented to the team - there may be two, if dissenting opinions emerge)
- Visual producers (coordinates and produces the visual product highlighting the major points of their group's position/research on the proposition on poster board or PowerPoint)

Note: This division of labor can be used throughout the year if you utilize group work frequently in your class, so that before the end of the year everyone will assume one of these roles during some research or group project.

Appendix B

Research Report Grading Rubrics

Rubric for Group Facilitator

You are the leader of your group. Your primary responsibility is to ensure that all group members are involved, and that the various parts of the project are completed and on time. You will be graded on the following criteria:

Outstanding (4.0)	Satisfactory (3.0)	Unsatisfactory (2.0-0.0)
All evaluations done daily and thoughtfully	Most evaluations done, some are less thoughtful than others	Most evaluations missing
All components are completed ahead of time and are exceptional	Most components are completed on time	Parts of project are missing and you make no effort to fix it
Group members are all involved at your urging	Some members are allowed to opt-out occasionally	One or two people do all the work
Group conflict is managed productively, and different opinions are expressed and respected	Group conflict is minimized but some opinions are not heard or recognized	Group is out of control, and you make little or no effort to bring it to order

Rubric for Group Presenter

You are the presenter for your group. You will be responsible for making your group's case at the legislative hearing. You will be graded by the following criteria:

Outstanding (4.0)	Satisfactory (3.0)	Unsatisfactory (2.0-0.0)
Attention-getting introduction (creative)	Basic introduction of group case (simply stating the group proposition)	Missing or late for presentation
Presentation is seamless with few stops to check notes	Some stumbling spots, checking notes	Incoherent presentation
At least three arguments made	One or two arguments made	No clear supporting arguments
Persuasive conclusion	Basic summary conclusion	No clear conclusion
Answers all questions clearly and thoughtfully	Has difficulty answering clearly or answers none at all	Does not answer questions

Rubric for Visual Product

You are to prepare a visual product to support your presenter(s) when they make their case at the legislative hearing. The following standards apply:

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Outstanding (4.0)	Satisfactory (3.0)	Unsatisfactory (2.0-0.0)
Visually represents three arguments	Visually represents one or two arguments	Little or no visual representation of arguments
Neat, attractive and creative	Neat and attractive	Messy, no effort evident.
Uses color and pictures	Uses color effectively	Little or no color or pictures used

Rubric for Written Statement of Position

Your group should prepare one document that explains and supports your position on this topic. If your group cannot come to consensus on one side or the other, you should prepare two separate papers - have one person from each side write a separate position paper. The following standards apply:

Outstanding (4.0)	Satisfactory (3.0)	Unsatisfactory (2.0-0.0)
More than one full page	One full page	Less than one full page
Clearly stated and reasoned position	Clearly stated position	Position is not clear
Three different arguments	One or two arguments	No support
Recognizes and refutes opposing argument	Recognizes opposition	No respectful treatment of opposition
Paper is well written	Paper only meets minimum standards	Paper is incoherent
No spelling or grammar errors	One or two mistakes	Many mistakes

Appendix C
Group Work Evaluation

Group Facilitator _____

Date _____

Group Member	Assigned Role	Task Completed	Grade

Group Grade Average

Grading Rubric:

(If anything other than a 3.0 is given -- either a 4.0 or under a 3.0 -- the group

leader is required to give an explanation for this on the comment section of this form.)

- 4.0 Student cooperated fully, or respectfully/productively disagreed, with group and leader, performed assigned tasks, found necessary information as well as additional information and could explain it.
- 3.0 Student cooperated fully with group leader, performed assigned tasks and found necessary information.
- 2.0 Student required reminders to get to work, found only the necessary information, and completed only the minimum assigned tasks.
- 1.0 Student completed assigned tasks after extensive pressure or teacher involvement.
- 0.0 Student was uncooperative and unproductive.

Comments:

Appendix D

NCSS Standards addressed: Thematic Strands:

Strand 1.

CULTURE
AND
CULTURAL
DIVERSITY

Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of Culture and Cultural Diversity.

Learner Expectations

In a democratic and culturally diverse society, students need to comprehend multiple perspectives that emerge from within their own culture and from the vantage points of the diverse cultural groups within that society and with whom the society may interact. These understandings allow them to make appropriate sense of the actions, ideas, and products of others as well as to relate to and interact with people within their diverse society and throughout the world.

Strand 2.

TIME,
CONTINUITY,
AND CHANGE

Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of Time, Continuity and Change.

Learner Expectations

The study of time, continuity, and change allows learners to understand their historical roots and to locate themselves

in time. Learners also draw on their knowledge of history to make informed choices and decisions in the present.

Teacher Expectations

Teachers of social studies at all school levels should provide developmentally appropriate experiences as they guide learners in the study of time, continuity and change. They should

- provide learners with opportunities to investigate, interpret, and analyze multiple historical and contemporary viewpoints within and across cultures related to events, recurring dilemmas, and persistent issues, while employing , skepticism, and critical judgement; and
- enable learners to apply ideas, theories, and modes of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary developments, and to inform and evaluate actions concerning public policy issues.

Strand 5.

**INDIVIDUALS,
GROUPS,
AND
INSTITUTIONS**

Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of interactions among Individuals, Groups, and Institutions.

Learner Expectations

Institutions such as schools, churches, families, government agencies, and the courts all play integral roles in our lives. These and other institutions exert enormous influence over us, yet institutions are no more than organizational embodiments to further the core social values of those who comprise them. Thus, it is important that learners know how institutions are formed, what controls and influences them, how they control and influence individuals and culture, and how institutions can be maintained or changed.

Teacher Expectations

Teachers of social studies at all school levels should provide developmentally appropriate experiences as they should

- guide learners in the study of interactions among individuals, groups and describing the connections and interactions of individuals, groups, and institutions in society;

- help learners analyze group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings;
- explain to learners the various forms institutions take, and explain how they develop and change over time;
- assist learners in identifying and analyzing examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and efforts used to promote social conformity by groups and institutions;
- enable learners to describe and examine belief systems basic to specific traditions and laws in contemporary and historical movements;
- challenge learners to evaluate the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change;
- guide learner analysis of the extent to which groups and institutions meet individual needs and promote the common good in contemporary and historical settings; and
- assist learners as they explain and apply ideas and modes of inquiry drawn from behavioral science and social theory in the examination of persistent social issues and problems.

Strand 6.

POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE

Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of Power, Authority, and Governance.

Learner Expectations

Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary American society, as well as in other parts of the world, is essential for the development in learners of civic competence. Through study of dynamic relationships among individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and concepts of a just society, learners become more effective problem solvers and decision-makers when addressing persistent social problems encountered in public life.

Teacher Expectations

Teachers of social studies at all school levels should provide developmentally appropriate experiences as they guide learners in the study of power, authority, and governance. They should

- help students to understand the purpose of government and how its powers are acquired, used, and justified;

- help learners to analyze and explain governmental mechanisms to meet the needs and wants of citizens, regulate territory, manage conflict, and establish order and security;
- have learners identify and describe the basic features of the American political system, and identify representative leaders from various levels and branches of government; and
- challenge learners to apply concepts such as power, role, status, justice, and influence to the examination of persistent issues and social problems.

Strand 10.

CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES

Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of Civic Ideals and Practices.

Learner Expectations

The study of civic ideals and practices prepares learners for full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies. Examining civic ideals and practices across time and in diverse societies prepares learners to close the gap between present practices and the ideals upon which our democratic republic is based. Learners confront such questions as: What is civic participation and how can I be involved? How has the meaning of citizenship evolved? What is the balance between rights and responsibilities? What is the role of the citizen in the community, in the nation, and in the world community? How can I make a positive difference?

Teacher Expectations

Teachers of social studies at all school levels should provide developmentally appropriate experiences as they guide learners in the study of civic ideals and practices. They should

- assist learners to understand the origins and interpret the continuing influence of key ideals of the democratic republican form of government, such as individual human dignity, liberty, justice, equality, and the rule of law;
- guide learner efforts to identify, analyze, interpret, and evaluate sources and examples of citizens' rights and responsibilities;
- facilitate learner efforts to locate, access, analyze, organize, synthesize, evaluate, and apply information about selected public issues--identifying, describing,

- and evaluating multiple points of view;
- provide opportunities for learners to practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens in a democratic republic;
- help learners to analyze and evaluate the influence of various forms of citizen action on public policy;
- prepare learners to analyze a variety of public policies and issues from the perspective of formal and informal political actors;
- guide learners as they evaluate the effectiveness of public opinion in influencing and shaping public policy development and decision-making;
- encourage learner efforts to evaluate the degree to which public policies and citizen behaviors reflect or foster the stated ideals of a democratic republican form of government;
- support learner efforts to construct policy statements and action plans to achieve goals related to issues of public concern; and
- create opportunities for learner participation in activities to strengthen the "common good," based upon careful evaluation of possible options for citizen action.

Appendix E

Michigan "MEAP" Standards addressed

Strand I.

Standard 1.4 Judging Decisions from the Past

HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVE

All students will evaluate key decisions made at critical turning points in history by assessing their implications and long term consequences.

Strand III.

Standard 3.1 Purposes of Government

CIVIC
PERSPECTIVE

All students will identify the purposes of national, state and local governments in the United States, describe how citizens organize government to accomplish their purposes and assess their effectiveness.

Standard 3.2 Ideals of American Democracy

All students will explain the meaning and origin of the ideas, including the core democratic values expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other foundational documents of the United States.

Standard 3.3 Democracy in Action

All students will describe the political and legal processes created to make decisions, seek consensus, and resolve conflicts in society.

Strand V.

Standard 5.1 Information Processing

INQUIRY

All students will acquire information from books, maps, newspapers, data sets, and other sources, organize and present the information in maps, graphs, charts, and time lines, interpret the meaning and significance of information, and use a variety of electronic technologies to assist in accessing and managing information.

Standard 5.2 Conducting Investigations

All students will conduct investigations by formulating a clear statement of a question, gathering and organizing information from a variety of sources, analyzing and interpreting information, formulating and testing hypotheses, reporting results both orally and in writing, and making use of appropriate technology.

Strand VI.

Standard 6.1 Identifying and Analyzing Issues

**PUBLIC
DISCOURSE
AND
DECISION
MAKING**

All students will state an issue clearly as a question of public policy, trace the origins of the issue, analyze various perspectives people bring to the issue, and evaluate possible ways to resolve the issue.

Standard 6.2 Group Discussion

All students will engage their peers in constructive conversation about matters of public concern by clarifying issues, considering opposing views, applying democratic values, anticipating consequences and working toward making decisions.

Strand VII.

Standard 7.1 Responsible Personal Conduct

**CITIZEN
INVOLVEMENT**

All students will consider the effects of an individual's actions on other people, how one acts in accordance with the rule of law, and how one acts in a virtuous and ethically responsible way as a member of society.