

**From:** Paula Roy Kane [mailto:pkane@msad58.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 12, 2018 3:58 PM  
**To:** DOE, SIS <SIS.DOE@maine.gov>  
**Subject:** Social Studies Standards Review

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been teaching at Phillips Elementary School, in Phillips, Maine, for 38 years. For about the last 20, I have taught middle level youth, grades 5 - 8. Sometime amongst those 20 years, I was proud to be part of the team that wrote the original standards for social studies for the Maine Learning Results, the ones that were published in what we called "the purple book". Ever since, I have used these standards faithfully as I planned our lessons and designed our assessments.

In my school district, MSAD/RSU 58, these standards have provided much-needed consistency throughout the four elementary schools. At that time, content area teachers at the middle level began working on "think tanks" with their counterparts at the high school. With the standards to guide us all, we who taught social studies at the middle level became much more proficient in helping our students establish strong foundations in civics and government, history, geography, and economics. These foundations would make it easier for students to deepen their understanding of the concepts at the high school. The standards remain the same at this next level, but are ramped up to take students to the next higher level of thinking. The Maine Learning Results now also include the History/Social Studies component of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA) & Literacy.

If I were to suggest improvements, my first and foremost would be to make the language throughout the document more student-reader friendly. As a teacher, I sometimes struggled to put the standards, as written, into words my students would understand. In my opinion, this would make it much easier for the students themselves to access the document and use it for self-evaluation and reflection. At one point, when the document was taking the next step towards publication online, the plan was to have links on which readers could click for more detailed explanations of key terms and concepts. Words in blue italics would be defined in the glossary. Just to make sure, I visited the Maine Department of Education website (see link at end of this message) in the process of preparing these comments and was still unable to find the glossary. Though it is noted that "*The Maine Learning Results for all subject areas, as well as the associated glossary, are [available online](#)*", that link has a note that reads, "We're sorry, but the page you requested cannot be found. We were unable to find the page you were attempting to access. It may have been deleted, moved, renamed, or it might not exist." I do confess that this could be the result of operator error as I am certainly not the most technologically savvy person on my team. My students would verify that wholeheartedly!

Overall, the social studies standards in The Maine Learning Results have been an invaluable resource to me. I will be retiring at the end of this school year, but I will still be pleased to know that the work to update and/or improve them will be continuing.

Sincerely,  
Paula W. Roy Kane