



Maine Education Association

Jesse Hargrove *President*
Beth French *Vice President*
Jaye Rich *Treasurer*
Rebecca Cole *NEA Director*
Rachelle Bristol *Executive Director*

10/28/2024

Laura Cyr,

As part of the Department of Education's Social Studies Standards review, the Maine Education Association (MEA), much like the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, requests that the Department and those involved in this process consider only refining the standards adopted in 2019. Given the disruptions caused by COVID-19, the already short review cycle has been further shortened. Districts are under no obligation to adopt new standards within a specific timeframe, so while we might assume they adopted the Social Studies standards in 2019 or 2020, some may have only recently started that work. Building curriculum and supplementary materials, implementing and refining that work, and making necessary adjustments takes time and resources. Because districts are locally responsible for designing instruction and materials for these standards, we fear that the volume of new content requirements that fall under the performance expectations will create inequities in how the implementation is carried out across the state, especially amid an educator shortage. Bear in mind, many states have adopted review cycles ranging from 5 to 10 years, noting that longer timeframes allow for the incorporation of best practices while giving educators the necessary time to adapt and assess the impact on teaching and learning.

In the 131st session, this committee heard public comments on *LD 2182: Resolve Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education*. The proposed standards and the public comments revealed a common theme: educators do not yet have the supports to integrate Wabanaki, African American, or Genocide studies into their curricula, despite the statute requiring schools to do so. The proposed changes in the standards sought to address this by integrating considerable and specific language changes in the performance expectations. For example, "Wabanaki" was added to the document 111 times, "African American" 63 times, and "Genocide" 50 times. MEA does not believe that merely adding these terms into the document will yield the desired results. Instead, we believe a commitment to and focus on creating and sharing resources for teaching Wabanaki, African American, and Genocide studies would be a much more feasible way to ensure we meet this requirement.

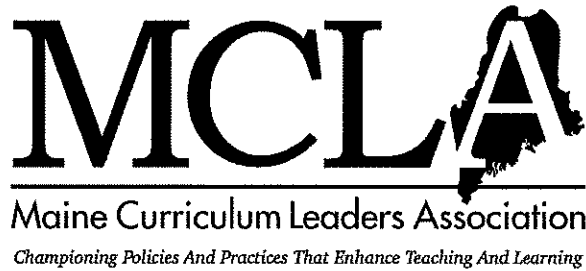
We also want to be mindful of the number of curricular mandates the legislature sees each session, many of which focus on the identity of marginalized groups. To that end, MEA would like to recognize the 16 uses in the document of the phrase "and other marginalized groups." We believe language such as this will help Social Studies educators to be inclusive of a wide range of identities and cultures in their curriculum. At present, the specificity in the performance expectations will require drastic changes to curricula as it exists and will require years of research, professional development, and resources to bring to fruition. While the development of curriculum is not the role of those developing the standards, creating a realistic set of standards/performance expectations that will set our students and educators up for success should be considered. The changes will have major implications for a profession that is already struggling with retention.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mallory Cook

35 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330 - 1349 Broadway, Bangor, ME 04401 -
7 Hatch Drive Suite #220, Caribou, ME 04736 - 29 Christopher Toppi Drive, South Portland, ME 04106

207-622-5866 - 207-888-2070 fax - www.maineaa.org



Nicole Chan, RSU 24, President
Jon Doty, RSU 34, President Elect
Jennifer Nickerson, RSU 22, Treasurer
Joanne Dowd, Kittery School District, Secretary
Debra McIntyre, Executive Director

Social Studies Standards Review

Public Comment:

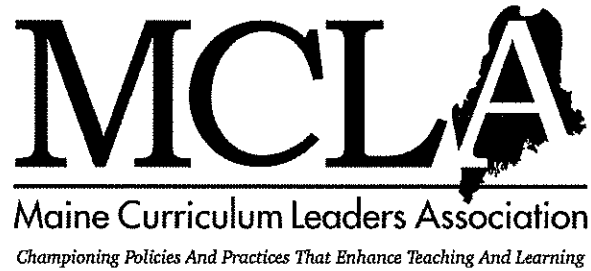
My name is Debra McIntyre, and I am the Executive Director for the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association. MCLA recognizes the previous work that went into revising the standards in 2023-24. The field was granted a one year reprieve for adopting new Social Studies standards, which was helpful to many districts. A review team suggested that the same revised version of the standards go back to the Education Committee.

According to a recent MCLA survey, the field is mixed on the revised standards, with concerns surfacing regarding identifying specific groups vs. a more open and inclusive perspective to the standards. We do appreciate the alignment to the state statutes that exist but at the same time have concerns about the wording "other marginalized communities" which may ignore the contributions of many peoples and risk promoting an ongoing imbalance. While the majority of the changes identified are located in the performance expectations and many of our members appreciated the additional clarity provided, some believe there is the loss of scaffolding. In the previous version, scaffolding was clearly stated by identifying the foundational and developmental categories. This organizational schema provided the field with scaffolding for both content and complexity, which was appreciated. In addition, the field is concerned with the high school expectation requiring students to implement a civic action or service-learning project. This requirement, while valuable, will place an undue burden on schools to manage the implementation of this mandate.

Because of these reasons, MCLA is neither for nor against the revised social studies standards.

We feel if these revised standards are adopted, the MDOE will need to provide ongoing support and resources for professional development. The lack of an identified Social Studies expert on the MDOE team has forced many districts to seek outside consultation for curriculum revision and professional development. A strong and ongoing support plan will be necessary for the field to be fully equipped to implement these revised standards.

We are hopeful that the review and revision process itself will be changed in order to support the ongoing efforts of all districts in the state. The five year cycle continues to be problematic and



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when revising standards it is essential to have the right people present at the table to get the best results.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cyr, Laura

From: Roberta Hart <rhart@kidsrsu.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 7:55 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Social Studies Standards Feedback

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Laura,

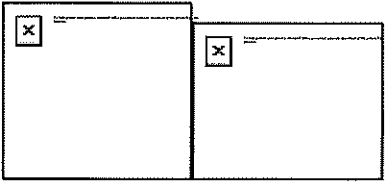
I teach second grade in RSU 2 at Dresden Elementary. I'm so happy to see that the new standards are so much more appropriate and attainable for young students.

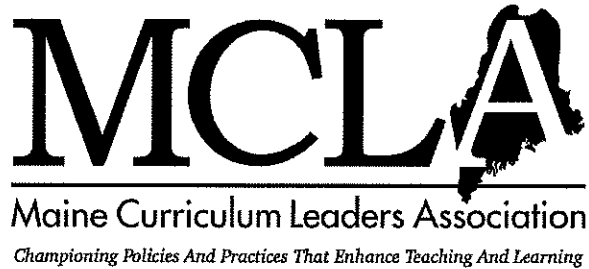
My only feedback is more of a housekeeping one in that I hope that the final version contains numbering similar to ELA and Math standards. From what I can see, the Social Studies standards are all coded the same regardless of grade level. Having similar coding plus the grade level number will make it easier for teachers to track and also make them identifiable on Infinite Campus when we go to grade them.

Thank you.

Roberta Hart
Grade 2 Teacher
LLC Building Rep
Dresden Elementary - RSU 2
86 Cedar Grove Rd.
Dresden, ME 04342
rhart@kidsrsu.org

"Reach for Success at DES!"





Nicole Chan, RSU 24, President
Jon Doty, RSU 34, President Elect
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Social Studies Standards Review

Public Comment:

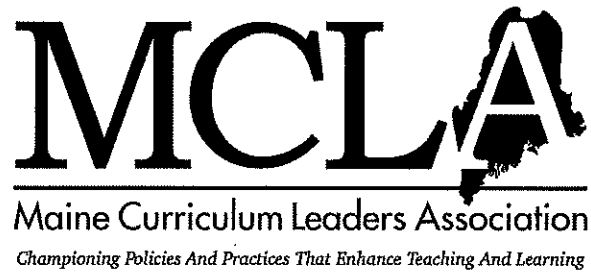
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Cyr, Laura

From: Kathryn Marseglia <kjmarseglia@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 4:57 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public comment Rule Chapter 132

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Cyr,

I am dismayed by this radical change proposed to the learning results parameters for Social Studies.

To ignore and attempt to delete the great architects of American public education whose forward thinking expressed and asserted in the principles of the Declaration of Independence, is outright neglect in the education of our children.

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Has America always lived up to those principles? Of course not, even great men and women are flawed, but the overarching premise on which America was founded should continue to be included as a major component of Social Studies education.

I am against this radical change which ignores the rich traditional heritage and journey of America. This is a narrow ideology that promotes divisiveness rather than unity.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Marseglia

**Feedback for Public Comment
For Proposed Revisions to the
Maine Learning Results Social Studies Standards**

November 24, 2024

To the Education Committee:

My name is Carrie Emmerson. I have taught Social Studies in Maine for 26 years, at four different high schools, and have been involved in education issues and education reform since 1993. I have used the Maine Learning Results as a guide for my teaching throughout my career, and contributed to the writing revision process for the 2019 Maine Learning Results for Social Studies.

As a Social Studies teacher, I want to educate our students to be thoughtful, aware and considerate of others in their communities at all levels (local to global); I want them to be critical consumers of information; I want them to understand the origins and implementation of the structures put into place to honor and protect our rights and those of others, both here and in the world, while recognizing that there have been many instances in our history (and others') in which those principles have not been faithfully executed; I want them to have compassion for the earth and all its peoples; and to use productive, constructive, non-violent means of resolving conflict, inequity, and injustice everywhere. I see many of those convictions reflected in the latest proposals for revision to the Maine Learning Results. However, I also see some areas that concern me. I would like to share my thoughts and concerns with you.

General observations:

- This iteration of the standards is very civics heavy - while I agree that civic education and practicing civic engagement is one of the most important things we need to teach our children, I am concerned that there are other aspects of social studies education that are being unfairly marginalized. For example,
- World history and US history have been combined, which lessens the lessons of world history and its common human experiences
- There is a heavy focus on Wabanaki, African American history and the Holocaust, often at the exclusion of more common human experiences, as mentioned above. I understand that these foci are driven somewhat by the statute, but think the direction of them within the revised standards limits instead of expands. While there is much in our nation's history, and the history of the world, to atone for, there is also a lot of good that has come to a lot of people

Keep

- Freedom and Justice (not Oppression)
- Unity and Diversity (not Inclusion and Exclusion)

Delete

- Justice and Exploitation

As stated earlier, I think that the vast majority of us try to give a balanced view of the social studies and their complexity. I do not find this language to represent the balance that we try to achieve.

Eras in US History and World History

The designation exists at the beginning of the document but the two have been melded into one “history” in the standards. The world history time frames appear to reflect updates on recommended approaches from the College Board, which makes sense to me, but I am not familiar with the term “doctrine of discovery,” even though it is what I teach (I have taught AP World History for 20 years and they are at the forefront of world history education in this country). I am not sure it is necessary.

In general, I do not totally agree with the focus on indigenous peoples and marginalized groups in Maine at the expense of (in my opinion) the lack of emphasis on world history and the related shared experiences of indigenous groups and oppressed peoples everywhere. In many of the standards, students are not asked to consider a global perspective until 6th grade, and even then, “and the world” is tacked on after a long list of other priorities. I believe It is human history, not necessarily confined to one place or one people. By addressing these universal human experiences, we can include experiences more specific to people in Maine and tie them to others' history.

Eras in Wabanaki History could be a separate course unto itself. I am not sure how practicable it is to expect this level of detail regarding one specific group of people in US or world history.

Maine Statutes Related To Social Studies

There is a disconnect between the breadth of the standards and a common requirement in many high schools of only three years of social studies. Also, I am concerned that world history, economics, and geography will be neglected in an effort to meet the specific legal requirements focusing on select groups in history, and personal finance.

Cyr, Laura

From: Saucier, Danielle M
Sent: Monday, November 25, 2024 4:41 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: My Written Public Comment - AKA Dee's Literacy Plug!

Social Studies Public Comment

Danielle Saucier

11/25/24

1. Paragraph 1 of the Introduction – removed reference to read, write, and think deeply
Council for the Social Studies: advocates of citizenship education cross the political spectrum, but they are bound by a common belief that our democratic republic will not sustain unless students are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments; know the past; read, write, and think deeply; and act in ways that promote the common good. (C3 Framework for Social Studies, 2013)
Also, in the last revision of the ELA MLR (2020) -
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/content/ela/standards> the committee made the decision to remove the language and standards that were related to the standards for literacy in History/Social Studies (<https://learning.ccsso.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ADA-Compliant-ELA-Standards.pdf> p. 59) specific to reading and writing. The revised Social Studies MLR may not consider and include some important skills for this integration of content.
The removal of read, write, and think as well as the lack of inclusion for the interdisciplinary intersection of Social Studies/History and literacy leaves a critical gap in the ability to comprehend and communicate with the specify needed for the discipline.
2. Guiding principle 1 specifies only audiovisual presentations. Perhaps a consideration of clear and effective communication that includes additional methods of communication should be more inclusive of learners and learning styles to demonstrate learning and communicate.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Have a great week and a happy holiday!

Be well,

Dee

Danielle M. Saucier, M.Ed. Literacy Specialist

Inclusive Education Literacy Specialist & Dyslexia Coordinator

Office of Special Services & Inclusive Education

Maine Department of Education

23 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Email: danielle.m.saucier@maine.gov

Phone: 207-441-1383

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Sen. Rafferty, Rep. Brennan, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs; my name is Kaya Lolar. I am a Panawahpskek (Penobscot) citizen, Harvard College senior, John Bapst alum, and former student of RSU #34 (Kindergarten-Grade 8). I also have been working regularly to make materials regarding Wabanaki studies available for educators since my high school years, and I currently work as both an instructional designer and Wabanaki advisor alongside the DOE to continue this important mission. Through my elementary and middle school years, I received very little teaching regarding Wabanaki studies, and the majority of what I did receive was incredibly generalized, focusing on Indigenous people as a “whole” or Indigenous tribes/nations that are not a part of the Wabanaki Confederacy, despite the fact that our school sat on land that was once occupied by Panawahpskek people and is less than a five-minute drive from the current Penobscot Nation Reservation. I struggled with my identity growing up, as many young children would (and do) when searching for representation in a space where it seldom exists. Sometimes, teachers would look to me when a question came up about the Wabanaki in class that they didn’t know the answer to, like I was born with an expertise on every aspect of our culture and history. This frustrated me. It made my sense of identity feel even more unstable, but I don’t blame the teachers. It can be scary to teach about something you know very little about, especially when you know you could be teaching a child something about herself or her people that turns out to be wrong. If not for the sake of all students learning openly and holistically of the first peoples of our land, Wabanaki studies should at the very least be taught for the sake of the young Indigenous students today struggling to feel welcomed or valued in a system that wipes their ancestors from our educational memory.

I’ve spent a great deal of time collaborating with and listening to educators over the past several years, as a substitute teacher, classroom volunteer, and now through my work alongside the DOE, and the most overwhelming response I’ve heard from these educators when asked why Wabanaki studies has not been thoroughly implemented in their schools since it was enacted into law in 2001 is a lack of resources and confidence. It is clear that further guidance, resources, and encouragement are necessary in order to ensure that Wabanaki Studies is taught in the way that LD291 originally required in 2001.

This is why it is crucial that we integrate Wabanaki Studies directly into our standards and, frankly, that we do not just stop there. The tendency to teach only about Indigenous people in an isolated unit perpetuates the idea that we are separate from today’s society—that we don’t exist in the same spaces as our peers whose history is woven cyclically through our social studies curriculum. This should not be something groundbreaking, and the long overdue implementation of Wabanaki Studies structurally into Maine’s education should not be seen as something that takes away from other underrepresented groups, and we now have our own Wabanaki Studies Specialist working alongside an incredible team of educators and advisors to amply support other educators on their Wabanaki studies journeys. I urge the committee to vote ought to pass.

Woliwoni,
Kaya Lolar



**maine environmental
education association**

PO BOX 413, Brunswick, ME 04011
(207) 619-1609

December 3, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Olivia Griset, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA). MEEA is a nonprofit statewide professional network representing over 2,000 educators in Maine, including classroom teachers as well as community-based educators. I am pleased to submit comments today on behalf of MEEA in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

For over forty years, we have supported Maine educators in providing high quality, locally relevant, environmental, and place-based education for youth. While we see environmental education as interdisciplinary and spanning all ages and content areas, social studies educators are core to our network.

At MEEA, we recognize the Wabanaki as the first peoples of this land that we care for today, and we see the importance of a strong Wabanaki studies education for students across what is now called Maine. Our organization is deeply committed to building more just and equitable communities through the power of education. We believe it is critically important that all students gain a strong understanding of Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide including the Holocaust as part of their social studies education. The proposed revisions to the standards will open space for deeper learning, critical thinking, and civil discourse across our education system and promote unity through communities on a local and state level. We are grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and we recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education in Maine and for your consideration of our comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Olivia L. Griset
Executive Director
Maine Environmental Education Association

Cyr, Laura

From: Todd Papianou <tpapianou@rsu10.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 1:46 PM
To: Cyr, Laura; Michael Prescott
Subject: Open Comments for LD291

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom it may concern,

I'm writing from the Western Maine Mountains formally known by the wabanaki people as "Penacock" or "the Foothills" in what is now named Rumford.

I teach HS Physical Education and in my LIFETIME PURSUITS Classes I do a lengthy land acknowledgment and refer often to historical place names during an 8 week comprehensive canoe unit. During our culminating activity a day trip along the Androscogin we learn that that name is relevant to the very way of life for native peoples. "The place to smoke fish" or "at the Great Falls" tells the story of how important place names were to communicate through the generations what value and importance a place and its name have to the people.

I have been using many of the resources that have been curated and vetted by the Wabanaki knowledge sharers. These units of study are of high rigor and the notion that this work has been authenticated by a strong working relationship between native authorities and Maines educational community is not to be understated. This is fantastic work.

I strongly believe we all need to honor the past, present, and future plight of the people of the dawn land that decided here for tens of thousands of years before the arrival of the colonists.

We have a legacy that needs to be addressed, and the very beginning of owning the past injustices is to continue the teachings of how we got here and how to move forward to heal those wounds.

I hope these words are enough to help push this bill across the line.

For now, please know that I continue to shape our student's knowledge about simple things like the meaning of the words for Eagle, Beaver, Crow, Raven, and Chickadee.

I'm blessed to have a music teacher in the building who is currently studying with Penobscot Elders to revive and protect the language of the Wabanaki people.

Todd Papianou
Rumford, Maine
Mountain Valley HS

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Cyr, Laura

From: Kaylan Scott <kscott@chewonki.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 1:45 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: In support of proposed changes to social studies content standards of the Maine Learning Results

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December 4, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Kaylan Scott, and I am the Associate Director of Outdoor Programs at the Chewonki Foundation.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

The Chewonki Neck campus is situated on the traditional land of the Abenaki people; the name of our organization is an Abenaki word describing what that land looks like from the vantage of a canoe floating on the estuaries that surround us. That is a view that thousands of young people have enjoyed as part of their Chewonki experience, whether they have come as Maine Coast Semester students, Outdoor Classroom students, or summer campers. I have had the opportunity to attend a series of Wabanaki studies workshops made available to educators by Maine Environmental Education Association and am so grateful for my own deepened understanding of the history of this land, and also that I have had the opportunity to incorporate my new knowledge into Chewonki Outdoor Programs curriculum. The lesson plans and resource materials that the DOE's Wabanaki Studies Specialist has created and catalogued continues to be enormously helpful and inspiring.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Kaylan Scott
Associate Director of Outdoor Programs
Chewonki Foundation



Kaylan E. Scott

Associate Director of **Outdoor Programs**

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

Outdoor Programs Leadership Team Direct Line: (207) 656-5001

Main Campus: (207) 882-7323 ext. 3107

Email: kscott@chewonki.org

Calendly: calendly.com/kscott-adoc

Web: www.chewonki.org

Maine Outdoor School for All



December 4, 2024

State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Ellie Bridgers, and I am an elementary school garden teacher at Ames Elementary in RSU 71.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

When an optional Wabanaki studies workshop was offered, I watched an email thread where every single teacher and support staff member in the school responded YES to attend. This workshop filled up fast, and not every teacher was able to register - so as a school, we pursued creating our own Wabanaki studies workshop working with Brianne Lolar. There is so much interest and enthusiasm in staff members at our school to teach this curriculum, even though it's not required of them. Additionally, there is support from teachers across all political spectrums to teach this curriculum. I teach many classes outside in the woods behind school, and find it important to make connections to Indigenous history and education that I myself missed out on, only 15 years ago as an elementary school student in Maine. I only began to learn about Indigenous and African American history in college, in Pennsylvania, where I was sitting besides students from states around the country. I was embarrassed by the unintentional ignorance I had in relation to my peers. Our students who don't pursue a college education may never receive this education. It is an important history to face honestly, perhaps the most important, as an American citizen - and a Mainer. We can do better.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ellie Bridgers

December 4, 2024

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Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Adele Drake and I am a visual art teacher at Hampden Academy. I have been working for the Department of Education for 5 years writing online curriculum, including Wabanaki Studies. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed revisions to Maine's social studies standards, which incorporate Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust. As an educator in Maine, I have witnessed firsthand the importance of equipping our students with a robust understanding of the diverse histories and cultures that shape our communities today.

The inclusion of Wabanaki studies in particular holds great significance. The passage of LD 291 in 2001 established the need to teach Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, yet many institutions still lack the comprehensive curriculum necessary to fulfill this mandate. These updated standards provide a vital framework for educators to incorporate Wabanaki knowledge and values into their teaching, fostering greater awareness of the land's history and the contributions of its first peoples.

Through professional development opportunities such as the Wabanaki Studies workshops facilitated by the Maine Environmental Education Association, I have gained valuable insights and resources to support my instruction. The materials shared by the Department of Education's Wabanaki Studies Specialist over the past two years have been invaluable, helping educators like me to feel more confident in delivering this essential content.

In my classroom, I strive to cultivate critical thinking and empathy in my students. Incorporating Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide enables deeper learning and civil discourse, preparing students to engage thoughtfully in our interconnected world.

Additionally, our school is situated on the ancestral lands of the Wabanaki people. Recognizing this connection and teaching students about the rich history of this land through the proposed standards is a step toward honoring its legacy and fostering a spirit of unity and respect.

I urge the Department of Education to adopt these revised standards, ensuring that all students across Maine have access to an inclusive and equitable education that celebrates the diverse stories and voices that define our state and nation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adele Drake
High School Art Teacher
Hampden Academy

207-542-0733

adrake@rsu22.us

12/4/2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Michelle Brann, and I am a Social Studies teacher, Civil Rights Team advisor, and Education Association President at Spruce Mountain High School in Jay, Maine. I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

As a 20+ year veteran of Social Studies education in the public school, I know how essential it is for students to have the opportunity to explore all areas of history, most especially those that have often been glossed over or ignored entirely. Despite LD 291's passage in 2001, there are still far too many schools who have not adequately integrated Wabanaki studies into their curriculum. I can say from experience that our work examining historical events like the Phips Bounty Proclamation and the impact of the residential school system on Native societies has been some of the most impactful work my students have participated in. Formally requiring our curriculum to include coverage of Wabanaki studies, African American History, and genocide will allow our students to explore these essential topics under the guidance of expert educators, allowing them to be better prepared to navigate a multicultural society respectfully and collaboratively.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Michelle Brann
SMHS
Social Studies Teacher
Education Association President
Civil Rights Team Advisor

Cyr, Laura

From: Aislyn Keyes <akeyes@bigelow.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 2:42 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 4, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Aislyn, and I am (describe who you are and what you work on).

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

Now more than ever it is important that we educate our communities in the history of the places we live. That must start with youth and in our schools. Without this critical education, we risk further disconnection in our communities. We owe it to our ancestors and descendants to accurately share the history and culture of this land that is now called Maine.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Aislyn Keyes, PhD she/her
Marine Educator
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences

E akeyes@bigelow.org
O 207-315-2567 x111



Bold Science for Our Blue Planet | BIGELOW.ORG
60 BIGELOW DRIVE | EAST BOOTHBAY, MAINE 04544 USA

Cyr, Laura

From: Josh Mangin <joshua.mangin@maine.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 3:41 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comments for Maine Social Studies Standards

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Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Josh Mangin, and I am writing to you as a concerned Maine citizen.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

In my professional role, I conduct research as well as teach research ethics to college students and professional researchers. Research and scientific endeavors have and continue to be pivotal in fostering Maine's economic development as well as improving the wellness and prosperity of Mainers. However, research can have a dark side, and unfortunately there are numerous past examples of researchers conducting unethical research, including research studies that negatively impacted members of Wabanaki Nations and African Americans. One can not learn about the Holocaust without learning about the atrocities conducted by Nazi scientists. Though this information can be difficult to learn, this past is still important for students to understand, especially in the context of scientific research. A major mission of the Maine educational system is to prepare students for a variety of careers, including in the STEM and biomedical fields. Incorporating the standards in Chapter 132, can create a strong foundation for preparing students to enter the STEM fields as well as prepare students to conduct ethical and high quality science.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Josh Mangin

Cyr, Laura

From: Emory Harger <emory@meeassociation.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Say YES to Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 4, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Emily (Emory) Harger, and I am the Communications Coordinator at Maine Environmental Education Association. I am also a resident of Searsmont in Waldo County.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

At MEEA, we work with Maine public school teachers to provide trainings on implementing Wabanaki Studies curriculum and outdoor learning projects into their classrooms across all grade levels and subject areas. From STEM teachers to art teachers, we hear from teachers that they want to teach Wabanaki Studies, and, they need more support in doing so in such a way that is culturally relevant for all students. Indigenous students and African American students deserve to see their histories and lived experiences reflected in their education. And, all students benefit from learning the accurate history of our country to build stronger unity amongst Maine's diverse population of students at the local and state level. The proposed revisions to the social studies standards will open space for deeper learning, critical thinking, and civil discourse for students that will continue into their lives as adults to engage civically to make Maine a better place for all of us.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Emily (Emory) Harger

Emory Harger
Communications Coordinator
Maine Environmental Education Association

(they/them/theirs) - What's this?

Cyr, Laura

From: Jerryanne LaPerriere <jlaperri@bates.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 4:20 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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As a former Maine middle and high school French and Spanish teacher, I am acutely aware of the benefits of students learning about different cultures and their histories. It gives them a much broader view of the world and a greater acceptance of peoples' differences.

I highly recommend that Maine institute Wabanaki and African American studies for the students of the great State of Maine.

Thank you for listening.

Jerryanne LaPerrière
Office and Sales Floor Coordinator
Bates College Store
Monday and Friday 12:30p-4:30p
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8a-12p
207-786-6121

Cyr, Laura

From: Kayla Girardin <girardin.kayla@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 7:13 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: In support of Wabanaki Studies and African American Studies in Maine social studies standards

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December 4, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Kayla Girardin, and I am former classroom teacher and current project specialist at a school support nonprofit in Portland, Maine.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is critical that Maine students understand the full history of the land they live and go to school on. Indigenous and African American students deserve learn their own history in school. The proposed standards would provide much needed guidance and scaffolding for educators to more successfully implement Wabanaki and African American studies into their curriculum. Now more than ever, it is crucial for educators and students alike to have conversations in their classrooms about the history of genocide, including the Holocaust.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Kayla Girardin

Cyr, Laura

From: Jamie Shelton <kshelton@bates.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 7:57 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 4, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Jamie Shelton, and I am a sophomore studying Psychology and English at Bates College.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It wasn't until last year, when I was eighteen, that I first heard the history of a Native American people presented in chronological order. Learning about Wabanaki history has transformed the way I view history. I was never the most interested in history, though I've known how important it is to know where we come from: both the mistakes we have made and the role models we can aspire to take after. It was at 18 that, for the first time, I was learning a true history of the communities and peoples who called this land home, that had such rich and deep histories and traditions, not just people who "happened" to be there. For the first time, I was able to learn about Maine's history without erasing the people who have lived here before and continue to live here today. Humanity is so multifaceted and students deserve to be able to learn about the people who have brought them to this moment, today.

Learning about the terrible history of genocide, particularly the Holocaust, provided insight on what humans are capable of, especially the importance of speaking up and standing up for what I believe in, in the face of injustice. These new social studies standards including Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust, are vital to me, as they should be to every person who will one day be out in the world. I hope that by passing these standards, the current social studies students of Maine can learn about their history to become more informed citizens and leaders.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Jamie Shelton
Bates College, Class of '27

December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Clorinda Chunn, and I am a retired teacher who volunteers in the Belfast District schools. I teach nature study aligned to standards, and I am often asked to help teachers with teaching Wabanaki history and culture. I tell them they need to learn, as we all do, directly from Wabanaki people, to know the correct history. Black history and Holocaust history are all essential to education, in order to nurture better citizens.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

LD 291 was passed without any assistance through teacher training or funding. The crucial subjects of Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust, need attention. Requiring their study for learning standards is the important start. It must be followed with teaching support, materials, and funding.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Clorinda Chunn

School volunteer in Belfast District, RSU 71

Cyr, Laura

From: Melani McGuire <mmcguire@bates.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 8:11 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Melani McGuire, and I am Maine citizen concerned with the lack of support for the education and understanding of our past histories.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

We need to take responsibility for teaching and understanding the history of our roles in the past injustices to the Wabanaki and African American peoples. We also need to understand their history in detail as it is an intricate part of the American fabric. Unfortunately genocide has been a part of history that has been ignored or glossed over and we need to make sure that it doesn't happen again to anyone

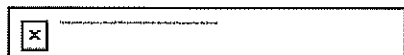
I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Melani McGuire

Melani McGuire



Director of HRIS and Human Resources Operations
215 College Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
(207)786-8265
mmcguire@bates.edu
Pronouns: she, her, hers

December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Kelly Birmingham, and I am an English and Outdoor Education teacher at Katahdin Middle High School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I think that it would be great to have new standards for Wabanaki Studies added into the social studies curriculum. I think that it should be taught across all curriculum areas. I also think that there should be mandatory training for all teachers that would be teaching this content so that it is taught in a mindful manner.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Kelly Birmingham
English and Outdoor Education teacher
Katahdin Middle High School/RSU #89

Potential points to include:

- LD 291, a landmark law requiring the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, was signed in 2001. Since the majority of Maine schools still have not yet implemented a sufficient Wabanaki studies curriculum, it is clear that further scaffolding and guidance is needed, which these proposed standards would provide.
 - If you have/had any Wabanaki students, you could potentially include a piece about how these refreshed standards have helped you to feel more confident in your support of them.
- We/I have had the opportunity to attend a series of Wabanaki studies workshops made available to educators by Maine Environmental Education Association.
- The DOE's Wabanaki Studies Specialist has made so many great materials available over the past two years, and as educators, we are more well supported in Wabanaki studies than ever before.
- Any specific connections regarding whose traditional lands your school/organization is built on (interactive map can be found [here](#)) and how the proposed standards would support your teaching/recognition of the land's history
- Any brief experiences you've had in your work that demonstrates why/how Wabanaki studies is needed in the social studies standards

Cyr, Laura

From: Hanna McGaughey <hmcgaughey@bates.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 9:13 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Hanna McGaughey, and I am assistant professor of Japanese Studies at Bates College.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards, as detailed in Chapter 132.

All work towards inclusion requires holding multiple truths, even when they conflict or contradict each other. Considering the Holocaust generally turns into a discussion of US military liberation of the victims in Europe, a narrative that doesn't accommodate the simultaneous Executive Order 9066 to intern legal Japanese residents and American citizens on the US West Coast.

A history of genocide requires multiple, difficult, and open-ended conversations that acknowledge and accommodate the emotions that arise within that process. No Wabanaki, African American, genocide or Holocaust survivor should have to bear the burden of giving witness without their consent and support from their educational partners. Room and support must be given to students and teachers to process their emotions and build empathy.

The goal of such education is, in my mind, to recognize the dignity and agency of all individuals in our society and around the world, including all beings in our environment. Each seeks their way through life given their unique situation. Conversations about each individual's needs and the best ways to collaborate and work together must be an ongoing process.

I am deeply grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for advancing education and for considering my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hanna McGaughey
Assistant Professor of Japanese Studies
Asian Studies
Bates College

hmcgaughey@bates.edu

(she/they)

Cyr, Laura

From: Carrie Diaz Eaton <cdeaton@bates.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 10:01 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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Good morning,

I fully support the new standards being proposed. I noticed many wording changes that make the social studies standards much clearer.

I serve on my local district's parent advisory committee for equity and inclusion (Brunswick Schools). I want to particularly applaud the inclusion of Wabanaki Studies into all schools' instruction in Maine. In my own personal K-12 experience, I had significant studies of the indigenous people, broadly and in my local area, and I was shocked to learn that this was not a universal experience. Brunswick does a great job at working with local Wabanaki leaders to bring experiences such as visiting artists and talks, but we have a lot more we can do. In the past, our committee had Wabanaki parents bring significant concerns to the committee with the result of their investing instead in private schools because our public schools were not meeting their basic needs to be seen and heard.

We have since improved significantly as a district on these issues. However, having the guidance, leadership, and support of Maine DOE on what constitutes basic literacy of the history of the peoples who have inhabited this land as well as literacy in social dynamics as they affect freedom and oppression throughout history and today will make us a stronger community for tomorrow.

Respectfully submitted as a private citizen of Maine with relevant expertise (and not on behalf of Bates College),
Carrie Diaz Eaton



"I am working on improving the climate and culture of the mathematics, biological, and computer sciences community. This work begins with me and I am acknowledging that I will help make things better moving forward. Hold me accountable for doing this work."

Dr. Carrie Diaz Eaton, [Website](#)

Pronouns: Any

Associate Professor of Digital and Computational Studies, Bates College

Executive Director and PI, RIOS Institute

[Faculty Fellow](#), Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Bates College

Bonner Fellow, Harvard Center for Community Engagement, Bates College

[MAA Leader](#) and Chair of the Committee for Minority Participation in Mathematics

Editorial Board, *CourseSource*

See the new JHM Special Issue on Mathematics and Society

Cyr, Laura

From: Bonnie Gilman <bgilman@brunswicksd.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 10:02 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Social Studies Standards

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12/5/24

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Bonnie Gilman, and I am a Talent Development teacher at Brunswick Junior High School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

--

Bonnie Gilman
She, her, hers
Talent Development Teacher
Brunswick Junior High School
(207) 319-1930

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Cyr, Laura

From: Sulwan Ahmed <sulwan@meeassociation.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 10:09 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Support of Implementation of Proposed SS Content Standards

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12/5/2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Sulwan Ahmed and I am a first-generation American, genocide survivor, homegrown Mainer, and a young professional working to support my Maine communities through The Nature Conservancy and Maine Environmental Education Association.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

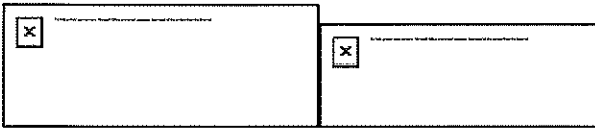
I have had the opportunity to attend a series of Wabanaki studies workshops made available to educators by the Maine Environmental Education Association. Moreover, by implementing the materials from Wabanaki studies and African American history in my classroom, I've seen the positive impacts they've had on my student's academic journeys, as well as, their growing appreciation for their community; something beyond what I would've ever experienced as a student in the Portland, Maine school district just a few years ago.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Sulwan Ahmed
The Nature Conservancy
Maine Environmental Education Association

--
Sulwan Ahmed (she/her)
Unceded Wabanaki Territory
Community Initiatives Changemakers Resident
Maine Environmental Education Association x The Nature Conservancy in Maine



Cyr, Laura

From: Sara Goodall <goodas@portlandschools.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 10:33 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: public comment

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Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Sara Goodall, and I am a lifelong educator, an elementary school principal in Portland Public schools, and a very proud public school parent of two students.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

LD 291, a landmark law requiring the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, was signed in 2001. I was actually a student in Maine in 2001 - but I never received any teaching around this subject. Since the majority of Maine schools still have not yet implemented a sufficient Wabanaki studies curriculum, it is clear that further scaffolding and guidance is needed, which these proposed standards would provide.

In Portland Public Schools, it has been an incredible learning experience as an educator to have this be part of our curriculum and learning. The DOE's Wabanaki Studies Specialist has made so many great materials available over the past two years, and as educators, we are more well supported in Wabanaki studies than ever before.

I am learning as an adult, and I am watching my students and my own children learn more about the true history of Maine, the land we live on, and be fully immersed in incredible fieldwork, studies, reading and learning. I am proud of what they have learned and continue to learn.

Wabanaki studies and African American Studies and the history of Genocide is needed in the social studies standards and I will advocate for this as a parent and an administrator.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Sara Goodall
Principal, Lyseth Elementary School

--

Sara Gips Goodall
Principal, Lyseth Elementary School
Portland Public Schools
Pronouns: she/her/hers

*** Please Note: ***

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Cyr, Laura

From: Jeff Gleason <jeff@maineycamp.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 12:09 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 5, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

These revised standards are important to our past, present, and future as we reconcile with where we are as a society and what has been given and taken away to get us to where we are. The past dictates our future. In order for us to do better, we must understand where we have been and how we move forward.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Jeff Gleason
CEO/Director
State YMCA Camp of Maine
www.maineycamp.org
@ycampofmaine

"The Camp of Character"

The Y: We're for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility

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Cyr, Laura

From: Sarah Gladu <sgladu@coastalrivers.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 12:25 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr;

I am Sarah Gladu, Director of Education and Community Science for a land trust in the Damariscotta-Pemaquid region. While it might seem a stretch for a community-based, non-profit such as ours to be concerned with social studies standards in Maine, I assure you it is of great importance to us. Our education program provides more than 100,000 hours of k-12 programming in our local school districts annually. Our programs are primarily focused on natural sciences, ecology and outdoor living skills but we also hire Wabanaki educators to provide hands-on, outdoor Wabanaki education programming to more than 200 students annually and we integrate Wabanaki teachings throughout our curriculum.

For the last 20 years local students have built wigwams, stretched and scraped hides, explored local middens, dug groundnuts and sampled other wild edibles, etched birch bark, played Wabanaki games and, in meeting our Wabanaki instructors, learned first hand that Wabanaki people are important to our modern world through our programs. However, many students have never met Wabanaki people before or learned about their reservations in our state. *The students have never made the connection between the importance of natural resources and the cultures of the First People who live in our communities.* Considering that the culture of Wabanaki people is inextricably tied to the plants, animals, landforms and water around all of us, we see bridging this gap as an important role our organization can play in our community. Strengthening the current standards will provide much needed support to ensure these kinds of gaps are closed.

I am pleased to fully support the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132. It is critically important that the new revised Maine social studies standards include Wabanaki studies, and also African American studies, the history of genocide and the Holocaust. While our education program does not focus on these other cultures and cultural events, they are important in the context of our communities.

I am grateful for the time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine. I have included a couple of photographs of our Wabanaki Education program so that you can get

a sense of how invaluable this kind of authentic programming can be for students.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my support of these current changes to the standards.

Sincerely,

Sarah Gladu

Sarah Gladu, Director of Education and Community Science
She/Her/Hers

Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust
PO Box 333
Damariscotta, ME 04543
207-563-1393 x340
coastalrivers.org







Cyr, Laura

From: Macy Galvan <macy@btl.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 12:51 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public comment in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

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December 5, 2026
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Macy Galvan, and I am the CREA Camp Director, a program through the Brunswick-Topsham Landtrust. I also work as the Community Engagement Coordinator at the landtrust ensuring that we provide culturally sensitive and informed programming to our community.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

As the director of an outdoor nature camp, it is imperative that our campers are communing with the great outdoors. For many, summer camp is a chance to explore the natural world in a new way and for many, it is sometimes their only chance to learn in an outdoor setting. This fact I learned working with the campers, hearing more about their comfort being outside and how it directly compares to their studies in school.

What is also a stark contrast to their formal education is the limited exposure to Wabanaki Studies, despite the fact that is required learning across the state. How can that be? We ask the campers weekly if they've ever heard of the terms "Wabanki," or "indigenous," and many reported that this was the first time they were hearing these words. Now, we have an opportunity to bridge that gap in their learning, of what is now called Maine, and the history of its people. We cannot stop there.

If we are to inspire a generation of empathetic, kind, informed youth, we **MUST** implement the proposed social studies standards. We cannot stop at one version of history, of the colonizers and of colonization. How can we ensure that history does not repeat itself?

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Macy Galvan (she/her)
Community Engagement Coordinator + CREA Camp Director
Brunswick-Topsham Landtrust
179 Neptune Drive, Suite 200
Brunswick, ME 04011
www.btlr.org



Please [click here](#) to renew your membership by December 31st.

December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Alison Buchsbaum, and I am a science teacher at Cape Elizabeth High School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

In today's world, it is essential that we understand the impact that we have on the planet and each other. Part of that is acknowledging and learning about the true history of this country, including the ways that certain populations have been mistreated. If we don't teach the youth about topics such as Wabinaki studies, African American studies, and genocide, there is a much greater risk that situations such as these will be repeated.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Alison Buchsbaum
Science Teacher
Cape Elizabeth High School

Cyr, Laura

From: Sarah Grinder <sarah.grinder@maine.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 5:00 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Support for social studies standards changes

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Sarah Grinder, and I am an occupational therapy faculty member at USM. I am also an enrolled member of the Nez Perce tribe (Nimiipuu).

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132. I love that state law requires Wabanaki studies in our public schools, but having lived here for almost 20 years, I now know that the implementation of that law has not yet been widespread. I can't imagine how hard it must be for individual teachers and schools to add one more thing on their own. I am hopeful that these changes would be one less barrier to implementing this important content.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

qe'ciyéw'yew' (thank you),

Sarah

--

Sarah Grinder, MOT, OTR/L
Senior Lecturer
Program Director, Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Occupational Therapy Department
51 Westminster Street, Lewiston, Maine 04240
Office: 289D
Phone: 207- 753-6668
Cell: 207-751-0323



Cyr, Laura

From: Katrina Heimbach <kheimbach@sad55.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 5:26 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Cyr,

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

As a 7th grade science teacher, I see the important connection between forest health, ash trees and the invasive species emerald ash borer, and the Wabinaque people. Understanding this important connection makes the curriculum more relevant in, not just science and social studies classroom, but to how students understand their community, their past and their future.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Katrina Heimbach

--

Katrina Heimbach
7th and 8th Grade Science Teacher
She/Her/Hers

MSAD#55 Confidentiality Notice: The information contained in this message (including any attachments) may contain privileged and/or confidential information protected from disclosure by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). It is intended solely for the use of the addressee. Any disclosure of the document is strictly prohibited outside the scope of the service for which you are receiving the information. If you have received this communication in error, please notify sender immediately and delete the material from any computer.

Cyr, Laura

From: Cynthia Nye <cnye@rsu23.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 5:29 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public comment in support of social studies standards revision

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Cynthia Nye, and I am a teacher in Maine. I teach Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and Holocaust and human rights education in my multi-disciplinary program for gifted and talented students grades 3-8, and I help colleagues integrate these essential themes in their classrooms.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

--

Cynthia Nye
Gifted and Talented Education Services (GATES)
Loranger Memorial School
Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Cyr, Laura

From: Catherine Bursk <cbursk@gmri.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 5:31 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Fw: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Catherine Bursk, and I am an educator and parent of a middle school student in South Portland .

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is important to me for the new revised social studies standards to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust. By providing an opportunity for our youth to bear witness to the atrocities of our past they will have an ability to create a future where those injustices are no longer tolerated.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Catherine Bursk

Cyr, Laura

From: Abigail Long <along@gmri.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 5:32 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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12/5/2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Abigail Long, and I am an educator in southern Maine.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is important for the new revised social studies standards to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide to teach the truth about the history of our land, the cultures of the people who live on this land, and the real history that cannot continued to be erased. Including these subjects in education for students is important because they promote unity through communities on a local and state level. We recognize the Wabanaki as the first peoples of this land that we care for today that is now called Maine. This is an important step towards inclusion, equity, and representation. There needs to be accountability and requirements for teachers to teach these topics.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Abigail Long

Cyr, Laura

From: Willow Cunningham <willow.e.cunningham@maine.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 6:34 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on the Proposed Changes to Social Studies

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December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Willow Cunningham, and I am a graduate research assistant at the University of Maine, Orono.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is deeply important to me that the new revised social studies standards include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide - particularly the Holocaust. What education on these topics I did receive from Casco Bay High School in Portland has made me a stronger and more compassionate thinker. Providing our students with the necessary history to be able to understand the context of America's colonial history, racism against ethnic minorities, and teaching the history of genocide are all vital knowledge areas for our youth.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Willow Cunningham

Research Assistant

UMaine Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

--

Willow Cunningham (they/them)
Graduate Research Assistant
University of Maine Computer Engineering

Cyr, Laura

From: Leah Trommer <leaht@coastalmountains.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 7:42 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Leah Trommer and I am an educator and director of community engagement director for a land trust in Camden. Most importantly, I am a parent of a Maine public school student.

I am submitting public comment today in support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

Being a Maine student who didn't learning our full history, I know it is essential for today's students to receive a more comprehensive and inclusive education, including Wabanaki studies, African American studies and the the history of genocide. It is our responsibility to ensure that Maine African American and Wabanaki children see their stories and culture represented in their public school experience.

I would like to see these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Warmly,
Leah

Leah Trommer
they/she (*Why Pronouns Matter*)
Learning Landscapes and Outreach Director
Coastal Mountains Land Trust
101 Mount Battie Street, Camden, Maine 04843
207-236-7091 (*office*)
Learning Landscapes



December 5, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Susan L. Beaulier. In addition to being a proud lifelong Maine resident, property owner, and taxpayer, I am also a public educator. For the last 35 years, I have dedicated much of my time and energy to enlightening the minds of students from grades PK-12. As a visual arts educator, I have introduced my students to various cultures and the art of those cultures across our planet. I do this because I think it is important for my students to understand that they are just one small part of a very large world. I want them to find ways to interact with the world and its peoples in a positive way.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132. I feel that the new revised social studies standards to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust are not just necessary; they are vital.

Our students are learning and growing in an age of global accessibility. Some of that information is accurate, and some of it is not. In order for our children to create educated and informed decisions, they need to learn how to look at presented information through the lens of critical thinking. I think it is imperative that the adoption of revised social studies standards to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust will allow educators to provide students with the information and critical problem-solving skills to form their own conclusions on the above topics in a thoughtful and informed manner.

I appreciate the immense time and energy educators have put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Susan L. Beaulier
PK-12 Visual Arts Educator
PK-12 Gifted/Talented Program Coordinator
MSAD #32

December 04, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Kevin Austin, and I am a 6th grade teacher at Westbrook Middle School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

As educators, it is our responsibility to provide students with a well-rounded, inclusive education that reflects the full scope of history and the diversity of experiences that have shaped our world. The revision of these standards presents a critical opportunity to ensure that students in Maine understand the foundational narratives of our country, which are often the stories of those whose experiences have often been marginalized or overlooked.

Wabanaki Studies: In 2001, LD 291 was signed into law, making Maine the first state to require the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all its schools. However, over two decades later, the majority of Maine schools have yet to fully implement a comprehensive and consistent Wabanaki studies curriculum. This gap highlights the need for further scaffolding, guidance, and resources, which the proposed revised standards would provide. As a teacher, I have had the privilege of attending a series of Wabanaki studies workshops offered by the Maine Environmental Education Association. These workshops, along with the materials made available by the Department of Education's Wabanaki Studies Specialist over the past two years, have given me new confidence in teaching this critical content. The refreshed standards would support educators like myself, offering more resources and clearer direction for effectively teaching about the Wabanaki people and their history, culture, and contributions.

I work in a community located on the traditional lands of the Aucocisco, an area within the Wabanaki Dawnland, and recognizing and honoring this heritage is an essential part of our educational mission. The proposed standards would not only help students learn about the Wabanaki people, but also foster a greater sense of connection and respect for the land we occupy. By including these teachings, students will better understand the importance of reconciliation and the continued impact of colonization on Native communities.

African American Studies: The history of African Americans is inseparable from the history of the United States. From the transatlantic slave trade to the civil rights movement and beyond, African Americans have shaped the nation in profound ways. Including African American studies in the standards will help students recognize the resilience, achievements, and struggles of African Americans, and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the systemic racism that continues to affect communities today. It is critical that students see themselves represented in the curriculum and learn about the diverse ways people have fought for equality and justice.

The History of Genocide: Learning about the atrocities of genocide, including the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, the genocide of indigenous peoples, and current acts of genocide, is essential for preventing such atrocities in the future. By teaching students about these painful chapters of history, we equip them with the knowledge and empathy to stand against hate, bigotry, and intolerance, and to

recognize the acts that lead to cultural genocide. These lessons are not only about the past; they are vital for fostering a culture of respect and understanding in our communities. Addressing genocide helps ensure that students understand the consequences of prejudice and the importance of human rights for all people.

Throughout my career, I have seen how powerful and transformative these topics can be for students. I've had students from diverse backgrounds, including Wabanaki heritage, who have expressed feeling both seen and valued when we address their history in class. Similarly, when we study African American history and the history of genocide, students are often deeply moved and become more aware of how such events resonate in their lives and communities. These studies not only make history come alive but help students better understand the world around them and their roles in shaping a more just and compassionate future.

Incorporating these areas of study is essential for developing well-informed, compassionate citizens who understand the importance of justice, equality, and respect for all people. It is my belief that including Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide in Maine's social studies standards will enrich students' education and prepare them to be active participants in creating a more equitable and inclusive society.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Kevin Austin
6th grade Social Studies
Westbrook Middle School

Cyr, Laura

From: Harvey, Jessica <jharvey@rsu16.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 8:35 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Support Wabanaki Studies and African American Studies

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12/5/24
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Jessica Harvey, and I am a 2nd grade teacher at Elm Street School in Mechanic Falls, ME.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is important to Maine educators and students for the new revised social studies standards to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust, because our standards should reflect accurate history and be taught throughout their time in school. When they come to my class, most of my second graders share that they have never learned about the Wabanaki before, despite it being a law that it is taught in classrooms for over 20 years. We need to amplify the amazing work that has been done thus far in these areas to better equip our educators to teach these important topics.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jessica Harvey (she/her) | 2nd Grade Teacher
2021 Androscoggin County Teacher of the Year

Elm Street School
129 Elm Street
Mechanic Falls, ME 04256
207-345-3381

jharvey@rsu16.org



@jharveyedu



Cyr, Laura

From: Heselton, Libby <lheselton@capeelizabetschools.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 8:36 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: support for Wabanaki studies

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Libby Heselton and I am a resident of Freeport and a school counselor at Cape Elizabeth Middle School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

Mainers love our state and want to know more about it. Students love being outside and learning about who came before us and how they dealt with challenges. Learning about the Wabanaki people and other people who struggled is essential to strong character development. This is our history.

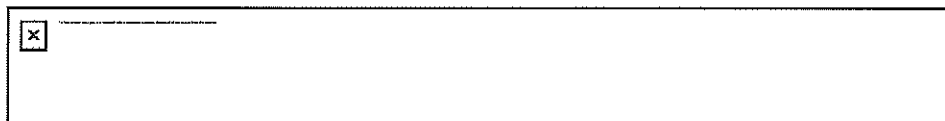
I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Libby Heselton
School Counselor
Cape Elizabeth Middle School

--
Libby Heselton
(she/her/hers)
School Counselor grades 7th and 8th
Cape Elizabeth Middle School
Phone: 207.799.8176, x7216
or 207-741-9568

Under Maine's Freedom of Access law, documents - including e-mail - about school district business are classified as public records and may be subject to disclosure.



Open Minds and Open Doors

Cyr, Laura

From: Carrie Cianchette <carrie.cianchette@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 8:54 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

My name is Carrie Cianchette, and I am mother of three school-aged children and I serve on the Board of Directors for Spurwink.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I whole heartedly support this measure because I want my children to learn and understand the multi-faceted history of our country and state and world and how it has impacted many different groups of people. More civil discourse and reflection is needed when our sometimes flawed history is taught. We need not brush over the uncomfortable parts, but include them and reflect on them in order to not repeat vile outcomes. I also believe that to best encourage stewardship of our land and resources, people such as the Wabanaki have valuable insights and examples from which we can all benefit.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Carrie Cianchette
Cumberland, ME

Cyr, Laura

From: erin mcallister <erin.mcallister@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 9:06 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment | Maine Social Studies Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

My name is Erin McAllister, and I am mother of three school-aged children and I serve on the Board of Directors for Chebeague & Cumberland Land Trust.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I whole heartedly support this measure because I want my children to learn and understand the multi-faceted history of our country and state and world and how it has impacted many different groups of people. More civil discourse and reflection is needed when our sometimes flawed history is taught. We need not brush over the uncomfortable parts, but include them and reflect on them in order to not repeat vile outcomes. I also believe that to best encourage stewardship of our land and resources, people such as the Wabanaki have valuable insights and examples from which we can all benefit.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Erin McAllister
Cumberland, ME

erin mcallister
207.318.6972

Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Department of Education Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

From: Ezra Sassaman
Advocacy Coordinator
Maine Climate Action Now

Date: December 6, 2024

Re: Letter in Support of Proposed Chapter 132 Changes

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Ezra Sassaman. I am a resident of Bar Harbor and the Advocacy Coordinator for Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a statewide coalition of climate justice and youth-led organizations from across the state.

Beyond just addressing climate issues, the groups in our coalition are united in our overall goal to make Maine welcoming to all. We are also brought together by a common goal to challenge and eventually eliminate the systems of oppression that divide humanity and give some groups unearned advantages at the expense of others.

An important step in challenging these systems begins with truth telling in education. Only when we address world history head on, with intention spent fully understanding *all* perspectives, can we truly overcome past injustices and begin the difficult, but necessary, process of creating the world together that we all deserve to live in.

With that being said, we are hopeful the proposed standards revisions will open space for deeper learning, critical thinking, and civil discourse across our education system. It is important to spend time emphasizing the stories told by Wabanaki tribal citizens, enslaved African-Americans and their descendants, and the victims of past and ongoing genocide.

We are thankful for the thoughtful work educators put into revising these standards, and we recommend that they become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Cyr, Laura

From: Jean Sullivan <jsullivan@msad11.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 10:08 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Social Studies Content for educational purposes

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Jeannie Sullivan, and I am the Academic Advisor for Kennebec Neighbors Adult Education.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

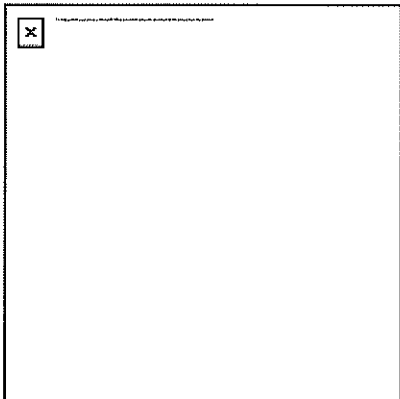
It is important to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, the Holocaust and other genocidal histories into the history that educators teach. The events in such histories have actually happened and to not include it in teaching practices would be white washing what children and others learn. It is imperative to learn about other cultures and the travesties that have been caused by the hands of other people. If we do not learn from all of history, we are doomed to repeat it. We need not turn away from uncomfortable events or events where white people look bad. If history is to be taught and learned from, all of it needs to be accessed in order for people to learn from it.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Jeannie Sullivan

--
Jeannie Sullivan
Academic Coordinator
Kennebec Neighbors Adult Education
40 West Hill Road
Gardiner, ME 04345
207-582-3774



Cyr, Laura

From: Meg Edstrom Jones <meg@theecologyschool.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 10:36 AM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: letter for Social Studies Standards Comment

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Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Meg Edstrom Jones, and I am the Director of Education Partnerships for The Ecology School. Along with members of our Learning Experiences team, I am responsible for supporting our team of educators with their facilitation of ecology and environmental education for students on our River Bend Farm campus in Saco, Maine. I am also Director of our Teacher Institute series, which provides immersive professional development opportunities for teachers from across the United States, interested in providing more outdoor and place-based learning opportunities for their students.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

As a member of our Learning Experiences team, I help design and facilitate the implementation of The Ecology School's environmental education curriculum that includes both the natural and cultural history of what is now called Maine. After having the opportunity to attend a Wabanaki studies workshop made available to educators by the Maine Environmental Education Association, our Learning Experiences team is taking a closer look at how we currently incorporate Wabanaki studies into our curriculum and methodology. This is an ever-evolving process, and we are so grateful to have resources like the MOOSE Wabanaki Studies Learning Progression and in-person workshops led by the DOE's Wabanaki Specialist to explore this resource to help support our learning and unlearning, in addition to the further integration of this material in our teaching.

As Director of our Teacher Institute series, I have the privilege of working with teachers from around the country looking to incorporate more place-based awareness and knowledge of their home communities. Unfortunately, this is also accompanied by a shared dearth of information and access to resources about their area's Indigenous history and how it impacts the present. Many teachers express a deep desire to learn more about the Indigenous history and current events in their area, so that they might more accurately share this information with their students. More access to resources, not less, is necessary for them to do so. In addition, the accountability from this curriculum becoming a requirement, a literal "standard", is an important step to standardizing its inclusion in the curricula here in Maine.

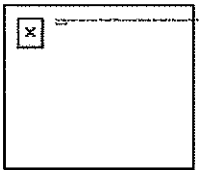
As a former 4th grade teacher, the importance of including Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and historical events like the Holocaust into our teaching can not be overstated. Our students need

fuller access to all of this material, to help them build a wider perspective of how history has shaped our present day and its implications for the future. Opportunities to build awareness and empathy are a critical step toward creating critical thinkers, encouraging deeper learning, and promoting civil discourse across our education system and communities. These topics need to be held up as integral to our schools' curricula, not as afterthoughts, add-ons, or electives. Without learning our shared history (and it is all shared), especially histories that include the oppression, persecution, and discrimination of marginalized people, we are doomed to perpetuate many of the harms from those histories, as is evidenced by persistent threats to censor access to and inclusion of this critical information today.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

~ MEg



Meg Edstrom Jones | *Director of Educational Partnerships & The Teacher Institute*
she/her/hers [Why Pronouns Matter](#)

The Ecology School
River Bend Farm
184 Simpson Road
Saco, Maine 04072
Office: (207) 283-9951 ext. 105

Learn more about The Ecology School's sustainable campus at [River Bend Farm!](#)



12/6/2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

We hope this message finds you well. Our names are Matt Cornish and Kareem Dieng, and we serve as the Camp Director and Director of Outdoor Education, respectively, at Camp Beech Cliff (CBC). CBC is a year-round outdoor education center and summer camp serving the youth of Hancock County. Our mission is to inspire personal growth, foster interpersonal connection, and nurture a deep appreciation for the natural world.

We are submitting this public comment in full support of the proposed updates to the social studies standards detailed in Chapter 132.

As an academic discipline, social studies explores human society. In our work as youth development professionals and outdoor educators, we see firsthand the importance of engaging young people not just as members of society, but as individuals who are interconnected and united in our shared humanity. A comprehensive education about the state of Maine would be incomplete without acknowledging its full history – just as any study of human society would fall short if it failed to address moments where humanity has fallen short. Honest understanding and acknowledgment are essential for both personal and community growth. With this in mind the inclusion of Wabanaki studies, African American Studies, and a history of Genocide, including the Holocaust, are essential to promoting unity throughout our diverse communities.

We also understand the time, energy, and care required to create meaningful educational experiences. These experiences not only shape well-informed citizens but also encourage students to examine history through a truthful and critical lens. We deeply respect and appreciate the significant effort educators have invested in revising these standards and wholeheartedly recommend that the proposed updates be adopted as the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing education and for considering our comments on this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Matt Cornish
Camp Director
Camp Beech Cliff
matt@campbeechcliff.org

Kareem Dieng
Director of Outdoor Education
Camp Beech Cliff
kareem@campbeechcliff.org

Cyr, Laura

From: Jazz Thompson <jthompson@wabanakiphw.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 12:03 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Laura, here is my response:

"As someone who has dedicated their career to education and food sovereignty, I am deeply troubled by the idea of eliminating Wabanaki and African American studies. These programs are not just academic pursuits; they are essential to understanding the complex relationships between food, culture, and community.

Through my work, I have seen firsthand how the erasure of Indigenous and Black histories has contributed to the disparities we see today in food access, health outcomes, and environmental sustainability. By cutting these programs, we would be perpetuating the very same systems of oppression that have led to these injustices within our communities all across Maine.

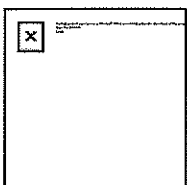
As an educator, I believe it is our responsibility to provide students with a deeper understanding of the world around them. This includes acknowledging the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, slavery, and systemic racism in our food systems and communities.

By retaining and strengthening Wabanaki and African American studies, we can:

1. Empower students with a moral understanding of the intersections between food, culture, and power.
2. Foster a new generation of leaders who are equipped to address the complex challenges facing our food systems and communities.
3. Contribute to a more just and equitable food system that honors the knowledge, traditions, and contributions of Indigenous and Black communities.

Let us prioritize the preservation and growth of these vital programs. Our students, our communities, and the future of our food systems depend on it. Let us not let history repeat itself. Let's keep moving forward in a way that can benefit us all in the long run.

Warm Regards,
Jasmine Thompson-Tintor.



Jasmine Thompson-Tintor
Food Sovereignty Educator
T: (207) 299-7498
E: jthompson@wabanakiphw.org
www.wabanakiphw.org

Cyr, Laura

From: Abby Newkirk <aenewkir@colby.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 12:10 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Abigail Newkirk, and I am the Linde Family Foundation Senior Coordinator of School and Teacher Programs at the Colby College Museum of Art in Waterville, Maine. Every year I welcome about 2500 students in the galleries and I use our amazing collection to help our young learners see the world from new and different perspectives. When you are young, your world can be small. Museums take you across time and space.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

A Penobscot leader once said that "through education comes understanding, and from understanding comes respect." That has been my guiding principle as I develop my lesson plans. The world is complicated and history brings up complex emotions. Students need to learn how to navigate those difficult subjects so that they can be productive members of society...so they can see beyond their lived experience. Only then can we reach understanding and respect.

I grew up in New Hampshire and, while I had a good education, now realize how many stories/perspectives were left out. This is something I am still remedying and working on every day. I want to make sure that the younger generations grow up knowing about Tulsa, the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Osage Nation, Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980, the Warsaw Ghetto, Darfur, and so much more. It is impossible to understand our world today without knowing what happened before...even if it is uncomfortable at times. We are all living in the wake of these historic events.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Abigail Newkirk
Linde Family Foundation Senior Coordinator of School and Teacher Programs
Colby College Museum of Art

--

Abigail (Abby) Newkirk '03
Linde Family Foundation Senior Coordinator of School and Teacher Programs
Colby College Museum of Art
situated on unceded Wabanaki homelands
5600 Mayflower Hill Drive
Waterville, ME 04901
tel: 207.859.5623
pronouns: she, her, hers

To sign up for our Educator E-Newsletter, please click [here](#).

Cyr, Laura

From: Evan Braude <ebraude@bowdoin.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 1:49 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 6, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Evan, and I am a Bowdoin student.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

My own elementary, middle, and high school curriculums did not teach indigenous history. Whenever Native Americans were mentioned, it was in passing—excusing and ignoring the atrocities the US government ordered. It is vital for all Americans to learn about the genocide of the indigenous people who were stewards of the land before us.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Evan

Good Afternoon,

My name is Shawn Jiminez, I am a former graduate of Gardiner Area High School and United States Senate Youth Delegate, and I currently sit on the Maine Youth Advocacy Team under the League of Women Voters and the Maine Youth Advisory Board of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

I am here today to express some comments on the proposed revisions of the Social Studies standards, in hopes to give a new perspective and emphasize the necessity to incorporate more voices into this conversation.

Necessity to incorporate climate crisis as a social study

The climate crisis needs to be implemented into the curriculum, and reference to the capitalocene as a social era should be placed in the timeline of eras indicating the economic and social harms that humans inflicted

Emphasis on verbiage

Black vs African American: Using "Black" instead of "African American" in discourse can be more inclusive and accurate for several reasons. "Black" encompasses a broader identity, including individuals from the Caribbean, Africa, and other parts of the world who may not identify with or trace their heritage directly to the United States or the African American experience. Second, "Black" reflects a racial identity rather than a cultural or ethnic one, which allows for more inclusive discussions about systemic racism and shared experiences of racial discrimination worldwide.

(What is a cultural group...?):

3.3 Explore, Identify, and/or compare diverse interests, identities, and opinions related to classroom traditions and decisions through literature, art, and poetry, with emphasis on African American and cultural groups (21);

"compare national traditions and customs with those of the Wabanaki Nations" ... what is a national tradition, and how do those apply to everyone (3.3-pp.21)

"Provide examples of how people influence government and work for the common good including engaging in civil discourse at the school and local level such as suffrage, petition, and protest" — examples vs protest vs subfield (2.2 Grade 3)

Struggling with verbiage of 1.4 performance expectation on page 14, which reads "Explain how tribal sovereignty established a unique relationship between Wabanaki Nations and the United States Government." Extremely important to acknowledge the settlement act and measures that take away from sovereignty—this relation is not unique, but rather discriminatory, and Maine is trailing behind in indigenous rights and protections

Problem with othering

Huge issue with 3.1 on pp23: 3.1 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights of African Americans and other marginalized groups in local communities, Maine, the Wabanaki Nations, the United States, and the world. The study should emphasize the experiences of African Americans and other marginalized groups — issues of othering...

Issue of other is also found in 1.7 on 39: Students explore geographic professions in Wabanaki, African American, and other marginalized communities.

3.3 Explore, Identify, and/or compare diverse interests, identities, and opinions related to classroom traditions and decisions through literature, art, and poetry, with emphasis on African American and cultural groups

Lack of Global Contexts

3.2 on pp23 holds a Western perspective, as who decides this purpose: Differentiate among procedures for making decisions in the classroom, school, civil society, and local, tribal, state, and national government in terms of how civic purposes are intended, including the Wabanaki Nations and African Americans

Students define “genocide” (49) — Students identify “examples” of genocide (51). This is problematic because the standards only focus on the genocide of Jewish individuals, neglecting examples of Genocide faced by Middle East territories and those in the Global South

No acknowledgement of Orientalism

Providing significance to certain events, but not others (Performance expectation 1.3 on 47: Students (D2) Analyzing and synthesize and evaluate major historical eras) — examples are given, but what gives you the power to determine which marginalized communities get spotlight

Issue with Economic Section

Economics section is extremely underdeveloped and holds unfair accusations (Performance section grade 5 pp 25 alongside use of “be productive” on pp 27— Students examine specific skills, training, employment, and career choices can improve a person’s ability to earn a living, be productive, and expand employment options”—sometimes career choices are outside of control, as socioeconomic constraints and racism prevent people from accessing certain opportunities, so tying that to productivity is not good

Delete 2.7 pp 33 as it is not always correct (2.7. Students explain why advancements in technology and investments in capital goods and human capital increase economic growth and standards of living)

—advancements in technology often correspond to job layoffs especially with new AI

In closing, I urge this committee to take these concerns into serious consideration. The proposed revisions to the Social Studies standards present an important opportunity to create a more inclusive, accurate, and globally informed curriculum.

Laura.cyr@maine.gov

Cyr, Laura

From: Hannah Joseph <hannahj@fiddleheadschoo.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 2:05 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment - Social Studies Standards

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December 6, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Hannah Joseph, and I am a PreK educator and a former 5th grade teacher.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I was very fortunate to start my teaching career in Maine mentored by a teacher who was very passionate about Indigenous studies. I learned so many things alongside my fifth graders that first year. We covered stereotypes and mascotting, integrated Indigenous studies into literacy, studied place names and settler colonial mindsets. Those 10 year olds were ready to have these discussions and I watched them make big time realizations. They left with a realistic understanding of the origins of the United States and are better young citizens because of it. People cannot recognize modern atrocities if they aren't taught about past atrocities.

In PreK, we focus on grounding children in an appreciation and respect for nature. We want them to understand that they are part of the ecological community and not above it. Wabanaki Studies is more than social studies, it is also climate education. I am incredibly grateful to Brianne Lolar and the many other Wabanaki contributors in building the Wabanaki Studies curriculum for the Maine DOE. It can feel uncomfortable teaching Wabanaki Studies as a white person, but I can teach it confidently knowing the curriculum is written by Wabanaki people and is respectful of their cultures.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Hannah Joseph

Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences

Cyr, Laura

From: Naomi Lopez <nlopez@bowdoin.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 2:26 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Naomi Lopez, and I am a college student studying Environmental Studies and Education.

I am submitting public comment today in enthusiastic support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

I feel strongly that the proposed revisions to include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust, will give students the knowledge and tools to become informed global citizens. I also believe we simply have a responsibility to educate young people about these historical legacies which have so deeply shaped Maine, the United States, and the World, and which continue to affect our modern world.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Naomi Lopez

December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Helena Tatgenhorst, and I am a current resident of Portland, ME, former resident of Winterport, ME, and attended schools in RSU #22.

I am submitting my public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132. Despite growing up within walking distance of the Penobscot River, I did not learn about the Penobscot tribe or the history of the people who stewarded this land for millennia until after high school. It was only as an adult that I learned that Wabanaki studies have been required teaching in Maine since I was in first grade. It is clear to me that further guidance is needed for teachers to implement these standards into Maine's schools, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Helena Tatgenhorst

Cyr, Laura

From: Lucy Britt <lucycbritt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 2:52 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Maine DOE:

I am writing as a resident of Lewiston and Maine - and as a college instructor - to support the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is so important to me that students in Maine learn the history of the Wabanaki, African American history, and other important events that made Maine what it is today. It is so exciting to be in a state that appreciates the importance of history and understands that if we do not learn from our past we are doomed to repeat it.

Sincerely,

Lucy Britt
Lewiston

Lucy Britt
Assistant Professor
Department of Politics
Bates College

Cyr, Laura

From: Jane Herbert <addledworks@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 3:06 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: LD 291

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Another voice here to support LD 291. The children of Maine need to know the history of all the people who have inhabited this land. We all need the facts and to learn from the People of the Dawnland before we destroy it utterly. My ancestors arrived in the 1630s and promptly built a sawmill down in Exeter. I'd probably be re-wilding anyway, but it feels good to know I can make some sort of atonement.

Jane Herbert
311 Hardy Road
Westbrook, ME 04092

Cyr, Laura

From: Denise St. John <dstjohnpt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 3:10 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Wabanaki & African American Studies Support

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December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Denise St John and I am a Teacher's Assistant at Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences in Gray, Maine.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is important to me that the children of what is now called Maine learn about the people who lived here before them, how they lived off of the land and respected and protected its resources. It is also important to teach the lesson that we are living on stolen land.

It is important to learn about the history of slavery in America and the great injustices that were committed against the African American people who were imprisoned by white Americans. This is a very dark part of our history as a country, but it did happen, and learning about it will hopefully help bring understanding to people and help negate prejudice.

Learning about genocide and the Holocaust is equally as important. We cannot ignore the atrocities committed against the Jewish people at the hands of Adolph Hitler and the Nazi's. We need to recognize them and educate about them so that history does not repeat itself.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for this land that is now called Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Denise D. St John
Teachers Assistant
Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences

Sent from my iPhone

Cyr, Laura

From: Jenna Dela Cruz Vendil <jvendil@bates.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 3:38 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Cc: j.renee
Subject: Public Comment in Support of Chapter 132 Changes

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December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Jenna Vendil, and I am a parent of two small children, a former member of the Portland Board of Public Education (2009-2018), a current board member of the Holocaust & Human Rights Center of Maine. I also work at Bates College's Harward Center for Community Partnerships, supporting student civic action and community engagement.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

The changes described in Chapter 132 provide necessary updates to social studies curriculum - that reflects the field as dynamic and evolving. I appreciate the updates made to ensure ongoing support and age-appropriate teaching of Wabanaki and Maine's African American histories, to cover genocide and human rights such as the Holocaust, and to provide a variety of narratives for students to learn about when it comes to collective history. Central to this work is supporting a student's cultivation of skills, tools, and competencies needed to be civic participants in our world.

Young people need additional support cultivating these skills, tools, and competencies at school. I see some college students who are inadequately prepared to address interpersonal problems constructively or collaboratively. Democracy is participatory, incomplete, and requires strong habits of continuous civic engagement. Youth I work with are interested in learning skills of civil discourse, and feel like this can and should be embedded at an early age.

Another compelling reason to support proposed changes to Chapter 132, is the inclusion of a high school civic action or service learning capstone. It takes more intentional, engaged strategies to support civic learning and community engagement. In an increasingly stratified world - on social media and in our physical lives, community-engaged opportunities provide connections to learn, reflect, and support our communities. As a mother, and a former school board member, these are the kinds of opportunities I hope my children and youth in the state would benefit from.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jenna Vendil
Associate Director of Democratic Engagement
Harvard Center for Community Partnerships,
Bates College
Lewiston, ME

12/6/24

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Grace Cain, and I am a K-2 Interventionist at Songo Locks School.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It is important to me that the new revised social studies standards include Wabanaki Studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust.

Social Studies is about what it means to be human and how our human interactions create the society/world that we live in. Given the challenges our students will face in their futures such as climate change and rapid technological advances it is essential that we give our students the tools and knowledge to work together to solve problems as a society that we have never seen or even imagined before.

I appreciate the critical thinking encouraged in these standards necessary to address such challenges.

I appreciate the inclusion of Wabanaki Studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust in these standards. This framework will help support educators and enrich the lives of students with a breadth and depth of knowledge. It is important that all voices are heard from our past and present to understand how we got here, where we are now, and move forward together.

I have been fortunate to learn from Brianne Lolar and Kaya Lolar in a recent professional development opportunity and was amazed at the content that has been added and is available to support educators to uphold these standards.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Grace Cain

Potential points to include:

- LD 291, a landmark law requiring the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, was signed in 2001. Since the majority of Maine schools still have not yet implemented a sufficient Wabanaki studies curriculum, it is clear that further scaffolding and guidance is needed, which these proposed standards would provide.
 - If you have/had any Wabanaki students, you could potentially include a piece about how these refreshed standards have helped you to feel more confident in your support of them.
- We/I have had the opportunity to attend a series of Wabanaki studies workshops made available to educators by Maine Environmental Education Association.
- The DOE's Wabanaki Studies Specialist has made so many great materials available over the past two years, and as educators, we are more well supported in Wabanaki studies than ever before.
- Any specific connections regarding whose traditional lands your school/organization is built on (interactive map can be found [here](#)) and how the proposed standards would support your teaching/recognition of the land's history
- Any brief experiences you've had in your work that demonstrates why/how Wabanaki studies is needed in the social studies standards

Cyr, Laura

From: Kohan, Tom <tkohan@capeelizabethschools.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 3:55 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Proposed Social Studies Standards

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December 6, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Tom Kohan, and I am an Ed Tech at Cape Elizabeth High School. I am submitting public comments today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

LD 291, a landmark law requiring the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, was signed in 2001. Since the majority of Maine schools still have not yet implemented a sufficient Wabanaki studies curriculum, it is clear that further scaffolding and guidance is needed, which these proposed standards would provide.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Tom Kohan

--
Tom Kohan
(he, him, his) (here's why)
Academic Skills Coach
Cape Elizabeth High School

Under Maine's Freedom of Access law, documents - including e-mail - about school district business are classified as public records and may be subject to disclosure.



Open Minds and Open Doors

Cyr, Laura

From: Kelly Schussler <kelly.schussler@msad60.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 4:03 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team

State House Station #23

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Kelly Schussler, and I am the general education social worker at the Vivian E. Hussey School in Berwick, Maine.

I am submitting a public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

Our students need to understand all aspects of our history. We would be neglecting their education if we did not teach them about the Wabanaki community, the African American community, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust. We must provide an accurate historical perspective to combat stereotypes and promote cultural understanding. This broadens students' worldviews and builds empathy.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

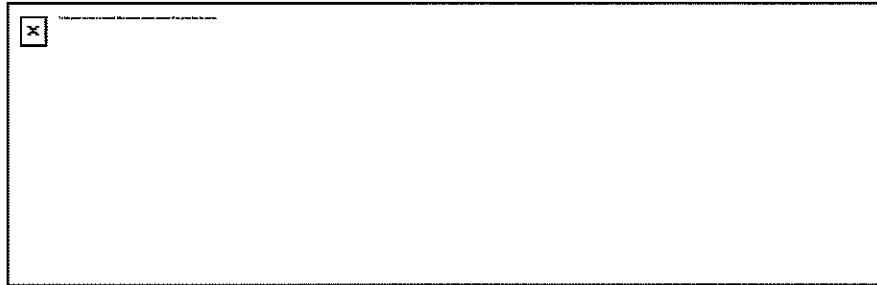
Sincerely,

Kelly Schussler, LCSW (she/her)
School Social Worker
Vivian E. Hussey School, Berwick, ME
MSAD 60

Cyr, Laura

From: Anne Stires <annes@fiddleheadschoool.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 4:10 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Social Studies Standards Comment

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



December 6, 2024

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

Our names are Kate Cass, Katherine Uschmann, Judy Kann, Sally Tinkham, Seal Rossignol, Anne Stires, and Jacinda Cotton-Castro. We are educators from Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences in Gray, Maine. We comprise a diverse group: a kindergarten teacher, an occupational therapist, a pre-Kindergarten teacher, a fifth grade teacher, an outdoor learning coordinator, a contracted curriculum coordinator, and a head of school. All but one of us attended Wabanaki Studies professional development workshops made available to educators by Maine Environmental Education Association. The workshops have been beyond helpful in the implementation of integrated and comprehensive Wabanaki Studies across the curriculum, as well as deepening our own knowledge. The DOE's Wabanaki Studies Specialist and a team of advisors have created an unbelievable number of guiding materials. The curricular materials have been made available over the past two years, and as educators, we are more well supported in Wabanaki studies than ever before.

LD 291, a landmark law requiring the teaching of Wabanaki studies in all Maine schools, was signed in 2001. Since then, the majority of Maine schools still have not yet implemented a sufficient Wabanaki studies curriculum. It is clear that further scaffolding and guidance is needed and the proposed standards would provide that to teachers and schools.

We are submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132. It is vital that the new revised social studies standards must include Wabanaki studies, African American studies, and the history of genocide, including the Holocaust. We recognize the extreme importance of including all of the truths of history and current events, so that students can make informed decisions

and use their knowledge to make this world a better place. It is troublesome to imagine a PK-12 education in this century that does not include representation of *all* of the people of these lands, their culture, and their stories.

Fiddlehead School occupies the traditional lands of the Abenaki and the proposed standards would support our curriculum development, teaching, and recognition of the land's history from outdoor learning lessons to place-based mapping, poetry, and plant science unit, to development of classroom libraries, our arts program, and much, much more. Wabanaki Studies is *very much* needed in the social studies standards (and integrated across the curriculum at every grade level) to provide students with accurate history and present day information. For example, a teacher shared recently that – as she was introducing a story written by a Panuwapskewiyik (Penobscot) author – a 3rd grader asked, “Are Wabanaki People still alive? I heard they were all killed.” There are countless misconceptions and untruths, as well as generalizations, that are made about Indigenous cultures. We need to right those wrongs. We must teach current, correct, comprehensive, and meaningful information about the First People whose history, languages, and stories have been systematically erased, not to mention about attempted genocide and the survival of the Wabanaki.

We are grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine on behalf of all students, including Wabanaki students' for a sense of confidence and identity, in addition to the just principles of equity and inclusion. Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of our comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Kate, Judy, Katherine, Sal, Seal, Anne, and Jacinda

Kate Cass, Kindergarten Teacher
Katherine Uschmann, Occupational Therapist
Judy Kann, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Sally Tinkham, Fifth Grade Teacher
Seal Rossignol, Outdoor Learning Coordinator
Anne Stires, Coordinator of Teaching and Learning
Jacinda Cotton-Castro, Head of School
Fiddlehead School of the Arts and Sciences in Gray, Maine

Anne M. Stires, M.Ed. (she/her/hers)
Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, PreK-4th grade

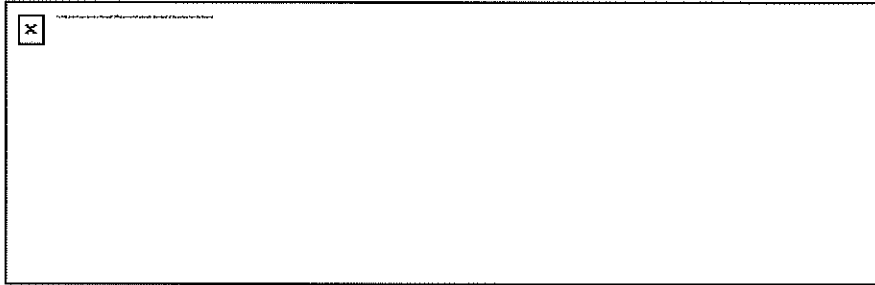
“When we love the earth, we are able to love ourselves more fully.”
~from “Touching the Earth” in *Belonging*, by bell hooks

*I work part time for Fiddlehead. My two days alternate each week between Tuesday/Thursday and Wednesday/Friday, with occasional variations in that. I check my Fiddlehead email the afternoon before my scheduled days each week in addition to the days I am at school (in an effort to address work/life balance).

Cyr, Laura

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Fiddlehead School of the Arts and Sciences in Gray, Maine

Anne M. Stires, M.Ed. (she/her/hers)
Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, PreK-4th grade

“When we love the earth, we are able to love ourselves more fully.”
~from ‘Touching the Earth’ in *Belonging*, by bell hooks

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Cyr, Laura

From: Emily Weyrauch <emily@nbeconsortium.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 4:51 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Support of Rules & Changes to Social Studies Standards

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12/6/24

Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Emily Weyrauch, and I am a coordinator for the Nature Based Education Consortium, supporting communications for a statewide network of folks seeking to expand access to outdoor learning for all Maine youth.

I am submitting public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards as detailed in Chapter 132.

It's important for Maine students to learn about Wabanaki people throughout time, and their current presence in society. As someone passionate about environmental learning, and learning that is connected to one's local community and history, I know that including indigenous people and their culture as part of the past and present of any lessons on physical place and society is crucial. I know that African American studies and the history of genocide are also key pieces of information for young people to understand as they step into our present society, and are key pieces of understanding our current political and social happenings.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for your consideration of my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Emily Weyrauch
Communications Coordinator
Nature Based Education Consortium

--

Emily Weyrauch
Communications Coordinator, Nature Based Education Consortium
emily@nbeconsortium.com
<http://www.nbeconsortium.com>

Cyr, Laura

From: Margaret Sobol <margaret.sobol@falmouthschools.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 4:59 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Social Studies Standards
Attachments: MDOE Social Studies Standards Comment .pdf

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Please see attached letter. Thank you.

--

Margaret Sobol
Outdoor Learning Educator
Falmouth Public Schools

Cyr, Laura

From: Danikah Chartier <danikah.chartier@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 5:01 PM
To: Cyr, Laura
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Social Studies Revised Standards

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December 6th, 2024
Maine DOE Legislative Team
State House Station #23
Augusta, Maine 04333
Dear Laura Cyr,

My name is Danikah Chartier, and I am a first-generation descendant of the Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Nation. I am an artist and gallery educator at the Colby College Museum of Art. I have written a Wabanaki History and Culture tour for K-12 school groups and a Decolonizing Art tour for Maine educators. I am also the former Indigenous Community Liaison and Researcher with Historic New England, where I was tasked with incorporating Indigenous perspectives into New England's history (one that cannot be without the other) and educating the staff on inclusive language and allyship best practices. Through my work, I have noticed an undeniable desire to learn; adults are seeking out what was erased from their history books. We have an opportunity to make better decisions for our children than what was decided for us. We must give kids the truthful history lessons they need to make informed decisions in their everyday lives and in the future when they become participants in our democracy.

I am submitting a public comment today in full support of the proposed rules and changes to the social studies standards, as detailed in Chapter 132.

I am grateful for the immense time and energy educators put into the work of revising the standards, and I recommend that these revised standards become the new social studies standards for the state of Maine.

Thank you for your work advancing education and for considering my comments on this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Danikah Chartier (she/her)
Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Nation
Gallery Educator at the Colby College Museum of Art