



State Board of Education
THE STATE *of* TEXAS

Ad Hoc Committee on Social Studies Framework

SBOE Report to the Committee of the Full Board

June 23rd, 2025



Committee Overview

- Committee Description, Members, Meetings and Goals

Research

- Comparison to Current Framework

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- Options for Consideration

Committee Discussion

- Timeline

Social Studies Ad Hoc Committee

Description, Members, Meetings and Goal



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Memorandum

To: All Members of the State Board of Education

From: State Board of Education Chairman





Date: October 10, 2024

Subject: Ad Hoc Committee on Social Studies Standards Framework

Committee Description: The Chairman of the State Board of Education has established an Ad Hoc Committee on Social Studies Standards Framework to evaluate Texas' current social studies learning standards, research best practices in history and civics education, and provide recommendations for developing exemplary state standards, ensuring Texas students receive a high-quality social studies education that prepares them for informed citizenship.

Committee Members and Meetings: The Committee makeup is Aaron Kinsey (Chair), Marisa Perez-Diaz, Julie Pickren, and Audrey Young. The Committee will not vote but rather provide a report to the State Board of Education.

Goal: Provide clear, actionable recommendations for developing social studies curriculum standards that will position Texas as a national leader in history and civics education. The standards should equip students with essential knowledge of American and Texas history, geography, and civic institutions while fostering the skills and dispositions needed for engaged citizenship in a diverse democratic republic.

			
Aaron Kinsey <i>Chairman</i>	Marisa Perez-Diaz <i>Member</i>	Julie Pickren <i>Member</i>	Audrey Young <i>Member</i>



National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results reveal a decline in eighth graders' proficiency in U.S. history and civics, with scores dropping to levels seen in the 1990s. Contributing factors include **weak state standards**, inadequate instructional materials, insufficient teacher preparation, limited instructional time, and a lack of accountability in social studies education. (*Finn, 2023*)

Best practices for social studies instruction:

Practice 1: K-2 History

K - 2 social studies instruction should focus on historical figures through personal stories and biographies, sequencing past events using timelines, and exploring places and artifacts of the past (i.e. buildings, art, and tools). This reinforces research based findings that show the **study of history for the youngest students is a learning rather than developmental process.** (*Fardi, 2022*)

Practice 2: Layered Topics

Building students' understanding by starting with broader contexts and progressively focusing on more specific histories produces **layered knowledge over time.** This aligns with spiral curriculum theory and cumulative learning that enhance long term retention of content. (*Lee, 2012*)

Practice 3: Chronological

Consistent exposure to **chronological narratives** aids elementary students in their understanding of historical concepts and grasping relationships between events. (*Sole, 2019*)

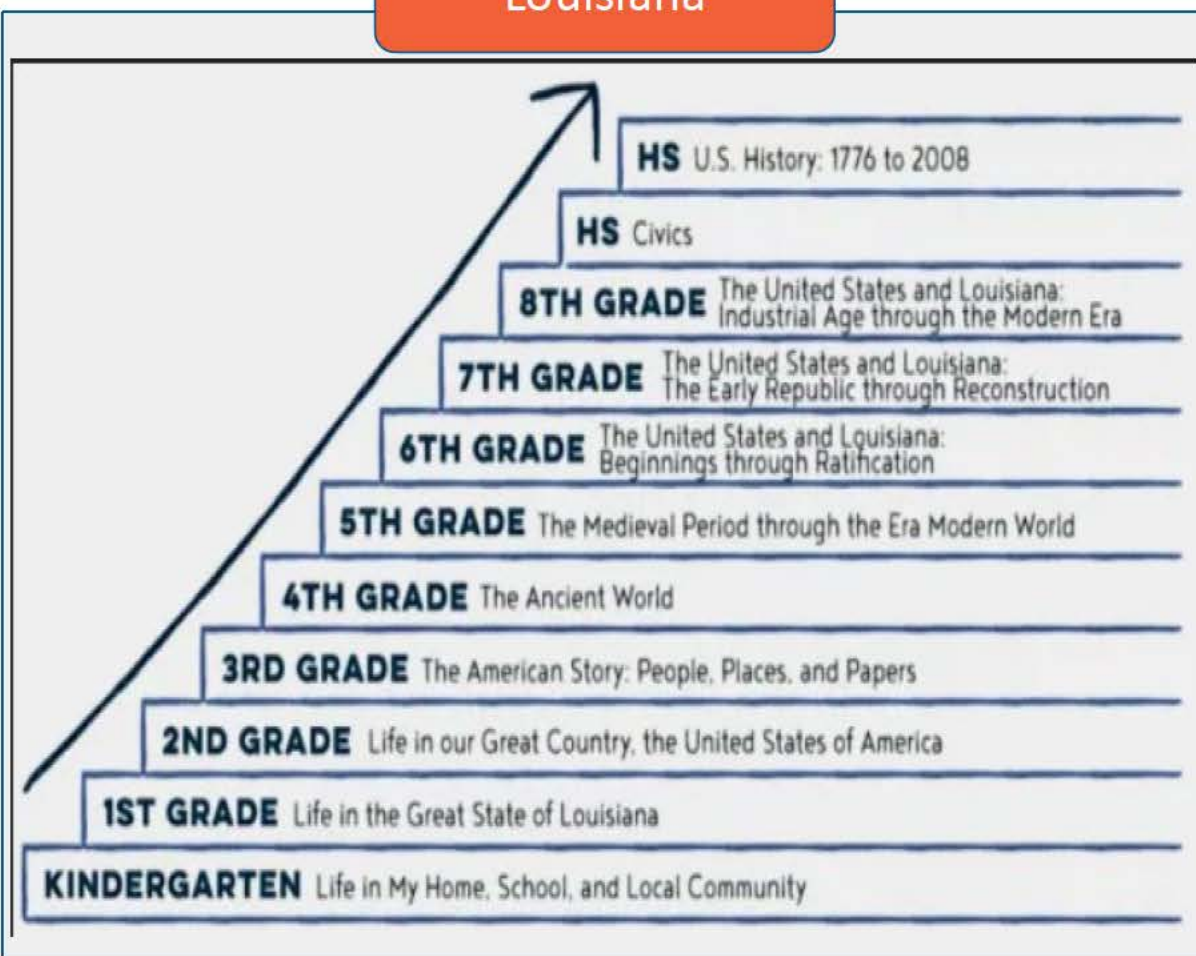
Frameworks from other States



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There is inconsistency in implementation of best practices in Social Studies frameworks for other states.

Louisiana



Tennessee

Standards Progression and Course Descriptions

Grade	Course Title	Course Description
K	The World Around Us	Kindergarten students will build upon experiences with their families, schools, and communities as an introduction to social studies.
1	Tennessee's Place in the United States	First grade students will learn about Tennessee and its place in the U.S. through culture, economics, geography, government/civics, and history.
2	Life in the United States	Second grade students will learn about culture, economics, geography, government/civics, and history by studying their identity as American citizens and how our nation operates.
3	Part 1: Geography and Economics	Third grade students will learn geographical skills, world geography, U.S. and Tennessee geography as well as the basic role of economics.
	Part 2: Early American and Tennessee History	Third grade students will learn about the indigenous people of North America, European exploration, early American and Tennessee settlements, and the founding of the Thirteen Colonies.
4	The History of the United States: Revolution to Reconstruction	Fourth grade students will learn about the events that led to U.S. independence, the American Revolution, the growth and development of the U.S. through Manifest Destiny, and the causes and effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction.
5	Part 1: The History of the United States: Industrialization to the Civil Rights Movement	Fifth grade students will learn about the challenges facing the U.S. during the 19th and 20th centuries, with an emphasis on major American wars and events that changed our history.
	Part 2: Tennessee History	Fifth grade students will learn about the history of Tennessee, including the cultural, geographic, economic, and political influences on the state and its development.
6	World History and Geography: Early Civilizations Through the Fall of the Western Roman Empire	Sixth grade students will learn about the cultural, geographical, political, and governmental beginnings of ancient civilizations through the fall of the Western Roman Empire.
7	World History and Geography: The Middle Ages to the Exploration of the Americas	Seventh grade students will learn about the social, cultural, geographical, political, and technological changes of Western Civilization in Europe as well as the geographic regions of East Asia, West Africa, and Southwest Asia and Northern Africa.
8	United States History and Geography: Colonization of North America to Reconstruction	Eighth grade students will learn about the settlement and founding of the U.S. through Reconstruction and study the history, economics, culture, government, and geography of Tennessee in context to illustrate the role our state has played in American history.

Frameworks from other States



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There is inconsistency in implementation of best practices in Social Studies frameworks for other states.

Florida

Kinder - Third grades:

- American History
- African American History
- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government

Fourth Grade:

- American History
- African American History
- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government
- Financial Literacy

Fifth Grade:

- American History
- African American History
- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government
- Holocaust Education

Overview of Grades 6 – 8

- 6 – 8 African American History
- 6 – 8 Holocaust Education

Sixth Grade:

- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government
- World History

Seventh Grade:

- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government

Eighth Grade:

- American History
- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government
- Financial Literacy

Alabama

Social Studies (2024)

- **SS24.K** Kindergarten: Living and Working Together in Family and Community
- **SS24.1** Grade 1: Living and Working Together in Community and State
- **SS24.2** Grade 2: Living and Working Together in State and Nation
- **SS24.3** Grade 3: Alabama in American History and Government I: Geography and Settlement
- **SS24.4** Grade 4: Alabama in American History and Government II: Colonies to 1900
- **SS24.5** Grade 5: Alabama in American History and Government III: Twentieth Century to Present
- **SS24.6** Grade 6: Making A New Nation: United States Beginnings and Civic Foundations
- **SS24.7** Grade 7: World History and Geography: Geographic Principles and Ancient Civilizations
- **SS24.8** Grade 8: World History and Geography: Middle Ages to the Enlightenment
- **SS24.WH** Grade 9: World History and Geography: Age of Revolution to Present
- **SS24.US1** Grade 10: United States History I: Revolution to Progressive Era
- **SS24.US2** Grade 11: United States History II: World War I to Present
- **SS24.USG** Grade 12: United States Government
- **SS24.E** Grade 12: Economics
- **SS24.P** Psychology
- **SS24.S** Sociology
- **SS24.CWI** Contemporary World Issues
- **SS24.HG** Human Geography
- **SS24.HS** Historical Studies
- **SS24.HOS** Holocaust Studies
- **SS24.AS** Alabama Studies

Social Studies Ad Hoc Committee

Framework – Current Course Sequence and Research



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Kinder	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
Self, Home, and Family	School and Community	Community, State, and Nation	People Who Made an Impact

*Practice 1: K – 2 Lacks content
focused on teaching of history.*



4 th Grade	5 th Grade
Texas History Survey	U.S. History Survey

*Practice 2: Topics are presented in
isolation , without layering within
and across grades.*



6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
World Cultures	Texas History	U.S. History (thru Civil War)

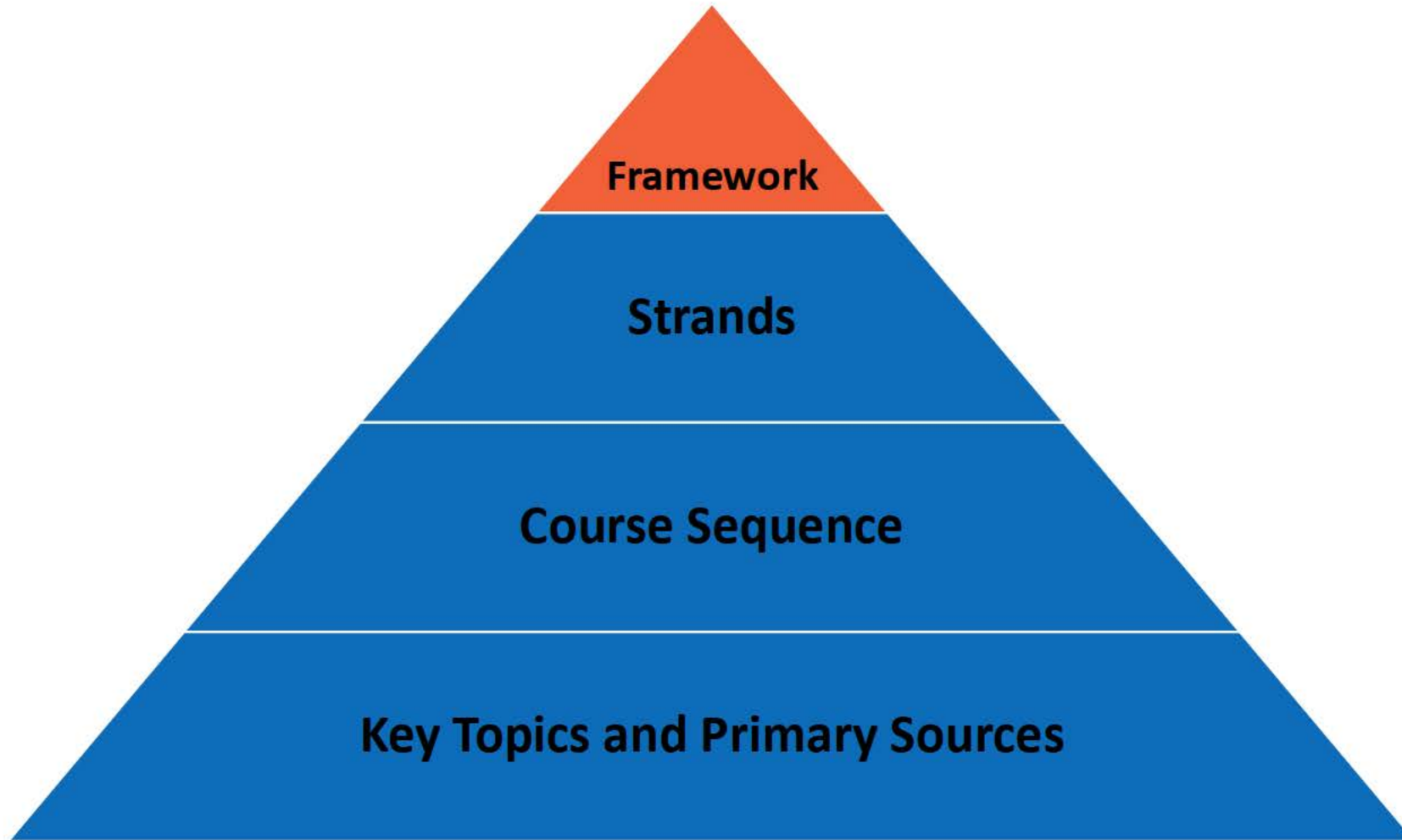
*Practice 3: Content is not
chronological.*

Social Studies Framework

Key Components of a Framework



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Social Studies Framework

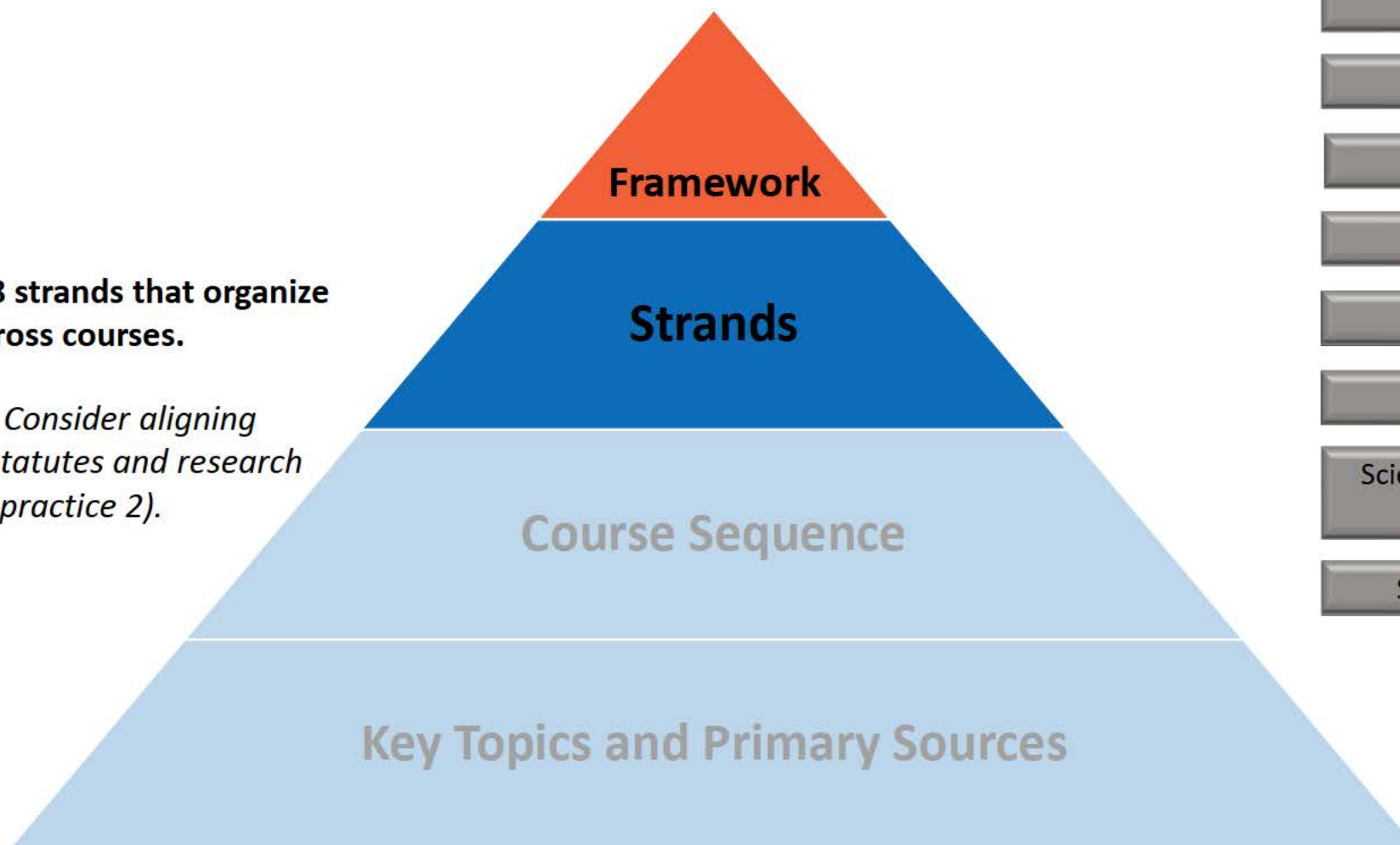
Key Components of a Framework – Current Strands



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There are currently 8 strands that organize content across courses.

Recommendation: Consider aligning strands with current statutes and research (see slide 4, practice 2).



History

Geography

Economics

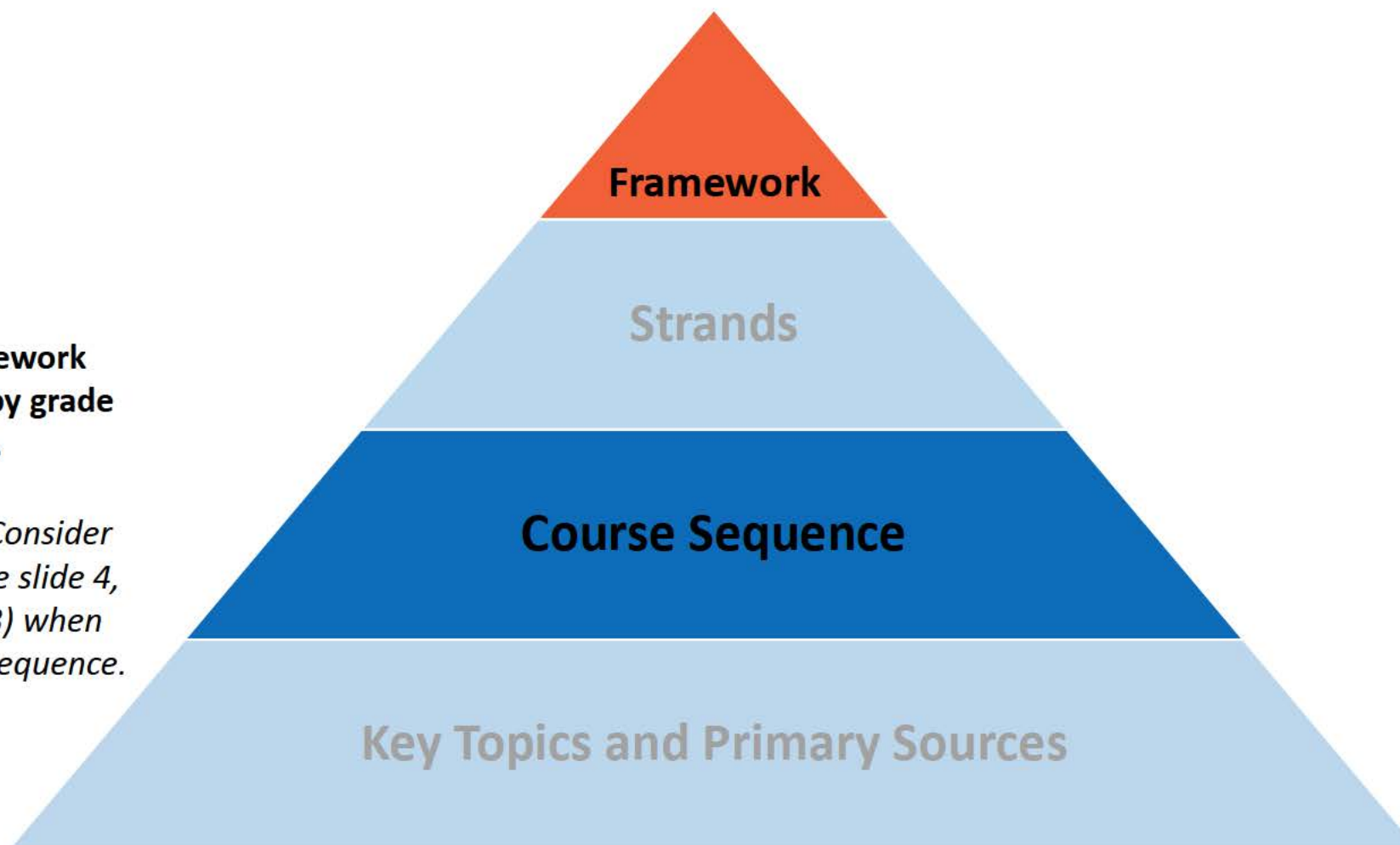
Government

Citizenship

Culture

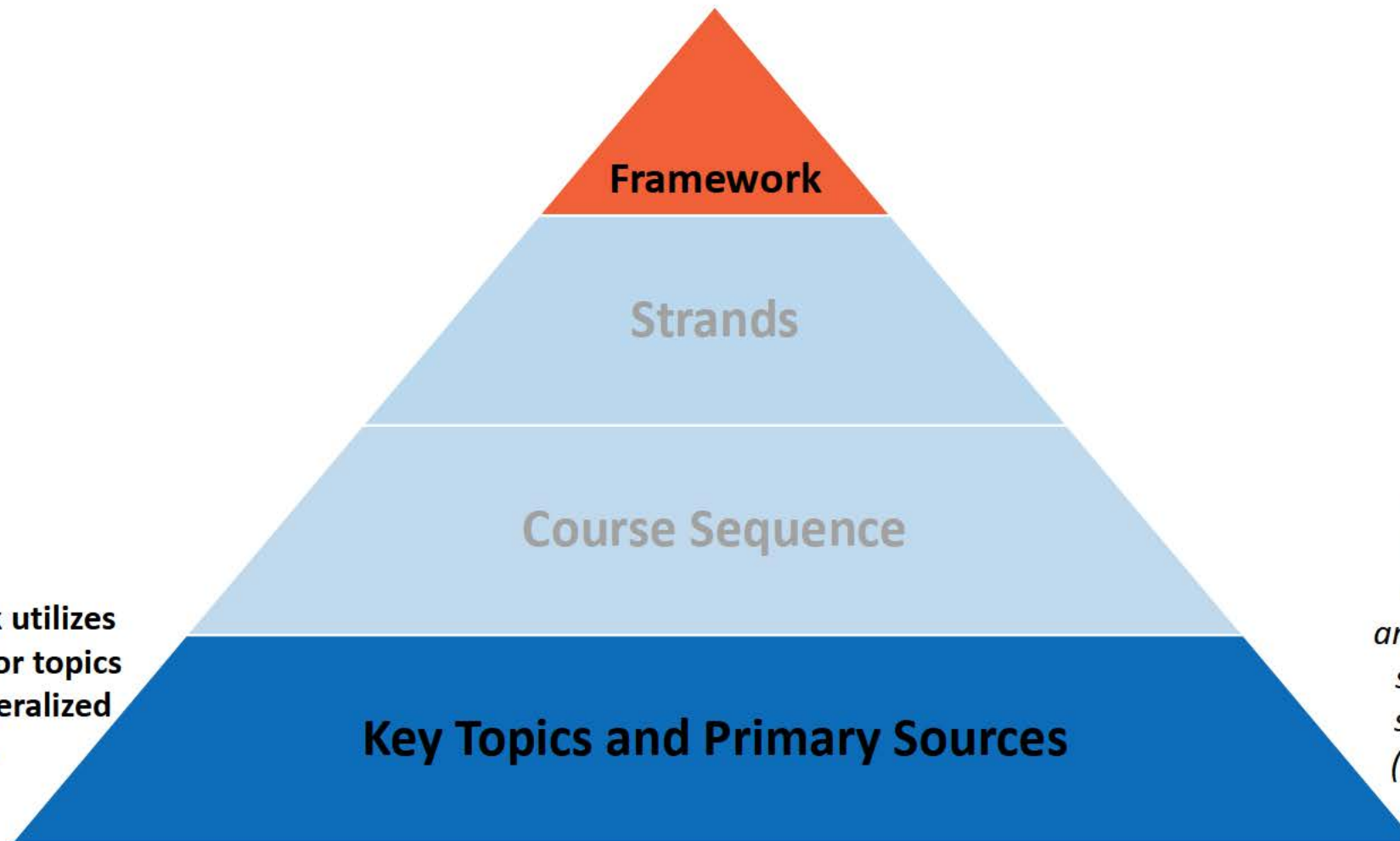
Science, Technology, and
Society

Social Studies Skills



The current framework organizes content by grade level topics.

Recommendation: Consider current research (see slide 4, practices 1, 2 and 3) when establishing course sequence.



The current framework utilizes the strand titles as major topics and then provides generalized TEKS language.

*Recommendation:
Consider providing clarity on key topics and identifying primary sources aligned with statute and research (see slide 4, practices 1,2 and 3).*

What are the next steps in selecting a framework?



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Discussion 1: Consider aligning Texas Social Studies **Strands** with Research and Current Statute.

Discussion 2: Consider current research when establishing a course sequence.

Discussion 3: Identify **Key Topics and Primary Sources** within the Strands to provide direction when drafting specific TEKS and alignment with statutory requirements.

Strands Option 1

Status Quo: Maintain Strand Titles



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History

Geography

Government

Economics

Citizenship

Culture

Science,
Technology,
and Society

Social Studies
Skills

Strands Option 2

Combine Existing Strand Titles and Align with Statutes



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Texas, United States, and World History	Government and Civics	Economics	Geography	Culture and Religion	Technology and Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key people, events, places, and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of, ability to, and appreciation of civics and the U.S. form of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasis on free enterprise system and its benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Places, features, and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art, architecture, writings, and religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key inventions, technology and their impact
Required content in statute including <i>informed American patriotism</i> , the <i>harmful effects of Communist Ideology</i> , and the use of specific <i>primary sources</i> may be integrated into multiple strands as appropriate.					

Strand Titles Option 3

Create New Strands Aligned with Statutes



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What are the next steps in selecting a framework?



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Discussion 1: Consider aligning Texas Social Studies **Strands** with Research and Current Statute.

Discussion 2: Consider current research when establishing a course sequence.

Discussion 3: Identify **Key Topics and Primary Sources** within the Strands to provide direction when drafting specific TEKS and alignment with statutory requirements.

Course Sequence Option 1

Status Quo: Maintain Course Sequence



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K
Self, Home,
and Family

1st
School and
Community

2nd
Community,
State, and
Nation

3rd
People Who
Made an
Impact

*Practice 1: K – 2 Lacks content
focused on teaching of history.*

4th
TX History

5th
US History

*Practice 2: Topics are presented in
isolation , without layering across
grades.*

*Practice 3: Content is not
chronological.*

6th
World Cultures

7th
TX History

8th
US History
(thru civil war)

Course Sequence Option 2



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Consider a course sequence based on the starting point sequence as directed by the SBOE in September 2022 meeting. Enhancements include improving K-2nd history coverage and offering some layering of topics in chronological order in grades 3rd-5th with a repeated depth of study in grades 6th–8th.

K – 2nd

Stories of America and Texas:
Foundational People, Events, Places and Ideas

*Practice 1: K – 2 Content
focused on teaching of history.*

3rd

Road to the
Republic

4th

America's
Journey from
Settlers to
Superpower

5th

From Frontier
to Leader: The
Story of Texas
in America

ancient to modern

*Practice 2: Layered
topics are presented
within the grade level
bands.*

*Practice 3: Content is
chronological within
grade bands.*

6th

Road to the
Republic

7th

America's
Journey from
Settlers to
Superpower

8th

From Frontier
to Leader: The
Story of Texas
in America

ancient to modern

3x3x3 Model

3 grades (K-2nd) build the
foundation of the stories of
America and Texas.

3 grades (3rd-5th) present a
survey of topics with a layered
and chronological approach
connecting world, U.S., and
Texas history.

3 grades (6th-8th) a deeper
and broader dive into the
topic from previous grade
bands.

Legend

	Texas History
	United States History
	World History

Course Sequence Option 3



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Consider improving K-2nd history coverage and create a layered & chronological sequence in grades 3rd-7th to synthesize a culminating study of Texas history in 8th grade.

K – 2nd

Stories of America and Texas:
Foundational People, Events, Places and Ideas

*Practice 1: K – 2 Content
focused on teaching of history.*

3rd

World

The Roots of
Western
Civilization

4th

World

The Rise of
Western
Civilization

5th

United States

From Sea to
Shining Sea: The
Founding of
America

6th

United States

From Colonies to a
Country: America's
Journey in the
World

7th

United States

The Emergence
of a Superpower

ancient to modern

*Practice 2: Layered
topics are presented
within and across the
grade levels.*

*Practice 3: Content is
chronological within and
across grades.*

8th

Texas

From Independence to
Influence

ancient to modern

3x5x1 Model

3 grades (K-2nd) build the foundation of the stories of America and Texas.

5 grades (3rd-7th) present a deep dive into topics with a layered and chronological approach connecting world, U.S., and Texas history.

1 grade (8th) synthesizes all prior content by diving deeply into the history of Texas as a leader in the nation and world.

Legend	
	Texas History
	United States History
	World History

What are the next steps in selecting a framework?



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Discussion 1: Clearly Define Texas Social Studies **Strands**

Discussion 2: Decide on Social Studies **Course Sequence** Aligned to Research

Discussion 3: Identify **Key Topics and Primary Sources** within the Strands to provide direction when drafting specific TEKS and alignment with statutory requirements.

Key Topics and Primary Sources



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Committee Discussion

Social Studies Ad Hoc Committee

SBOE Report – Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2025 - Continued



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Members Present:

Aaron Kinsey, *Chair*; Marisa Perez-Diaz, *Member*; Julie Pickren, *Member*; and Audrey Young, *Member*

Meeting Minutes:

I. Committee Chair's Opening Remarks

- a. Chair Kinsey convened the Ad Hoc Committee and provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda and reminded members of the assigned charges, including Committee description, members, meetings and goals.

II. Committee Presentation

- a. Chair Kinsey introduced TEA staff to begin the presentation.
- b. TEA Staff updated members of the Committee with research on effective practices. Members offered local examples of advanced level instructional materials adopted that led to multiple benefits for all students, including Gifted and Talented as well as Special Needs students. Members asked questions related to the practice of scaffolding and the practice of introducing new content in chronological order but also content appropriate to ensure knowledge retention.
- c. TEA Staff provided Social Studies Frameworks from four states across the country: Louisiana, Tennessee, Florida, and Alabama. Information provided showed inconsistency of practices across states in Social Studies Frameworks for other states. Members asked TEA Staff if more information could be collected relating to when each state implemented these Frameworks and staff indicated they would gather more information. Other Members indicated it would be interesting to understand how success is being measured in these states versus how Texas measures success. TEA Staff shared that strands have different names in each state, for example Florida's strand on Holocaust Education. TEA Staff went on to say it is difficult to identify chronological learning based on other state's strands. Another Member noted the state of Alabama having also added Holocaust Studies. Members discussed a special topics course could be considered for Holocaust studies. One Member asked about national standards. TEA Staff indicated that a national organization provides standards but alignment with Texas statute would need to be considered. One Member emphasized the importance of how to approach learning at lower levels and would like to ensure subject matter experts are allowed to make recommendations on TEKS and the opportunity to connect students with their local history.
- d. TEA Staff presented information related to the Key Components of a Framework: Strands, Course Sequence, and Key Topics and Primary Sources. Three Options were presented to the Committee: 1. Status Quo (8 current strands); 2. Existing Strands Aligned with Statutes; and 3. Create Your Own. Members discussed skills aligned with strands. For example, learning to read a map, identifying cardinal directions and layering those skills across strands. One Member voiced concern with the list of statutory primary sources and their level of difficulty and the consideration of teacher preparation for more complex subjects. A Member commented on the opportunity to align with Civics Academies for teacher training per SB 3. Another Member indicated it was a good idea to combine Social Studies skills with Geography. Further discussion among all Members occurred about the subject of Communism and its content being applicable across more than one strand, such as Government and Economics. Further discussion by Members regarding Course Sequence focused on aligning with state statute, obtaining practitioner feedback, closing academic learning gaps between grades and noting the need to prevent the introduction of concepts once and students never revisiting the information again. TEA Staff commented that the practice of "layering" will provide students with the context they need for retention, allowing students to go deeper from one grade to the next. Discussion among the Members regarding the appropriate percentage of U.S. History across all grades was discussed and a request was made for percentages to be determined going forward. When discussing Key Topics and Primary Sources, TEA Staff shared statutory references with Members and highlighted recent legislation passed during the 2025 session. *Continued...*

**The Committee will not vote but rather provide a report to the State Board of Education.*

Social Studies Ad Hoc Committee

SBOE Report – Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2025 - Continued



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Meeting Minutes – Continued

III. Committee Discussion

- a. Members of the Committee discussed the timeline by which certain actions should be taken such as the adoption of a Framework, determination of Content Advisors and workgroup meetings. A Member noted that recently passed legislation requires review and revision of the Social Studies TEKS by July 31, 2026. Some Members referenced the SBOE Process Guide to select Content Advisors and name workgroups. One Member noted that 9 Content Advisors will be selected, of which 7 will be named by the SBOE and 2 by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Emphasis on the condensed timeline for making decisions and approving participants will be necessary. Members agreed that the full board will need to consider the adoption of a Framework, Content Advisors, and Work Groups at the September SBOE Meeting. Committee members agreed to meet prior to Thursday to agree upon the report to be presented to the COFB.

IV. Committee Recommendations

- a. Members of the Committee agreed to recommend to the Committee of the Full Board a Social Studies Framework based on a combination with existing titles and align with statutes (Option #2 – 6 strands): Texas, U.S., and World History; Government and Civics; Economics; Geography; Culture and Religion; and Technology and Innovation.
- b. Members of the Committee agreed to recommend to the Committee of the Full Board a Social Studies Framework with a Course Sequence based on the starting point as directed by the SBOE in September 2022 meeting including enhancements to improve K-2nd grade history coverage and offering some layering of topics in chronological order in grades 3rd through 5th with a repeated depth of study in grades 6th through 8th.
- c. The Ad Hoc Committee on Social Studies Framework agreed to report out to the Committee of the Full Board on Thursday, June 26, 2027.