

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY**  
**INFORMATIONAL REPORT PRESENTATION ON**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES 6 FOR REGULAR STATUS**

June 24, 2024

**Background Information**

During the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, Maryland State Department of Education convened a multidisciplinary group to draft a new framework for the Social Studies 6 (SS6) and Social Studies 7 (SS7) courses. The resulting SS6-7 framework is a two-year World Human Geography course described by the course overview as follows:

*Grades 6 and 7 social studies is a two-year experience in which students employ geographic, economic, civic, and historical tools to understand how big geographic questions link the past to the present. Grade 6 and 7 social studies builds on the elementary social studies courses by aligning a progression of skills and student understanding of civics, geography, economics, and history. This two-year sequence ensures that students understand the global context for the events they will study in Middle School United States History as well as establish a foundation for launching their high school experience in Modern World History. Exploration of each topic should start with an examination of how location affects the events, ideas, and individuals being investigated. In addition, students should understand the broader historical context for each topic. Significant opportunities exist within the framework to integrate claim construction, evidence evaluation, and argumentative writing so that grades 6 and 7 scaffold to support student success on the middle school assessment administered at the end of grade 8.*

The framework for Grades 6 and 7 are organized around a series of big questions related to enduring geographic understandings that link student investigation of the past and present. According to the MSDE Course Overview, the four enduring geographic understandings are:

- **Movement:** People, goods, and ideas move across the planet through migration, trade, transportation, and communication networks.
- **Human Systems:** Humans develop spatial interactions, land use and settlement patterns in the creation of economic, social, political, and cultural systems that connect and divide people across multiple scales.
- **Human Interactions with the Environment:** Human and environmental systems are interdependent. Humans modify the Earth at various scales to meet wants and needs, and also adapt to long- and short-term changes in environmental systems.
- **Place and Region:** The physical and human attributes that make a specific location, or place, unique. The shared attributes that link places into coherent and distinct areas, or regions.

In January of 2024, the Maryland State Department of Education approved the new frameworks for SS6-7 and the HCPS Office of Social Sciences convened a multidisciplinary curriculum team consisting of current middle school social science teachers, high school teachers with experience in teaching the College Board AP Human Geography course that is closely aligned with the geographic thinking perspectives inherent in the new SS6-7 frameworks, and a Library/Media Specialist to create a new Social Science 6 curriculum aligned to the new framework. The team

evaluated the SS6-7 framework and, based on the scope and sequence of the high school AP Human Geography course, sequenced the units to better align and scaffold and spiral geographic thinking skills. The team then wrote a curriculum for the first four units, which will comprise the HCPS Social Science 6 course with plans to convene a similar group in SY24-25 to create the second half of the course for Social Science 7. This is to align our HCPS curriculum with the MSDE frameworks.

This course is intended to replace the current Social Science 6 course, Modern World Geography.

The units for SS6 are as follows:

1. Geographic Thinking
  - a. Geographic Thinking
  - b. Place and Region
  - c. Movement
  - d. Human Systems
  - e. Human Interaction with the Environment
2. Human Interaction with the Environment
  - a. The Neolithic Revolution and River Valley Civilizations
  - b. Industrialization and Urbanization
  - c. The Green Revolution
  - d. Climate Change and Climate Resilience
3. Human Systems- Political Structures
  - a. Early State Formation
  - b. Theocracies
  - c. Democratic Revolutions
  - d. Authoritarian Regimes
4. Human Systems- Economic Systems
  - a. Networks of Exchange
  - b. Capitalism
  - c. Centralized Planning in the Twentieth Century
  - d. Globalization

**Discussion:**

This presentation provides an overview of the background, history, and development of this course, to align with the new MSDE framework for Social Science 6-7.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Schools recommends the Board of Education approve Social Science 6 for regular status for the 2024-2025 school year.