

Human Geography 7

Board of Education Presentation

June 23, 2025

Heather Kutcher

Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Erin Lange

Supervisor of Social Studies

Request

- The Office of Social Studies requests that the Human Geography 7 curriculum be approved by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent for implementation in SY25-26.



- **Requirements:**
 - With the full implementation of Human Geography 6 for SY24-25, Human Geography 7 is necessary to complete the sequence and to align to the MSDE Social Studies Frameworks (per COMAR 13A.04.08.01).
 - Framework-aligned curriculum to complete full Middle School Social Studies sequence is required for students to be prepared for Social Studies 8 MCAP.
 - Current Ancient World History 7 curriculum is not aligned with State requirements of Social Studies 8 MCAP

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** General concern was raised around the shift to Human Geography and the lack of teaching of explicit geographical information/facts.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Human Geography synthesizes knowledge of physical geography through the lens of how physical geography impacts and is impacted by complex human systems.
 - Additional explicit teaching of physical geography knowledge and skills is being incorporated into Unit 1 of Human Geography 6 to address knowledge gaps.

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** General concern was raised regarding ensuring balance and diverse perspectives, especially around topics that have CRT.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Critical Race Theory is not taught.
 - We have included and added additional student voice and choice assignments to encourage students to explore and share multiple, diverse perspectives and to provide balance. Examples of these opportunities include but are not limited to:
 - One-pager or video on EQ "Can human systems prevent the movement of disease?"
 - Hexagonal Thinking Challenge and presentation on EQ "Is migration inevitable?"
 - Philosophical Chairs debate or persuasive essay (CER) on EQ "Is migration inevitable?"
 - Treaty of Paris Dinner Party on EQ "What creates conflict and cooperation among and between groups of humans?"
 - Public Service Announcements on EQ "Who are American Indians today?"
 - Triangle Diagram on Focus Question "How have religions influenced human communities and the formation of societies and empires?"
 - Mind map of key vocabulary related to EQ "How do religious systems move and spread?"

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** The experience about Colonial and Native Interactions is written with CRT ideology, which creates a bias that supports an anti-American portrayal of our history.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Critical Race Theory is not taught.
 - The entirety of Unit 4 is the Project-Based Learning Unit. In it, students will choose a local Native American tribe to research and tell their story through the context of the American story, including researching how Natives lived before European contact, how they interacted with and changed as a result of interactions with Europeans, and how the tribe has contributed to the rich history and diverse present of the United States today.
 - Students will give and receive structured feedback. There is also opportunity for expert feedback to ensure diverse perspectives guide the PBL unit throughout.

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** There needs to be a list of facts and vocabulary that should be covered in each unit.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Creating an exhaustive list would move beyond the purpose of curriculum writing and into the realm of daily lesson planning.
 - Indicators and objectives in the framework already serve as statements of the factual knowledge and understandings students need to successfully engage with the Essential Questions.
 - Teachers plan regular formative assessments to check for progress toward mastery. Monitoring student learning and supporting students in monitoring their own learning are key components of Danielson Domain 3d (teacher evaluations).

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** The inclusion of climate change as a cause of migration is inaccurate, not factually supported, is another form of CRT, and a logical fallacy.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - An activity has been added to the overall experience in which students will engage in a Philosophical Chairs debate, allowing students to bring in additional perspectives and resources for consideration. Students have the opportunity to formulate a claim related to the compelling question "Is migration inevitable?"
 - **Added language included in Teacher Background Information:** *It is important to recognize that our students will bring a wide array of ideas and background knowledge to the classroom. While our curriculum is carefully aligned with state frameworks, the conversations and perspectives students engage in at home and in their communities may vary significantly. Therefore, we encourage you to foster a respectful learning environment that acknowledges and values all perspectives. It is our responsibility to equip students with critical thinking skills to engage with a broad range of ideas, preparing them for thoughtful and informed dialogue on these complex and often sensitive topics.*

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** Experience on 21st Century migration is misleading and dishonest about the reality of illegal immigration into the US over the past four years.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - In Focus Question 3 "What are the range of responses to address 21st century migration patterns?," students analyze primary and secondary source documents/personal narratives from countries around the world, including the United States.
 - Under the category "Restrictions," students examine excerpts from US legislation from 2000 to today. This supports the concept that there are legal and illegal immigration pathways.

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** Language in PowerPoint overview of major world religions does not include explicit language about the Christian beliefs of one creator God and does not accurately depict the trinitarian nature of the religion.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Background information and PowerPoint referenced in Board member feedback have been adjusted to include Christian belief a singular "creator God."

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** Language in Teacher Background Information, as proposed in multiple iterations to the Board, includes language that teachers "should avoid the use of resources that do not align with the EQ" or "does not deviate from the unit's EQ." Board member expressed concern that this language restricts teachers from using additional resources.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - Teachers have always had freedom to supplement curricular resources, but must align their instructional experiences to purpose set forth by EQs.
 - Negative language has been removed. Teacher guidance states "[e]nsure all materials and purpose remain aligned with the unit's essential and focus questions."

BOE Feedback

- **BOE Feedback:** Teacher-facing language in the experience on Colonial and Native Interactions is assumptive and emotionally charged.
- **HCPS Response:**
 - The identified language of concern has been removed.

Request

- The Office of Social Studies requests that the Human Geography 7 curriculum be approved by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent for implementation in SY25-26.



- **Requirements:**
 - With the full implementation of Human Geography 6 for SY24-25, Human Geography 7 is necessary to complete the sequence and to align to the MSDE Social Studies Frameworks (per COMAR 13A.04.08.01).
 - Framework-aligned curriculum to complete full Middle School Social Studies sequence is required for students to be prepared for Social Studies 8 MCAP.
 - Current Ancient World History 7 curriculum is not aligned with State requirements of Social Studies 8 MCAP

Questions
