Promoting History-Social Science in your District’s LCAP and Accountability Dashboard Report

by Michelle Herczog & Yvonne Contreras

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California has recently instituted a new accountability system built on multiple measures. Educators use these eight state priorities to determine local educational agency (LEA) and school progress toward meeting the needs of their students. The measures reflect factors that contribute to a quality education, including high school graduation rates, college/career readiness, academic indicators on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CASPP), English learner (EL) progress, suspension rates, and parent engagement.

The question for the history-social science community is how can schools across the state strengthen history-social science education and meet the goals of the new framework with the new accountability system in place? This article provides an explanation of the new state accountability system and offers insights for including history-social science as part of a well-rounded education for all students in district Local Control Accountability Plans and Dashboard Reports.

An excellent resource for understanding the direct impact and importance of history-social science on the state’s accountability system can be found in a special edition of the Journal of the California Council for the Social Studies entitled How do we Measure Student Performance in Social Studies?1
Jim Hill, Guest Editor of this edition provides this introduction:

The new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) method of school finance has changed funding in California’s K-12 educational system. Districts and schools will now have to report in specified ways their funding strategies to improve student achievement and engagement. This can affect all students as well as targeted English learners, socio-economically disadvantaged, educationally disadvantaged, foster youth, and homeless youth. The goals of LCFF are to enhance and improve the quality of teaching and learning locally, and to focus in particular on helping students become college and career ready.

District personnel can use student outcomes from measurable social studies performance activities as evidence that they are meeting their reporting requirements.

The California Council for the Social Studies is providing here a number of social studies performance/active learning activities in history, geography, economics, and civics, or a mix of several of these disciplines, using content and skills from the:

- California History-Social Science Standards,
- California Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
- 21st Century Skills for College and Career Readiness,
- College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, and
- Next Generation Science Standards.

Oriented around college and career readiness, districts can use these learning activities to meet their specific achievement goals as defined by the requirements of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Districts would report achievement results as specified in this issue as part of their annual LCAP report. In many cases, LCFF funding can support professional development to help educators expand their knowledge and skills as they effectively implement these activities. Various organizations, including non-profit and state funded, offer professional development opportunities to help teachers increase content knowledge and improve their practices to improve student learning in the classroom.

The California Council for the Social Studies supports active, inquiry-driven, and performance based learning. When students do social studies performance activities, they practice skills and knowledge from various social studies disciplines. Students learn democracy and citizen roles by doing them and by engaging with significant issues. Doing social studies in this way provides for the practice and performance of English Language Arts Common Core Standards and in particular, the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards in Common Core. When students apply the design of the Inquiry Arc of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards in these activities they are also learning how to be engaged citizens.
The Local Control Funding Formula – What is it and how is it different from previous school funding?

The local control funding formula (LCFF) was enacted in 2013–14, and it replaced the previous kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12) finance system which had been in existence for roughly 40 years. For school districts and charter schools, the LCFF establishes base, supplemental, and concentration grants in place of the myriad of previously existing K–12 funding streams, including revenue limits, general-purpose block grants, and most of the 50-plus state categorical programs that existed at the time. The intent of LCFF is to provide more flexibility for local schools and districts to prioritize funding for the areas of need deemed important to their school community.

Local Control Accountability Plan – What is it and how is it developed?

The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. It should include input from school staff, families, and community members as a collaborative effort. The LCAP provides an opportunity for schools and districts to share their stories of how, what, and why programs and services are selected to meet their local needs and the budgets needed to achieve their goals. County offices of education review and approve LCAPS from their school districts.

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<th>State and Local Priorities</th>
<th>History-Social Science Impact</th>
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<td><strong>Priority 1:</strong> Basic Services and Conditions at Schools</td>
<td><strong>History-Social Science as part of a broad course of study legislated in California Education Code 51210 for grades 1-6 and 51220 for grades 7-12, is a basic condition of learning required for all students. Besides the important learning of the people, places, and events in history, the social sciences focus on the disciplinary habits of mind, economic and geographic principles as well as civic competencies need to prepare all young people for college, career, and civic life. Therefore, it is vital for all students to have access to high quality history-social science instruction and instructional materials aligned to the state standards and newly adopted History-Social Science Framework. Highly qualified teachers, professional learning, and resources are key to achieving this priority.</strong></td>
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<td>• Rate of teacher assignment relates to equity, professional learning, resources, and teachers.</td>
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<td>• Students have access to standards-aligned instructional materials.</td>
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<td>• Facilities are in good repair as they relate to culture, climate, and resource alignment.</td>
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<td><strong>Priority 2:</strong> Implementation of State Academic Standards</td>
<td><strong>The California History-Social Science Standards combined with the 2016 History-Social Science Framework and supported by high quality professional development and instructional</strong></td>
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<td>Implementation of academic content and performance standards adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.</td>
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resources directly impacts implementation of California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and the California History-Social Science Standards.

Civic learning (and the other social sciences) naturally supports the college and career readiness skills and abilities called for by the Common Core State Standards, especially in English language arts. For example, the new standards prioritize comprehension and use of complex texts, and our Constitution and Bill of Rights are excellent content for such skill development. The new standards also call for the capacity to analyze a problem and to communicate purposefully, both orally and in writing, which can be achieved through simulations of democratic processes such as classroom mock trials. Including history-social science teachers in Common Core State Standards professional learning experiences can facilitate integration of civic learning and the Common Core.5

Priority 3: Parent Engagement
Efforts to seek parent input in decision making, promotion of parent participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and special need subgroups as relates to culture and climate, equity, and family and community.

Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on youth’s achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of a student’s success in school.6

Service-Learning, civic learning programs, National History Day, and Model United Nations are among the many interactive history-social science initiatives that engage parents and families in students’ education.

Priority 4: Student Achievement
Performance on standardized tests, score on Academic Performance Index, share of pupils that are college and career ready, share of English learners that become English proficient, English learner reclassification rate, share of pupils that pass Advanced Placement exams with 3 or higher, share of pupils determined prepared for college by the Early Assessment Program as

With no current state required assessment for history-social science, assessment tasks developed by publishers, programmers, and teachers provide valuable data to measure student achievement and inform instruction.

Furthermore, a great number of research scholars including E.D. Hirsch, Jr.7 and Daniel Willingham8 point to the direct impact of content
relates to assessment, curriculum, equity, and instruction.

learning on literacy. Literacy skills are strengthened when they are contextualized in content knowledge. Similarly, content knowledge is strengthened when students can engage literacy skills to comprehend text.

In addition, the American public and business community are keenly interested in youth developing the competencies necessary to thrive in a changing global economy. Civic learning not only enhances knowledge of economic and political processes, but supports college and career readiness through opportunities for youth to apply academic concepts in real-world settings, work collaboratively in teams, and engage with professional role models.⁹

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<th>Priority 5: Student Engagement</th>
<th>History-Social Science, and civic learning in particular, beginning in elementary and middle school, with a focus on civic responsibility reduces students’ likelihood of dropping out of high school.¹⁰ Courses that require community service and participation in student government have been found to predict high school graduation and college attendance and success.¹¹ More than 80% of students who drop out indicate that they would have been more likely to stay in school if they had more opportunities to participate in experiential learning.¹²</th>
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<td>School attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school dropout rates, high school dropout rates, high school graduations rates.</td>
<td>Civic learning builds a positive school climate, which in turn has a positive impact on a wide array of outcomes for students, ranging from academic achievement to personal character. Research shows that providing opportunities to engage in civic learning teaches the importance of community (both within the school and more broadly). Respectful dialogue about controversial issues is foundational to a positive school climate. The benefits of civic learning in one classroom can help shape the norms of other classrooms and the school more broadly.¹³</td>
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<td>Priority 6: School Climate</td>
<td>Priority 7: Access to a Broad Course of Study</td>
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<td>Student suspension rates, pupil expulsion rates, other local measures including surveys of pupils, parents and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.</td>
<td>Student enrollment in a broad course of study that includes all of the subject areas described</td>
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As noted in California Education Code 51210 and 51220, History-Social Science is a required course.
Eight State and Local Priority Areas guide districts in their work to develop Local Control Accountability Plans. Including a rigorous and engaging history-social science program as part of a well-rounded education for all students helps schools and districts meet these priorities in powerful ways. Note: Two additional state priorities (not shown) are designated for county offices of education.

What is the California School Dashboard?

The California School Dashboard (or the Dashboard) is an online tool that shows parents and communities how schools and districts are performing on academic indicators, graduation rates, and other measures of student success, based on the eight priority areas of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) previously described.

Six state indicators described by the California Department of Education (see below) now measure school district performance. Performance will be positively impacted when districts intentionally include history-social science in their instructional programs to meet the state priorities above.

1. **Chronic Absenteeism Indicator** (will be added in Spring 2018)
   Based on the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) guidelines, students who miss more than 10 percent of the academic year are deemed chronically absent.

2. **Suspension Rate Indicator**
   This indicator is based on the number of students who were suspended anytime during the school year.

3. **English Learner Progress Indicator**
   This indicator is based on the number of English learners (ELs) and long-term ELs who made progress on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or who were reclassified as English proficient.

4. **Graduation Rate Indicator**
   This indicator applies only to schools and districts that serve high school students and is based on the number of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years. Students who earn a Special Education Certificate of Completion or a general equivalency diploma are not counted.

5. **College/Career Indicator** (will be added in Spring 2018)
   Like the Graduation Rate Indicator, this College/Career Indicator (CCI) applies only to schools and districts that serve high school students and is based on the percentage of students who are prepared for college or career when they graduate from high school. To learn about all of

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**Priority 8: Outcomes in a Broad Course of Study**

Student outcomes in the subject areas described in *Education Code* section 51210 and subdivisions (a) to (l), inclusive, of *Education Code* section 51220, as applicable as relates to curriculum, equity, and professional learning.

At the time of publication of this journal, there is no required state assessment of History-Social Science in California. Yet, there are a number of high quality history-social science programs and initiatives that provide ample performance assessment tasks and rubrics to measure student outcomes. A complete description of these can be found in the Social Studies Review Journal of the California Council for the Social Studies entitled *How do we Measure Student Performance in Social Studies*?
the measures used to determine if students are prepared, please see the CDE College/Career Indicator Web page available at: http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/cci.asp.

6. Academic Indicator: English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics
This indicator is based on performance on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and mathematics for students in grades three through eight and how far the average student is from meeting the standard.

A school’s performance is disclosed on a five-by-five table that recognizes the status of each indicator but also recognizes a change in status from year to year. The performance level (color) is the point where the Status level and Change level meet. Hence, schools will be recognized for achievement and growth.

Example: This dashboard view shows how a “Medium” status level for graduation and an “Increase” in change will receive an overall performance level of Green.

Conclusion

It is abundantly clear that history-social science needs to be an integral part of every child’s education, every year, from pre-school to grade 12. Federal legislation enacted through No Child Left Behind resulted in a marginalization of the social studies across the country and across California. Our state’s current accountability system is not intended to have the same consequence – it provides ample opportunity to maintain and strengthen high quality instruction in history, geography, economics, and civics for all students.

Given our current political, social, and economic landscape, it is imperative, now, more than ever that resources be dedicated to prepare all our students to be engaged in the civic life of our nation. The newly adopted California History-Social Science Framework clearly states this as its fundamental goal. By understanding the virtue of local control and recognizing the necessity of including the social studies as a priority for schools and districts, school leaders can truly impact the course and future of our American democracy.

Endnotes


2 ibid

3 California Legislative Information, California Education Code 51210. http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=51210.&lawCode=EDC


