
Social Studies Assessment Transition Plan 2014-15

The Background:

In July 2013, the SBOE approved a new set of social studies standards for K-12 to be implemented in the 2014-15 school year. The new standards represent a dramatic change in both the rigor and the content covered in each grade level. The current Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) social studies Achievement and End of Course tests do not adequately measure the new standards, and thus the department is in the process of developing new assessments that align to the new standards. The new assessments will be piloted in the 2014-15 school year.

During the 2014-15 school year, the department proposes to pilot the new social studies assessments in lieu of administering the summative social studies TCAP. Districts will not receive scores from the pilot assessments. Social studies TCAP tests will be reinstated in the 2015-16 school year. This item is being brought before the board on first and final reading in January 2014 in order for the department to communicate with districts about the transition plan in a timely manner.

Social studies will continue to be a part of the K-12 school curriculum and high school graduation requirements. Per SBOE Rule 0520-01-03-.05, districts must continue to offer social studies courses in each grade in K-8, and include the following in the high school curriculum: U.S. History and Geography, World History and Geography, Economics, and Government. Teachers will begin using the new social studies standards in the 2014-15 school year.

Districts would not be required to administer state social studies assessments in 2014-15. In 2015-16, state social studies testing would resume and districts will be required to administer the new social studies TCAP assessments, including Achievement Tests and End of Course exams.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.