

To: Oak Norton
From: Lynne Greenwood 
Subject: Addressing U.S. Constitution Issues in Social Studies Core Curricula
Date: March 8, 2010

I appreciated the opportunity to visit with you at the board meeting last Friday. After our visit, I felt a need to provide you with pertinent information regarding your concerns. I wish to reaffirm that your concerns along with all individual and group concerns, received during the adoption period of the K-2 Social Studies Core Curriculum, were reviewed in depth and are currently on a list for appropriate grade level implementation, as we precede with social studies curricula revisions.

During November 2009, seven public hearings regarding the Social Studies Curriculum were held throughout the State. USOE received written comments from you (November 25, 2009) and others concerning the teaching of the Constitution. A committee reviewed all comments and suggestions submitted during the public hearings, as well as all written comments/e-mails submitted throughout the process. Each written comment was examined and received an individual response from the USOE Social Studies Specialist.

Because of the comments we received, our department decided to quickly review Utah's 3rd – 12th grade Social Studies Core, as well as national and state standards for when, where, and how the Constitution is being taught. The committee determined that the principles of the Constitution were included in the K-12 Social Studies Core within developmentally appropriate concepts, with a greater emphasis at 5th, 8th, 11th and 12th grades.

Curriculum and Instruction, along with the USOE, is committed to continue to review and strengthen the Utah Social Studies Core curricula. To this end, we are establishing a revision process for 8th grade U.S. History I and 11th grade U.S. History II as it relates to our form of government. We will pay special attention to the inclusion of the concept of "republic" in our materials. Standards relating to the Constitution and the principles that it proclaims will always be a high priority and will receive a stronger emphasis as revisions are enacted.

In support of ongoing imbedding of Constitutional principles, cadres of teachers are currently being selected to create lesson plans for the K-2 Core. Also, teams of grade-level teachers will be preparing activities for Constitution Day. These activities will be shared with Curriculum Directors, Social Studies Specialists, Social Studies organizations, as well as classroom teachers. This information will also be on the UEN and USOE websites.

Again, I want you to know we value your comments and the comments of others in strengthening the principles of the Constitution. We are endeavoring to utilize these comments as key tenets in our revisions of US History courses. We look forward to sharing draft documents with you and others as the work progresses this fall. Hopefully, you can see that we are indeed acting on all comments in an earnest and appropriate manner. Thank you for being such a strong advocate for the Constitution that we all hold so dear.

cc: Assistant Superintendent Brenda Hales