

High School US History Survey Background

August 4-5

During the final meetings of the Social Studies standards workgroup, it became apparent that the group was divided on the issue of U.S. History with regard to the time period that is addressed in the High School standards. The issue is the proposal for the inclusion of 1776-1876 in the High School History Standards, by some members of the U.S. History workgroup. In the current standards, the High School U.S. History standards are based on the time period from 1877 to the present. The workgroup decided that the Department of Education could send a survey to U.S. History teachers in South Dakota to see if 60% of teachers agreed with the inclusion of those standards. The survey responses came back and 58% agreed. Therefore, this did not meet the percentage as required by the workgroup.

October 7

Following this survey, due to the almost even divide on the time period for High School U.S. History standards from both the field and within the standards workgroup, the Department of Education had decided to extend and expand the standards revision process for Social Studies. Therefore, the standards were postponed for presentation to the Board of Education for public hearing and adoption, until the November public hearing. The Department of Education brought together an eleven person workgroup to address the time period issue for High School US History. This workgroup came to a unanimous agreement on how the U.S. History standards should be written along with recommendations for how these standards may be included in courses to meet existing graduation requirements. The compromise was decided, as follows. In the proposed standards, a district can choose one of these two options:

1. Modern History: 1877- present
2. Comprehensive US History: 1776-present

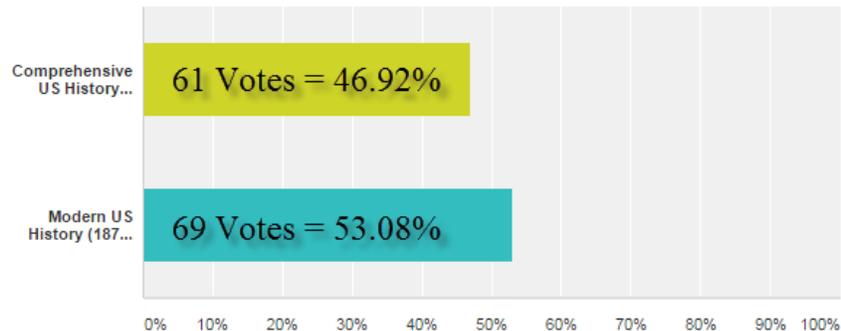
This issue was first presented to the Board of Education on November 17th during the first public hearing for Social Studies standards. At the January 15th meeting, the Board of Education requested that the Department of Education send a survey to all districts to gain more information on this issue and to also encourage districts to include teachers in the decision-making process. The survey content and results can be found on the next page.

High School US History Survey

The US History survey was sent to all school districts in South Dakota on February 6 as a request from the South Dakota Board of Education, with a deadline for superintendents to fill out the survey by March 1, 2015. An email reminder went out to school districts on February 17 with a second email reminder on February 27. Also, follow up phone calls were made on February 27. As of March 5, 130 districts responded to this survey.

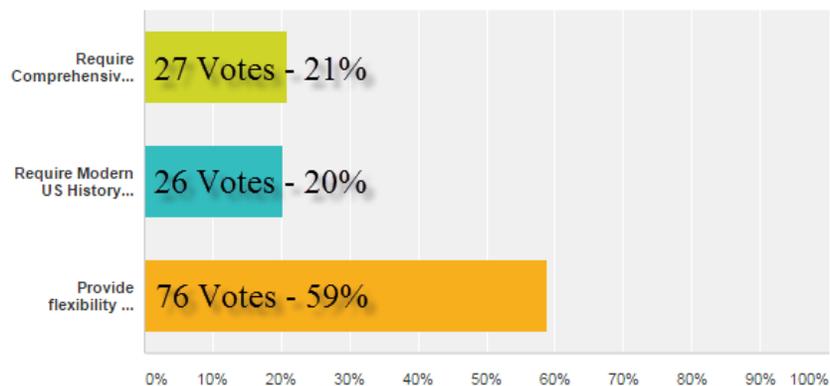
130 school districts provided their preference for how US history should be taught

1. Comprehensive US History (1776-present)
2. Modern US History (1877-present)



129 school districts provided their preference for how US History should be required statewide

1. Require Comprehensive US History (1776 - present)
2. Require Modern US History (1877 - present)
3. Provide flexibility for districts to choose EITHER Modern US History (1877- present OR Comprehensive US History (1776 - present)



129 school districts described how the district arrived at the decision

86% of districts' discussions involved high school teachers, 38% involved middle school teachers, 12% involved curriculum directors, and 74% involved superintendents/principals.