

Michigan Content Standards and Draft Benchmarks

Strand III. Civic Perspective (High School)

Students will use knowledge of American government and politics to make informed decisions about governing their communities.

Knowledge of government enables individuals to define the roles of citizens within a constitutional democracy and to compare the American system of government with other systems. Civic knowledge builds understanding about the exercise of power. With knowledge of government and politics, citizens are equipped to evaluate domestic and international policy and to exert influence in public affairs. Over time and in varying contexts, students construct an increasingly sophisticated civic perspective organized by the following themes:

Standard III.1 Purposes of Government

All students will identify the purposes of national, state, and local governments in the United States, describe how citizens organize government to accomplish their purposes and assess their effectiveness.

All societies establish governments to serve intended purposes. The purposes served by a government and the priorities set have significant consequences for the individual and society. In order to accomplish their purposes, governments organize themselves in different ways.

30-65, 66-91, 100-127, 327, 500, 519, 692-720

Standard III.2 Ideals of American Democracy

All students will explain the meaning and origin of the ideas, including the core democratic values expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other foundational documents of the United States.

American constitutional democracy is founded on a core set of values expressed in the nation's foundational documents. A shared commitment to these values bonds Americans with a common identity and provides social cohesion. Political and legal processes are created to clarify the meaning of values in the American creed and to resolve conflicts among those values.

66-99, 100-127, 128-159, 160-191, 738-741, 742-749, 750-773

Standard III.3 Democracy in Action

All students will describe the political and legal processes created to make decisions, seek consensus, and resolve conflicts in a free society.

In a free society, there are inevitable conflicts that arise from the clash of various interests, perceptions, and beliefs. Responsible citizens learn to confront these conflicts and to work toward resolving them within the boundaries of democratic procedures.

408-442, 444-471, 472-496, 497-531, 532-561, 562-587

Standard III.4 American Government and Politics

All students will explain how American governmental institutions at the local, state, and federal levels provide for the limitation and sharing of power and how the nation's political system provides for the exercise of power.

The American system of government is based on shared power. Citizens who operate effectively within the federal system understand its institutions and how to work within them.

228-229, 230-257, 258-285, 286-317, 318-347, 348-377, 408-440, 692-720

Standard III.5 American Government and World Affairs

All students will understand how the world is organized politically, the formation of American foreign policy, and the roles the United States plays in the international arena.

The United States is part of an interconnected world which requires citizens to understand how the world is organized politically, the process by which foreign policy is formulated, and the roles that our nation plays in the international arena.

626-627, 628-663, 664-691