

*Monroe Township Civic Education  
District Social Studies Update  
December 19, 2018*

**PENDING CIVIC ED BILLS** – NJ State Legislature:

**NEW - S2762** - NJCSS bill on Teaching Civics in Middle School (7/3/18)

**NEW - A4376** - Identical NJCSS bill on Teaching Civics in Middle School (9/13/18)

**A1095** - Civics instruction in high school as part of the 2 year requirement in U.S. History (1/9/18)

**A 884** - Instructional mandate on contributions of veterans and history of patriotic holidays (1/9/18)

**A 578** - Geography (1/9/18)

**A308** - Requirement to pass Citizenship Test as a high school graduation requirement (1/9/18)

**SYNOPSIS S2762:**

*Requires board of education to provide civics instruction in middle schools and requires DOE to provide funding to NJ Center for Civic Education at Rutgers to help prepare civics teachers.*

**DISTRICT:** (courses/activities, C & I):

**1. The following HS civics courses are offered 2018-2019:**

- a. Civic Action in Democracy – 2.5 credits
- b. Intro to Law – 2.5 credits
- c. Constitutional Law – 2.5 credits
- d. Civics – SPED students

**2. Civic Education: Our curriculum: NJSLS and NATIONAL C3 STANDARDS DRIVEN**

The study of civics is infused K-12 across the continuum in all Social Studies classes. The National C3 Standards (College, Career and Civic Life) provides guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics and the study of Government.

**3. K-9 Social Studies Curriculum Mapping-** A highly skilled district K-9 team of Social Studies teachers collaborated during the Summer of 2018 to review and analyze the NJSLS:SS, CCSS and C3 Standards. Framed around horizontal and vertical articulation, teachers scripted and mapped new grade level Scope and Sequences in preparation for the task of writing/updating our K-9 Social Studies curricula during the Summer of 2019.

**4. MT League of Women Voters** – On-going partnership and collaboration with League members; host Member/Student annual Voter Reg drives.

**5. MT Historical Preservation Commission** – On-going partnership; HS Essay Writing contest; NEW FIELD EXPERIENCE- **MONROE DAY!**  
Elementary Student Field Trip (pilot team) – Dey Farm Spring 2019.

6. **NEW! Civic Education Leadership Series** – MS program for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students – (1) guest speaker/presenter with a career focus on civics and service, engages and shares career experiences with our students. Hosted in the Lecture Hall or PAC – Spring 2018 - Middlesex County Freeholder Director Rios; Fall 2018 - MT Historical Preservation Commission.
7. **Rho Kappa – HS Social Studies Honor Society** – Year 2 – This HS club engages students who have demonstrated high achievement and an interest in the Social Studies, in a wide variety of service-learning experiences in our school and for our community-at-large. (Honor Society GPA and Induction requirements.)
8. **American Legion Post # 6065- Oratorical Contest** – Annual, tiered speaking/oratorical contest for HS students framed around inquiry and communication of knowledge and understanding of topics related to the United States Constitution. Students complete at local, regional and State level contests hosted by members of our American Legion (**Dec 19 MTHS Round #1**).
9. **Model UN** – Model United Nations is an authentic simulation of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council and other multilateral bodies which introduces students to the world of diplomacy, negotiation, and decision making. At Model UN students step into the shoes of ambassadors of countries that are members of the UN, from Argentina to Zimbabwe. The students, known as “delegates”, debate current issues on the organizations’ vast agenda. They prepare draft resolutions, plot strategy, negotiate with supporters and adversaries, resolve conflicts, and navigate the UN’s rules of procedure all in the interest of resolving problems that affect our world and the our global community.
10. **Mock Trial NJ Bar Association**– The NJ Bar Association Foundation conducts Mock Trial programs for grades 3 through HS. Our HS team is able to understand and engage with Constitutional law in scenario-based trials, political and public affairs. Students communicate their ideas and opinions; develop research, writing and trial presentation skills; and understand the value of student leadership and law as a career pursuit. Hosted in New Brunswick by the County Bar Association each year.
11. **Youth and Government** – HS students in YAG put their skills to the test and learn through experience. Students see the legislative process done first-hand by participating as senators, assemblymen, justices, lobbyists, and members of the media in a legislative simulation. Students are able to address issues by writing, debating, and passing legislation all while being in the actual seats of legislators in the NJ State House.
12. **NEW! Upper Elementary Media Centers** – **CIVICS NOOKS** – Grade 3-5 CIVICS NOOKS feature literature/primary & secondary source documents, symbols, historical figures of interest and welcome students to “sit and study a while.” Additional literacy support is available through DESTINY (on-line Media Center digital portal). Civic literacy resource lists are teacher-ready (curriculum embedded).

13. **Voter Registration Drives-** Website portal on district and High School webpages to support voter registration. Our student-driven “drives” are hosted throughout the year and enable students /peers to not only register, but to understand the critical connection between voting and voice in a representative democracy.
14. **National History Bee & National Geography Bee** – Sponsored by National Geographic, all Upper Elementary buildings and our Middle School encourage students to participate in these schoolwide national contests. Districtwide, over 250 Monroe students are among over 10,000 students nationwide to engage in these rigorous, challenging annual competitions.
15. **NEW! MIDDLE SCHOOL CIVICS COURSE** –Targeted for ALL 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Beginning in September 2019 MTMS 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will be scheduled for a MS stand-alone civics and service-learning course in addition to their Social Studies grade level history course . CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT - Summer 2019 with September 2019 roll-out. This will enable our district to proactively to meet future NJ State and DOE mandates.
16. **MS Civics Textbooks-** Piloted then integrated into our grade 8 Social Studies curriculum. Title: Building Citizenship: Civics and Economics (McGraw Hill) prepares middle school students for active citizenship in today’s world. It was developed with an emphasis on cultivating strong reading and writing skills, as well as building critical thinking and historical analysis skills.
17. **NEW! iFALCONCIVICS!**– Launch is planned for January 2019. This web portal will host good news, current events, photographs, club, classroom and Social Studies contest contributions of our K-12 students, districtwide. The goal is to share and disseminate with parents and the community-at-large, our passion for community engagement, collaboration, partnership and character education along with opportunities for service-learning, problem-solving and citizenship.