



BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION  
**Social Studies | AMERICA DECIDES**



**ORGANIZING THEME/TOPIC**

**FOCUS STANDARDS & SKILLS**

**UNIT 1: WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?**

**Suggested Time Frame:**  
 Quarter 1 (3-4 weeks)

**To what extent does the environment, or institution in which one is raised, influence one's political identity?**

- The student will recognize and evaluate significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas of the many diverse peoples and groups and their impact on individuals, communities, states, and nations (3.1)
- The student will draw conclusions about significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas, analyzing the origins and context under which these competing ideas were reached and the multiple perspectives from which they come (3.2)
- The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)

**What factors influence individual and group voter behavior (e.g. SES, religion, race, age, gender, education, geographic region, etc.)?**

- The student will recognize and evaluate dynamic relationships that impact lives in communities, states, and nations (5.1)
- The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)
- The student will investigate the relationships among people, places, ideas, and/or the environment and connect those relationships to contemporary issues (5.3)

**To what extent do current issues influence the nominating process and selection season?**

- The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)
- The student will investigate an example of continuity and/or change and connect that continuity and/or change to a contemporary issue (4.3)

**Within the range of the American political spectrum, what are the differences between liberal and conservative ideologies in the United States?**

- The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)
- The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues (3.3)

**Why do parties and/or ideologies outside of the traditional two-party system develop?**

- The student will draw conclusions about significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas, analyzing the origins and context under which these competing ideas were reached and the multiple perspectives from which they come (3.2)
- The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues (3.3)

	<p><b>To what extent do local, state, and national issues impact area voters?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will recognize and evaluate significant choices made by individuals, communities, states, and nations that have impacted our lives and futures (1.1)</li> </ul> <p><b>What is the voter registration process in my state?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will recognize and evaluate the rights and responsibilities of people living in societies (2.1)</li> <li>The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)</li> </ul>
<p><b>UNIT 2: FINDING A CANDIDATE</b></p> <p><b>Suggested Time Frame:</b> Quarter 1 (3-4 weeks)</p>	<p><b>How do figures in power represent citizens' needs, wants, and perspectives?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will recognize and evaluate significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas of the many diverse peoples and groups and their impact on individuals, communities, states, and nations (3.1)</li> <li>The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>What are the official and unofficial qualifications to be President?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)</li> <li>The student will investigate specific rights and responsibilities of individuals and connect those rights and responsibilities with contemporary issues (2.3)</li> <li>The student will use his/her understanding of these dynamic relationships to create a personal, community, state, and/or national narrative (5.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>To what extent do the current Presidential candidates fit the traditional model of Presidents?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)</li> <li>The student will investigate an example of continuity and/or change and connect that continuity and/or change to a contemporary issue (4.3)</li> <li>The student will use his/her understanding of continuity and change to construct a model for contemporary reform (4.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>What are the job responsibilities of the President as the head of the Executive Branch?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will recognize and evaluate significant choices made by individuals, communities, states, and nations that have impacted our lives and futures (1.1)</li> <li>The student will recognize and evaluate the rights and responsibilities of people living in societies (2.1)</li> </ul> <p><b>How does each candidate display or embody the platform of their party?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues (3.3)</li> <li>The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>What impact does a Vice-Presidential candidate make on the campaign?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Which candidate best represents your views?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of choices and consequences to construct a decision-making process and to justify a decision (1.4)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of rights and responsibilities to address contemporary issues (2.4)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)</li> </ul>
<p><b>UNIT 3: ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE</b></p> <p><b>Suggested Time Frame:</b> Quarter 1-2 (3-4 weeks)</p>	<p><b>How has the American political culture created the current U.S. political system?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> <li>• The student will investigate the relationships among people, places, ideas, and/or the environment and connect those relationships to contemporary issues (5.3)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of these dynamic relationships to create a personal, community, state, and/or national narrative (5.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>To what extent does money play a role in the road to the White House?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of choices and consequences to construct a decision-making process and to justify a decision (1.4)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>To what extent does media play a role in the road to the White House?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of choices and consequences to construct a decision-making process and to justify a decision (1.4)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>To what extent does momentum play a role in elections and what factors can lead to shifts of momentum?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas of the many diverse peoples and groups and their impact on individuals, communities, states, and nations (3.1)</li> <li>• The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues (3.3)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>How does the party nominating system work?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will investigate examples of causes and consequences of particular choices and connect those with contemporary issues (1.3)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of choices and consequences to construct a decision-making process and to justify a decision (1.4)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)</li> </ul>

	<p><b>How does the use of the Electoral College factor into campaign strategy and the results of the election?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will analyze the context under which choices are made and draw conclusions about the motivations and goals of the decision-makers (1.2)</li> <li>• The student will investigate examples of causes and consequences of particular choices and connect those with contemporary issues (1.3)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate dynamic relationships that impact lives in communities, states, and nations (5.1)</li> </ul> <p><b>How are voters informed regarding issues and candidates?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will investigate examples of causes and consequences of particular choices and connect those with contemporary issues (1.3)</li> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of choices and consequences to construct a decision-making process and to justify a decision (1.4)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)</li> <li>• The student will investigate specific rights and responsibilities of individuals and connect those rights and responsibilities with contemporary issues (2.3)</li> <li>• The student will draw conclusions about significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas, analyzing the origins and context under which these competing ideas were reached and the multiple perspectives from which they come (3.2)</li> </ul>
<p><b>UNIT 4: PLUGGING INTO THE SYSTEM</b></p> <p><b>Suggested Time Frame:</b> Quarter 2 (3-4 weeks)</p>	<p><b>Do citizens' actions reflect their civic ideals and beliefs?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will investigate examples of causes and consequences of particular choices and connect those with contemporary issues (1.3)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)</li> </ul> <p><b>What dynamics impact voter participation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate significant beliefs, contributions, and ideas of the many diverse peoples and groups and their impact on individuals, communities, states, and nations (3.1)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>What impact can individual voters have on the outcome of elections?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of significant relationships and draw conclusions about a contemporary world (5.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>To what extent do interest groups play a role in effecting elections?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues (3.3)</li> <li>• The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)</li> <li>• The student will recognize and evaluate dynamic relationships that impact lives in communities, states, and nations (5.1)</li> </ul>

**UNIT 5: DRAWING CONCLUSIONS**

**Suggested Time Frame:**  
Quarter 2 (3-4 weeks)

**How does the current political culture reflect the historical patterns of electing government leadership and changing beliefs of the U.S. political system?**

- The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time and its impact on individuals, institutions, communities, states, and nations (4.1)
- The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)

**To what extent do the outcomes of this election compare with previous elections?**

- The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change (4.2)
- The student will investigate an example of continuity and/or change and connect that continuity and/or change to a contemporary issue (4.3)

**What are the President-elect's responsibilities between the election and inauguration?**

- The student will recognize and evaluate the rights and responsibilities of people living in societies (2.1)
- The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)
- The student will investigate specific rights and responsibilities of individuals and connect those rights and responsibilities with contemporary issues (2.3)

**What are the expectations for the President-elect's first hundred days?**

- The student will analyze the context under which choices are made and draw conclusions about the motivations and goals of the decision-makers (1.2)
- The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)
- The student will investigate the relationships among people, places, ideas, and/or the environment and connect those relationships to contemporary issues (5.3)

**To what extent did the election impact the make-up of Congress, and how will that impact the President-elect's agenda?**

- The student will analyze the context under which significant rights and responsibilities are defined and demonstrated, their various interpretations, and draw conclusions about those interpretations (2.2)
- The student will investigate specific rights and responsibilities of individuals and connect those rights and responsibilities with contemporary issues (2.3)
- The student will use his/her understanding of those beliefs, contributions, ideas, and diversity to justify or define how community, state, national, and international ideals shape contemporary society (3.4)
- The student will use his/her understanding of these dynamic relationships to create a personal, community, state, and/or national narrative (5.4)