

Leger

REPORT

Social Studies Curriculum Engagement

Alberta

DATE December 13, 2023



REPORT

Context



Context & Objectives

Context

In fall of 2023, the Government of Alberta began engagements on the draft Social Studies curriculum by conducting online engagement with the public from September 18 - October 16, 2023. This engagement included an online survey (four ranking questions and one qualitative open-ended question) and an online discussion guide to provide responses on areas of focus, topics and skills that should be addressed in the Social Studies curriculum.

Objectives

In the 2023 Mandate letter for the Minister of Education, one of the key initiatives identified was to work collaboratively with parents, teachers, and stakeholders to continue to implement K to 12 curriculum and implement additional basic life and home maintenance skills as well as financial literacy training into the high school curriculum where appropriate. The government wants to ensure Albertans have the opportunity to provide their perspectives on what they believe to be important. A new phased engagement process was launched in August 2023, providing all stakeholder groups an opportunity to contribute to the curriculum process.

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Methodology



Methodology



Method

Alberta Education engaged Albertans on their perceptions and preferences for a new Social Studies curriculum between September 18 and October 16, 2023.



Who

Albertans were invited to take part in the engagement. A total of n=12,853 took part in the survey from various stakeholder groups (educators, students, parents/guardians, and interested Albertans). An additional 4 responses were received via email, and 2 discussion guide responses from principals were shared.



Analysis

Respondents did not have to provide a response for each question or option. Those who did not answer the question are not included in the question base. Those who answered some of but not all of the questions are included, and the options not answered were analyzed as 'not selected'. Email feedback was analyzed as open ended comments and coded.



Reporting

Results from the survey questions and additional feedback received are shown in this report. Due to rounding and analysis, not all rows will add to 100%.

REPORT

Key Findings



Key Findings



Albertans overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of developing critical thinking skills within the Social Studies education. Critical thinking was identified as what should be the top focus of a Social Studies curriculum, and the top skill that should be developed.



The main topics for Canadian history and culture that Albertans feel should be included in the Social Studies curriculum are:

- Structures of local, provincial and federal governments
- Early settlement and exploration
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, history and traditions



For world history and global issues, Albertans believe students should be learning about:

- Human rights
- Trade and the global economy
- Legacies of ancient civilizations



History was the most frequently mentioned topic with regards to curriculum, with Albertans believing students should be taught both Canadian and general history.



Albertans also commented on the need for curriculum to be based on fact and not narrative, and that content should be age/developmentally appropriate.

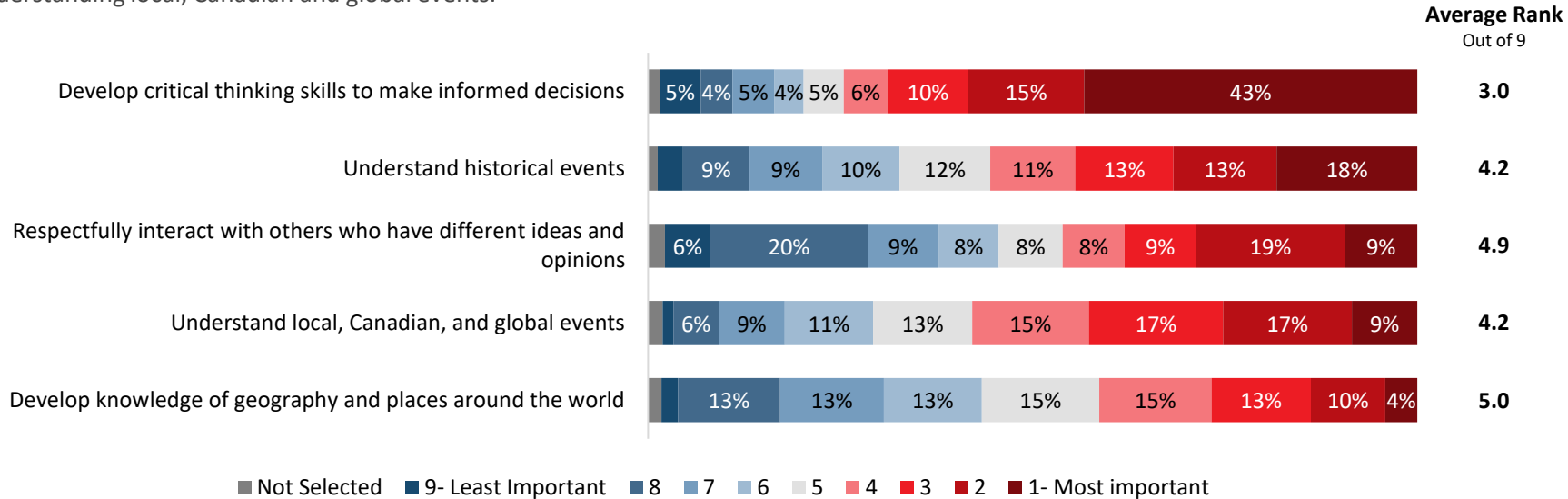
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Detailed Results



Focus of Social Studies Education

Albertans largely believe the most important area to focus on for Social Studies education is to develop critical thinking skills. Other important areas are understanding historical events; respectfully interacting with those of different ideas and opinions; and understanding local, Canadian and global events.



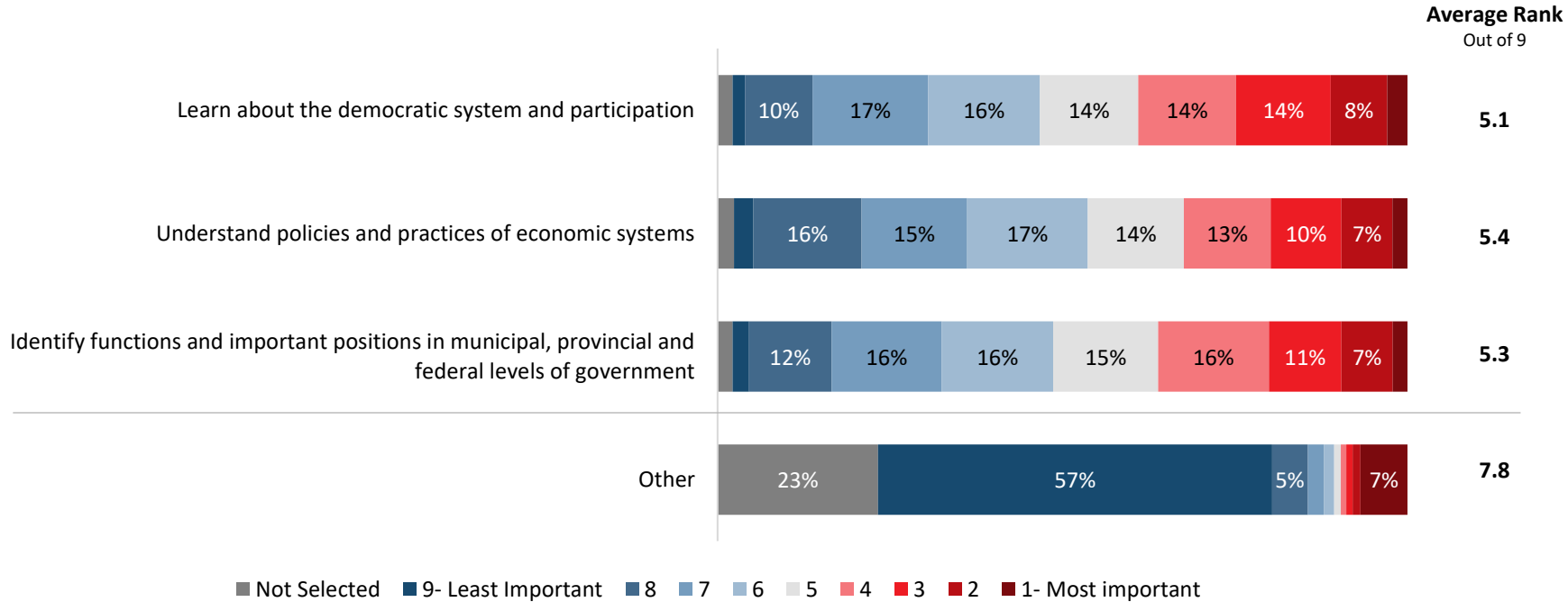
Q2. Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that includes content about history, geography, economics, government, and civics. Social Studies education can build active, informed, and responsible citizens who contribute to their communities and are knowledgeable about rights, responsibilities, and decision making. What should students focus on in Social Studies education?

Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 9 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,614)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Focus of Social Studies Education (Continued)



Q2. Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that includes content about history, geography, economics, government, and civics. Social Studies education can build active, informed, and responsible citizens who contribute to their communities and are knowledgeable about rights, responsibilities, and decision making. What should students focus on in Social Studies education?

Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 9 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,614)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Focus of Social Studies Education (Top Choices)

The top choice among Albertans for the focus of Social Studies curriculum is to develop critical thinking skills to make informed decisions. Other top choices include understanding local, Canadian, and global events, and historical events.

	Top 1	Top 2	Top 3	Top 5
Develop critical thinking skills to make informed decisions	43%	58%	69%	80%
Understand local, Canadian, and global events	9%	25%	43%	71%
Understand historical events	18%	32%	44%	67%
Develop knowledge of geography and places around the world	4%	14%	27%	57%
Respectfully interact with others who have different ideas and opinions	9%	29%	38%	54%
Learn about the democratic system and participation	3%	11%	25%	53%
Identify functions and important positions in municipal, provincial and federal levels of government	2%	10%	20%	51%
Understand policies and practices of economic systems	2%	10%	20%	46%
Other	7%	8%	9%	11%

% Top Response(s) in Column

Q2. Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that includes content about history, geography, economics, government, and civics. Social Studies education can build active, informed, and responsible citizens who contribute to their communities and are knowledgeable about rights, responsibilities, and decision making. What should students focus on in Social Studies education?

Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 9 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,614)

Note: Top choices are calculated and not mutually exclusive, therefore columns/rows may not add to 100%

Focus of Social Studies Education (Top Choice by Group)

All groups of Albertans still identify developing critical thinking skills to make informed decisions as the most important focus for a Social Studies curriculum. Students and educators additionally consider respectful interaction with others who have different ideas and opinions to be important. Interested and other Albertans also think that understanding historical events are important.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 12,614	131	7,413	1,820	2,736	494
Develop critical thinking skills to make informed decisions	43%	27%	44%	45%	41%	42%
Understand historical events	18%	19%	17%	12%	24%	27%
Respectfully interact with others who have different ideas and opinions	9%	18%	9%	16%	6%	6%
Understand local, Canadian, and global events	9%	8%	8%	11%	8%	6%
Develop knowledge of geography and places around the world	4%	6%	5%	4%	3%	3%
Learn about the democratic system and participation	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Understand policies and practices of economic systems	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Identify functions and important positions in municipal, provincial and federal levels of government	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Other	7%	14%	7%	6%	6%	7%

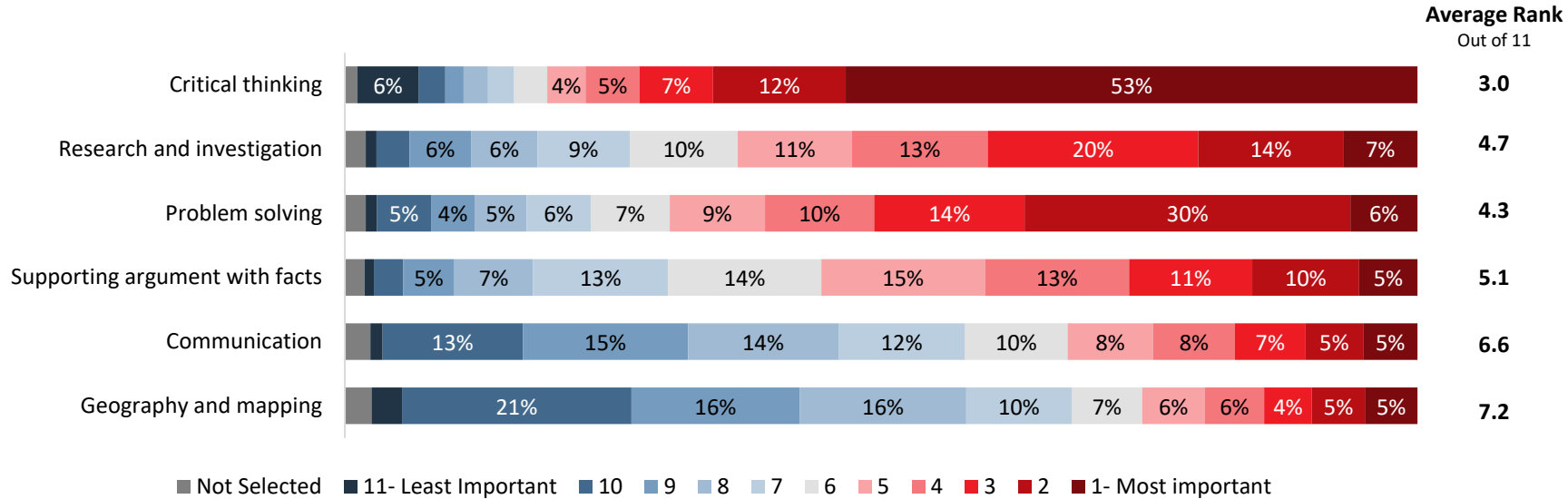
Q2. Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that includes content about history, geography, economics, government, and civics. Social Studies education can build active, informed, and responsible citizens who contribute to their communities and are knowledgeable about rights, responsibilities, and decision making. What should students focus on in Social Studies education?

Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 9 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey

Social Studies Skills Development

Albertans strongly believe that students should gain critical thinking skills in their Social Studies education. Other important skills include research and investigation, problem solving, and supporting argument with facts.



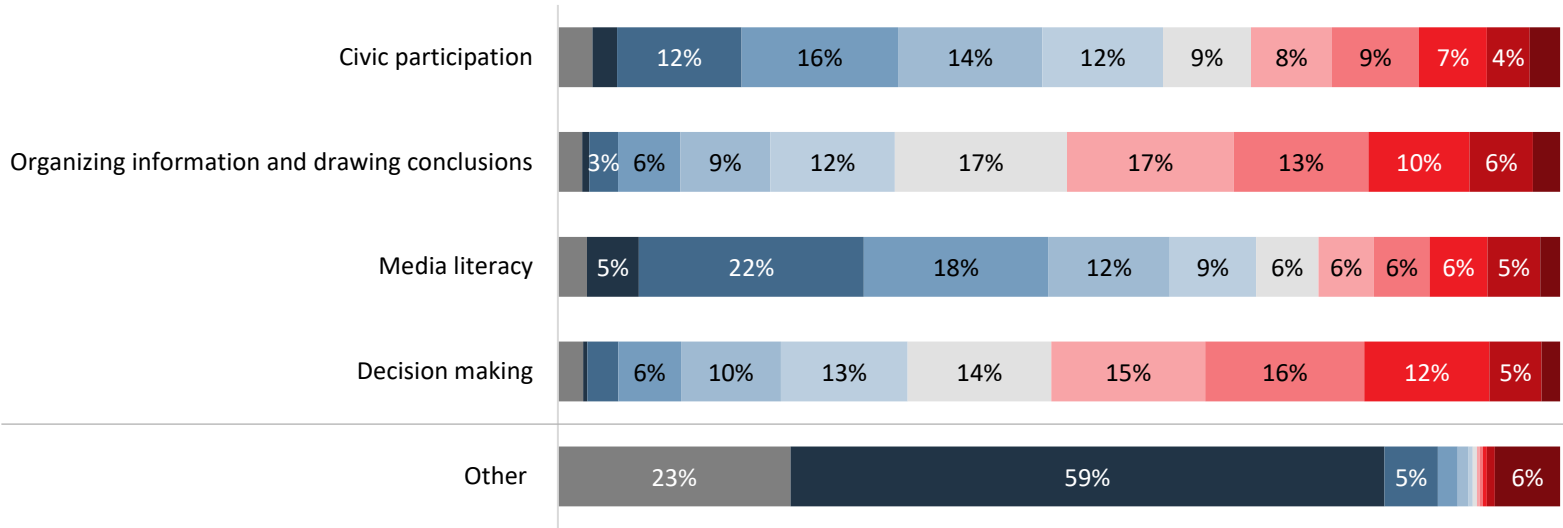
Q3. Developing skills is an important part of Social Studies education. Social Studies can provide students with transferable skills needed to question assumptions, and make informed decisions as active participants in society. What skills should students develop through Social Studies curriculum? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 11 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12, 586)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Social Studies Skills Development (Continued)

Average Rank
Out of 11



■ Not Selected ■ 11- Least Important ■ 10 ■ 9 ■ 8 ■ 7 ■ 6 ■ 5 ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1- Most important

Q3. Developing skills is an important part of Social Studies education. Social Studies can provide students with transferable skills needed to question assumptions, and make informed decisions as active participants in society. What skills should students develop through Social Studies curriculum? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 11 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,586)
Responses less than 4% not labelled

Social Studies Skills Development (Top Choices)

Overwhelmingly, Albertans believe that students should develop critical thinking skills in their Social Studies education. Additional top choices among Albertans are problem solving, research and investigation, and supporting arguments with facts.

	Top 1	Top 2	Top 3	Top 5
Critical thinking	53%	66%	73%	81%
Problem solving	6%	37%	51%	70%
Research and investigation	7%	20%	40%	63%
Supporting argument with facts	5%	15%	27%	56%
Decision making	2%	7%	20%	51%
Organizing information and drawing conclusions	3%	9%	19%	49%
Communication	5%	10%	17%	33%
Civic participation	3%	7%	14%	31%
Geography and mapping	5%	10%	14%	26%
Media literacy	2%	7%	13%	24%
Other	6%	7%	8%	8%

% Top Response(s) in Column

Q3. Developing skills is an important part of Social Studies education. Social Studies can provide students with transferable skills needed to question assumptions, and make informed decisions as active participants in society. What skills should students develop through Social Studies curriculum? Please rank in order of importance.(1 being most important with 11 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,586)

Responses less than 6% not labelled

Note: Top choices are calculated and not mutually exclusive, therefore columns/rows may not add to 100%

Social Studies Skills Development (Top Choice by Group)

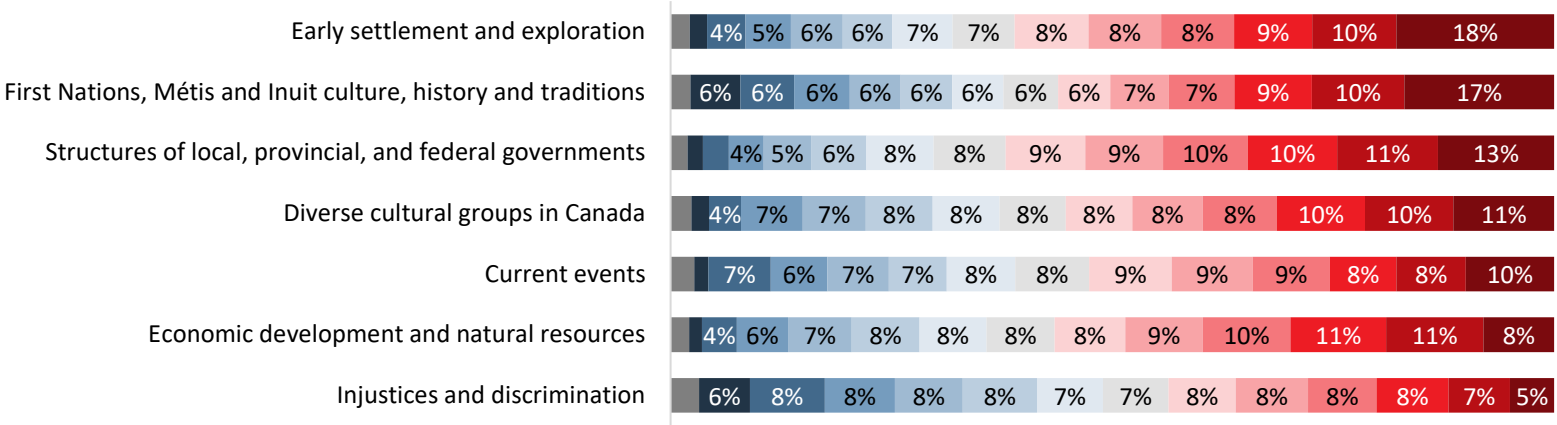
All groups of Albertans note critical thinking as the top skill that should be learned in Social Studies education, with Educators most likely to value this skill. In addition to critical thinking, students are more likely to think that geography and mapping, and civic participation are skills that should be developed.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 12,586	129	7,410	1,812	2,719	494
Critical thinking	53%	45%	52%	59%	53%	52%
Research and investigation	7%	2%	7%	5%	8%	10%
Problem solving	6%	3%	7%	4%	6%	5%
Supporting argument with facts	5%	7%	5%	4%	7%	6%
Communication	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%
Geography and mapping	5%	9%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Civic participation	3%	7%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Organizing information and drawing conclusions	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	2%
Media literacy	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Decision making	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Other	6%	10%	7%	6%	5%	5%

Canadian History and Culture Topics

Albertans were more varied in what topics they believe should be covered for Canadian history and culture in a Social Studies curriculum. Albertans believe that early settlement and exploration; First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and traditions; and structures of local, provincial and federal governments are important topics to cover in Social Studies.

Average Rank
Out of 13



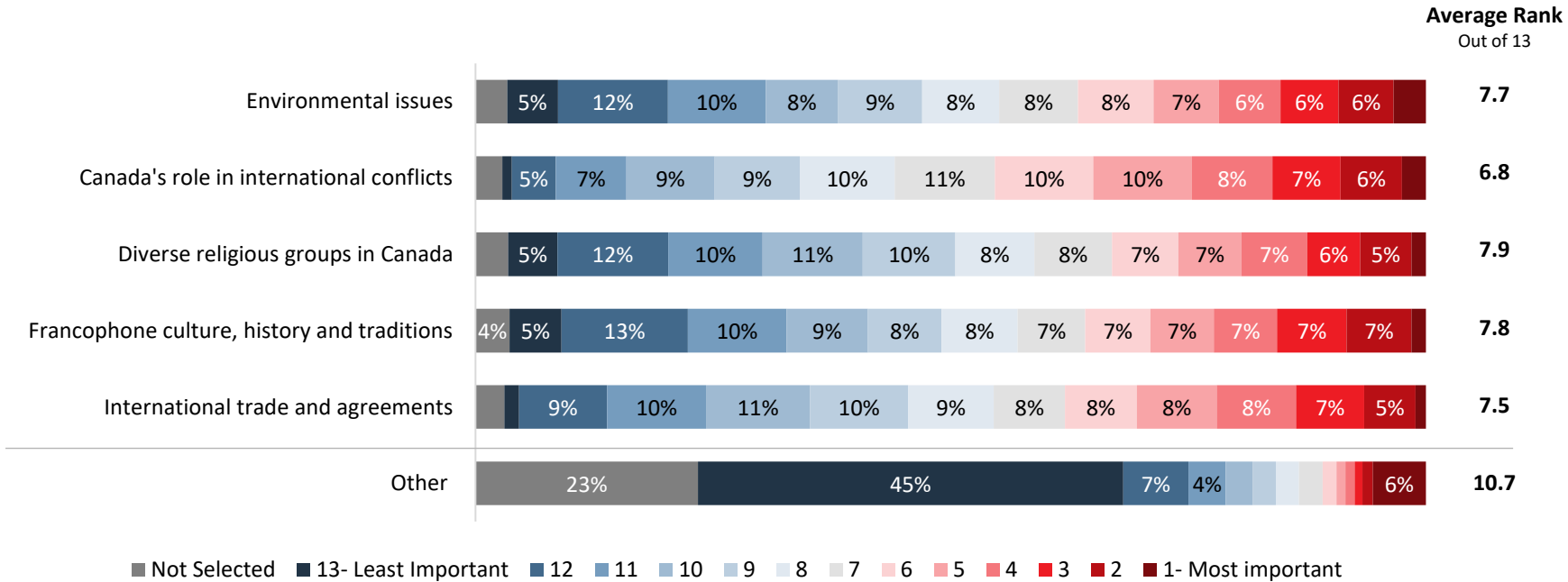
■ Not Selected ■ 13- Least Important ■ 12 ■ 11 ■ 10 ■ 9 ■ 8 ■ 7 ■ 6 ■ 5 ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1- Most important

Q4. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of Canadian history and culture? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 13 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,610)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Canadian History and Culture Topics (Continued)



Q4. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of Canadian history and culture? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 13 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,610)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Canadian History and Culture Topics (Top Choices)

Albertans top choices mirror the ranking, where they believe early settlement and exploration; First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and traditions; and structures of local, provincial and federal governments are important topics to cover in a Social Studies curriculum.

	Top 1	Top 2	Top 3	Top 5
Structures of local, provincial, and federal governments	13%	25%	35%	53%
Early settlement and exploration	18%	27%	36%	53%
First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, history and traditions	17%	27%	36%	50%
Economic development and natural resources	8%	19%	30%	49%
Diverse cultural groups in Canada	11%	21%	31%	48%
Current events	10%	18%	25%	43%
Injustices and discrimination	5%	12%	20%	36%
Canada's role in international conflicts	3%	9%	16%	35%
International trade and agreements	1%	6%	14%	30%
Francophone culture, history and traditions	2%	8%	16%	29%
Environmental issues	3%	9%	15%	29%
Diverse religious groups in Canada	2%	7%	12%	26%
Other	6%	7%	8%	9%

% Top Response(s) in Column

Q4. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of Canadian history and culture? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 13 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,610)

Responses less than 6% not labelled

Note: Top choices are calculated and not mutually exclusive, therefore columns/rows may not add to 100%

Canadian History and Culture Topics (Top Choice by Group)

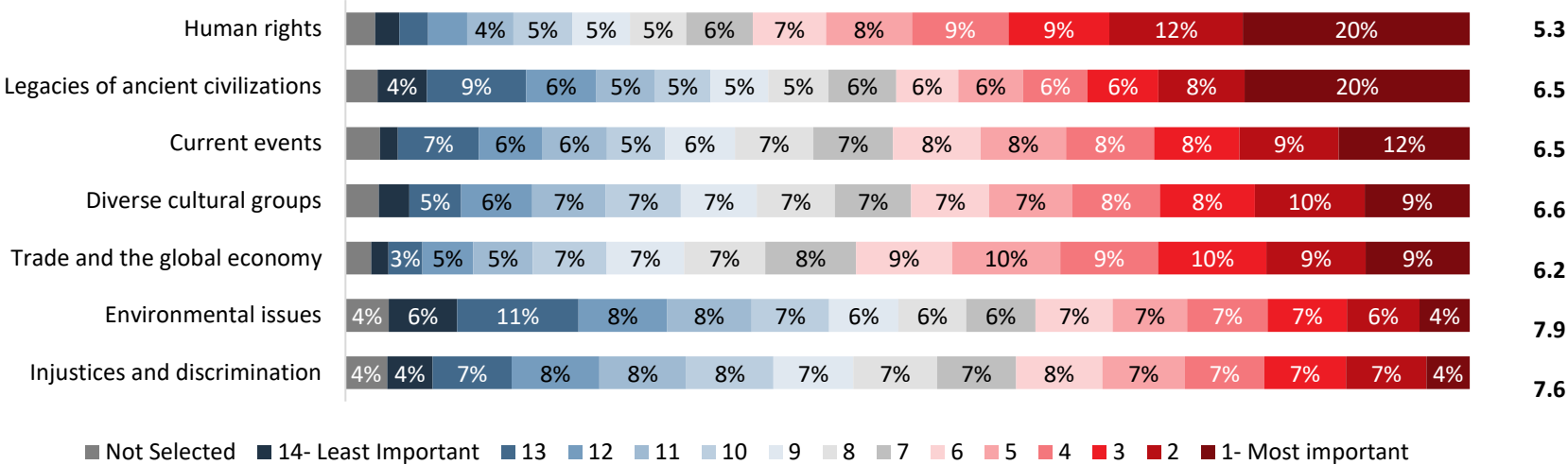
Different groups of Albertans are slightly more varied in their thoughts on what Canadian history and culture topics should be taught in the Social Studies curriculum. Educators and students, and parents are most likely to think that First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, history and traditions should be taught. Students and educators are more likely than other groups to think current events should be covered. Interested and ‘other’ Albertans are the most divergent and are most likely to think early settlement and exploration should be taught for Canadian history and culture.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 12,610	132	7,407	1,818	2,733	495
Early settlement and exploration	18%	9%	15%	14%	27%	29%
First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, history and traditions	17%	22%	17%	25%	11%	16%
Structures of local, provincial, and federal governments	13%	11%	13%	10%	16%	13%
Diverse cultural groups in Canada	11%	5%	12%	16%	8%	9%
Current events	10%	15%	10%	12%	8%	8%
Economic development and natural resources	8%	6%	9%	3%	9%	9%
Injustices and discrimination	5%	10%	5%	5%	4%	3%
Environmental issues	3%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%
Canada's role in international conflicts	3%	5%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Diverse religious groups in Canada	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Francoophone culture, history and traditions	2%	-	2%	1%	1%	1%
International trade and agreements	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	6%	12%	6%	6%	4%	5%

World History and Global Issues Topics

To provide students with an understanding of world history and global issues, Albertans believe it is important for a Social Studies curriculum to cover human rights, legacies of ancient civilizations, and current events.

Average Rank
Out of 14

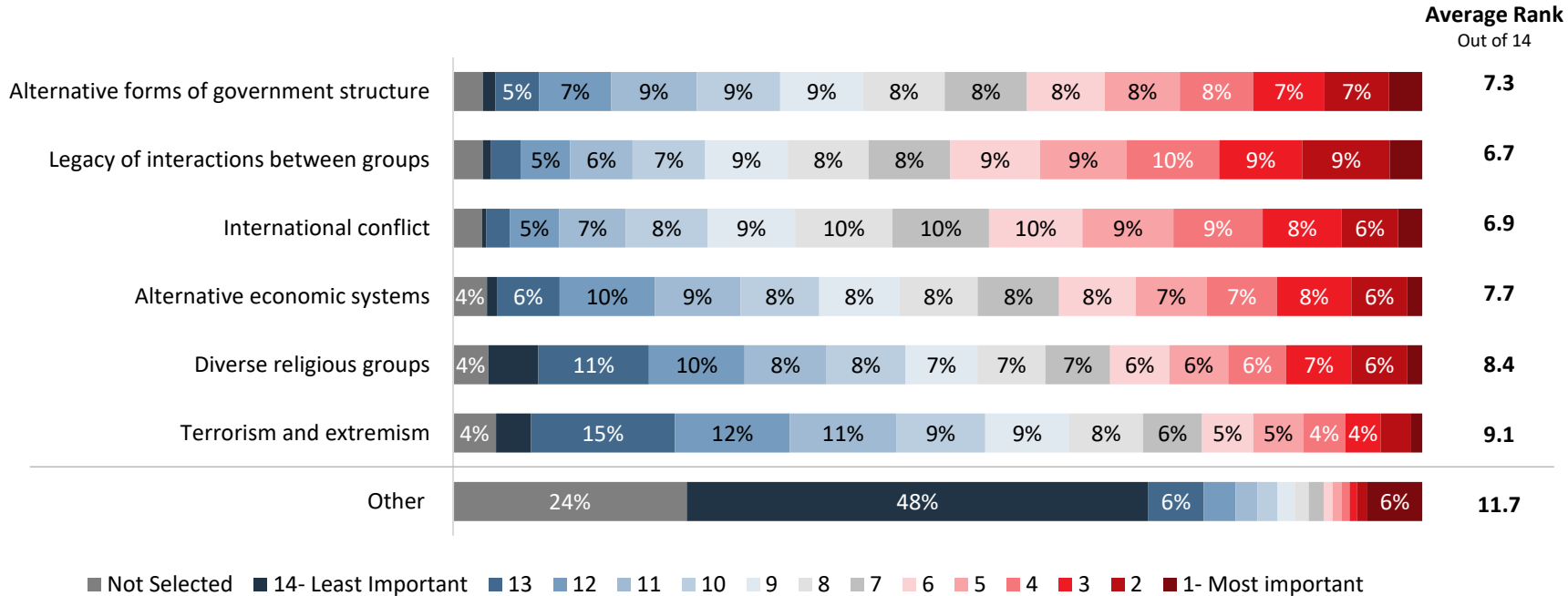


Q5. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of world history and global issues? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 14 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,577)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

World History and Global Issues Topics (Continued)



Q5. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of world history and global issues? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 14 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,577)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

World History and Global Issues Topics (Top Choices)

Albertans largely think human rights is the most important topic to cover with regards to understanding world history and global issues. Other top choices include legacies of ancient civilizations, current events, trade and the global economy, and diverse cultural groups.

	Top 1	Top 2	Top 3	Top 5
Human rights	20%	32%	41%	57%
Trade and the global economy	9%	18%	28%	46%
Legacies of ancient civilizations	20%	28%	34%	45%
Current events	12%	20%	28%	43%
Diverse cultural groups	9%	19%	28%	43%
Legacy of interactions between groups	3%	12%	21%	39%
International conflict	2%	8%	16%	35%
Alternative forms of government structure	3%	10%	17%	33%
Injustices and discrimination	4%	11%	18%	33%
Environmental issues	4%	11%	18%	32%
Alternative economic systems	2%	7%	15%	30%
Diverse religious groups	2%	7%	14%	26%
Terrorism and extremism	1%	4%	8%	17%
Other	6%	7%	7%	9%

% Top Response(s) in Column

Q5. What topics should Social Studies curriculum include to provide students with an understanding of world history and global issues? Please rank in order of importance. (1 being most important with 14 being least important)

Base: Albertans who answered question in survey (n=12,577)

Responses less than 4% not labelled

Note: Top choices are calculated and not mutually exclusive, therefore columns/rows may not add to 100%

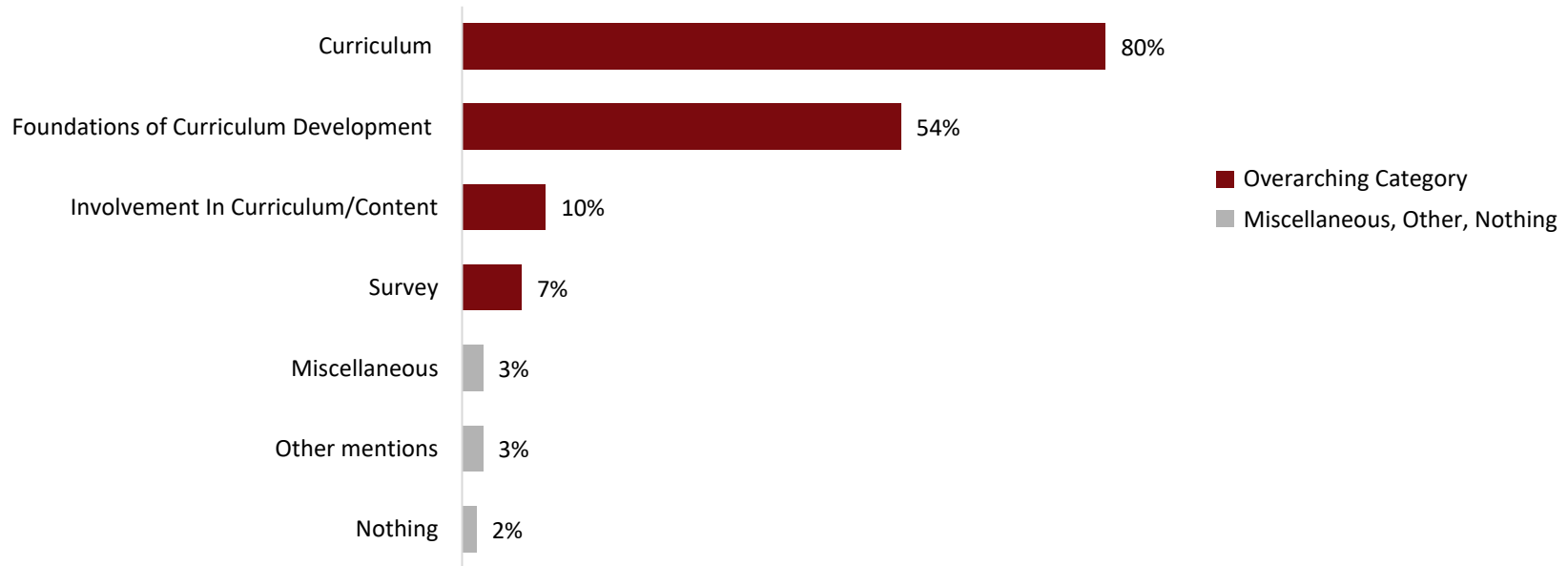
World History and Global Issues Topics (Top Choice by Group)

Students, parents and educators are most likely to think that human rights should be taught in a Social Studies curriculum with regards to world history and global issues. Interested and other Albertans are most likely to think that legacies of ancient civilizations should be taught.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 12,577	128	7,400	1,803	2,728	493
Human rights	20%	20%	21%	25%	16%	15%
Legacies of ancient civilizations	20%	10%	19%	13%	26%	26%
Current events	12%	13%	11%	14%	11%	12%
Diverse cultural groups	9%	8%	10%	15%	5%	8%
Trade and the global economy	9%	5%	10%	3%	13%	9%
Environmental issues	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%	2%
Injustices and discrimination	4%	9%	4%	5%	3%	3%
Alternative forms of government structure	3%	1%	3%	3%	5%	5%
Legacy of interactions between groups	3%	5%	3%	6%	3%	3%
International conflict	2%	7%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Alternative economic systems	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	<1%
Diverse religious groups	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Terrorism and extremism	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Other	6%	11%	6%	5%	5%	5%

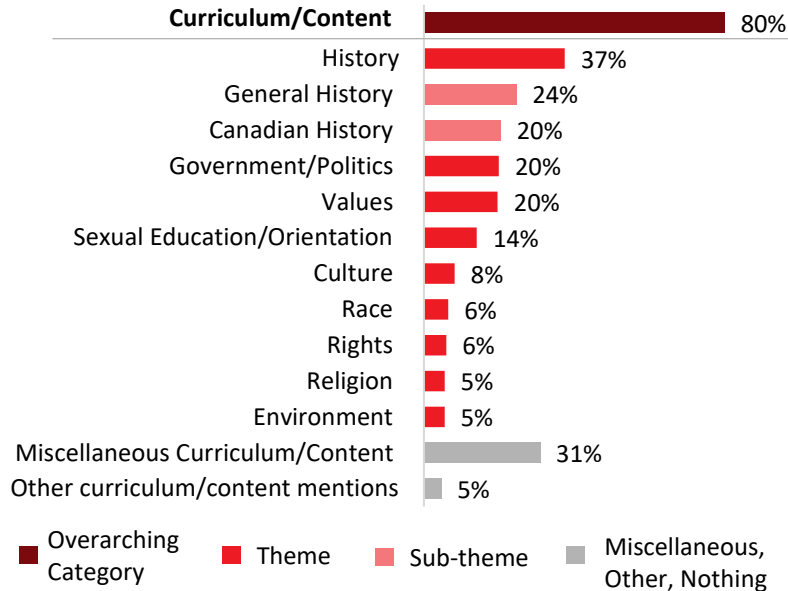
Additional Thoughts from Albertans

Albertans shared additional thoughts on a new Social Studies curriculum in an open-ended question which was coded as themes. The qualitative responses fall into four key categories: curriculum, foundations of curriculum development, involvement in curriculum/content and survey feedback. The section that follows details the responses in each of these overarching categories.



Curriculum

With history making up the largest proportion of open-ended responses (80%) there was a wide array of topics within it. Albertans most frequently mentioned history-related topics (37%) including general (24%) and Canadian history (20%) when it came to the Social Studies curriculum. Other top mentions include government/politics and values.



"I think the focus should be fact driven and not ideologically driven. Also, important that kids learn to identify reliable sources of information and the difference between facts and opinions". (Parent/Guardian)

"Focus should be on past outcomes of various economic and political systems for individual and societal wellbeing. Well-being should be defined through quality of life, economic options available to average people, freedom of entrepreneurship, creativity in new inventions, freedom of choice and lifestyle". (Interested Albertan)

"The specific learning outcomes of our current curriculum fail our students in giving them knowledge of the world beyond Canada. Having our next generations be tolerable, open minded, and respectful to all people is the most critical skill for them to leave Social Studies with to be successful in which ever path they choose beyond grade 12". (Educator)

"I feel that there has been too much emphasis on learning the structure of democracy and the economy every year. We don't learn enough about geography and the unique cultures of the world. We should learn less about Canada and more about the outside world. The history of the exploration and settlement of Canada is overdone". (Student)

Curriculum (Detailed Results – History)

Albertans had a wide variety of suggestions for teaching history in the Social Studies curriculum. Educators and students were more likely to suggest Canadian history related topics.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Curriculum/Content	80%	85%	82%	73%	81%	81%
History	37%	44%	37%	41%	35%	37%
General History	24%	29%	25%	22%	25%	25%
Teach history	9%	4%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Teach more world/global history	6%	12%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Learn from history/don't repeat it	6%	8%	6%	4%	8%	9%
Don't delete/erase/change history	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%
Teach about wars/world wars/conflict	3%	4%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Teach historical events	3%	6%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Teach less American history	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other history mentions	2%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Canadian History	20%	27%	19%	27%	17%	19%
Teach Canadian history (home/local/communities)	14%	17%	12%	22%	13%	15%
Teach Indigenous history	4%	6%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Teach less Indigenous history	2%	6%	3%	1%	1%	1%
Teach less Canadian history	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	<1%
Teach patriotism/national pride	1%	-	1%	<1%	<1%	1%
Other Canadian history mentions	<1%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%

Curriculum (Detailed Results – Government/Politics and Values)

Albertans noted that it was important to remove political ideologies from Social Studies curriculum and keep it non-partisan, which was noted more often by parents and interested Albertans, and less by educators and students. Interested Albertans were more likely to suggest government/politics topics.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Curriculum/Content	80%	85%	82%	73%	81%	81%
Government/Politics	20%	13%	21%	14%	23%	20%
Remove political ideologies/propaganda/keep non-partisan	10%	4%	11%	6%	11%	9%
Teach about government/government policy/structure	5%	4%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Teach about other forms of government (communism/capitalism/socialism, etc.)	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	4%
Teach about politics/political science/political system	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Teach about democracy	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Teach about taxation/taxes/doing taxes	1%	-	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Other government/politics mentions	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Values	20%	19%	20%	19%	20%	22%
Allow students to form their own conclusions/opinions/informed decisions	7%	8%	7%	6%	8%	9%
Teach respect/respect for different views	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%
Teach diversity/inclusion	3%	8%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Teach tolerance/acceptance	2%	-	2%	2%	2%	1%
Stop dividing/start unifying	2%	-	2%	1%	1%	2%
Teach values/morals	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	2%
Teach kindness/caring/understanding	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Teach responsibility/accountability	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Teach compassion/empathy	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Teach about family/family values	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	2%
Other values mentions	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Curriculum (Detailed Results – Sexual Education/Orientation, Culture and Race)

Sexual education/orientation topics were mentioned more among parents, interested and other Albertans, particularly the removal of sexual orientation-related education from the Social Studies curriculum.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Curriculum/Content	80%	85%	82%	73%	81%	81%
Sexual Education/Orientation	14%	10%	16%	4%	15%	14%
Remove sexual orientation/SOGI	9%	4%	10%	1%	10%	11%
Remove LGBTQ2S+ from education	3%	4%	4%	<1%	3%	2%
Remove sex/sexual materials from education	2%	2%	2%	<1%	3%	2%
Teach SOGI/LGBTQ2S+ /LGBTQ2S+ rights/history	1%	-	2%	1%	1%	1%
Other sexual education/orientation mentions	1%	-	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Culture	8%	10%	9%	9%	6%	6%
Teach other cultures/beliefs	4%	6%	5%	5%	3%	2%
Teach Canadian culture	1%	-	1%	2%	1%	2%
Teach Indigenous culture	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Teach less Indigenous culture	1%	4%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other culture mentions	1%	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Race	6%	12%	7%	5%	6%	4%
Remove crt/critical race theory	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Teach about injustice/oppression/discrimination	1%	-	2%	2%	1%	1%
Remove racism	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Remove discrimination/teach non discrimination	1%	6%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Teach crt/critical race theory	<1%	-	<1%	<1%	<1%	-
Other race mentions	1%	2%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%

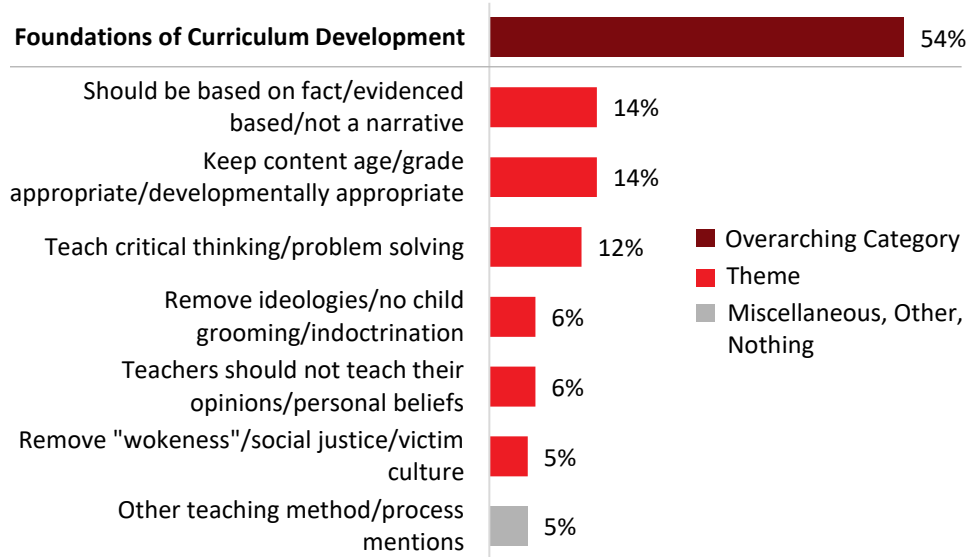
Curriculum (Detailed Results – Miscellaneous Curriculum/Content)

There were many other suggested items for a Social Studies curriculum. Educators and students were more likely to suggest teaching geography/world geography.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Curriculum/Content	80%	85%	82%	73%	81%	81%
Miscellaneous Curriculum/Content (Subnet)	31%	35%	31%	33%	29%	31%
Teach geography/world geography	5%	8%	5%	9%	4%	5%
Teach economics	5%	2%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Teach current events	5%	10%	5%	5%	3%	5%
Teach media literacy/influence/discerning fact from misinformation	4%	6%	4%	5%	4%	3%
Teach communication skills/how to debate/ask questions	3%	-	3%	3%	4%	4%
Teach about research/fact finding	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	5%
Teach good citizenship/global citizenship	3%	-	2%	6%	1%	1%
Teach financial literacy/personal finance/budgeting	2%	-	2%	1%	2%	1%
Teach arithmetic/math	2%	-	1%	1%	3%	4%
Dislike proposed curriculum	1%	-	1%	3%	1%	1%
Teach reading	1%	-	1%	1%	3%	3%
Teach civics	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	2%
Teach home economics/life skills	1%	-	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Teach writing	1%	-	1%	1%	2%	2%
Teach science	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	2%
Teach Social Studies	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Teach about self/individual well being	1%	-	1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Other curriculum/content mentions	5%	10%	5%	4%	4%	4%

Foundations of Curriculum Development

Over half (54%) of Albertans provided comments on foundations for the Social Studies curriculum development. Important focuses for Albertans are that the curriculum should be based on fact and not a narrative (14%), and content should be age/developmentally appropriate (14%).



“The maturity of students at younger grades needs to be taken into consideration. The draft has students trying to understand complicated issues at a stage that the students do not have the maturity to comprehend, let alone analyze & evaluate them”. (Educator)

“The Social Studies curriculum should be based on facts and proven evidence not government ideology”. (Parent/Guardian)

“Please find a method in which students are truly motivated to participate in the class and learn, further from just getting a high grade. On a fundamental level, students should understand and be taught the importance of Social Studies and the reasons for teaching the class”. (Student)

“I strongly advocate for a return to content, fact-rich core knowledge-based learning in Social Studies. I disagree with a focus on skill-based, expanding your horizons learning in social studies. I strongly advocate that controversial topics, subjects, ideas, and information be left out of the curriculum”. (Interested Albertan)

Foundations of Curriculum Development (Detailed Results)

Parents, interested and other Albertans were more likely to suggest that curriculum should be based on fact and evidence rather than a narrative. Educators were the most likely to provide comments on foundations of curriculum development, notably suggesting keeping content age/developmentally appropriate.

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Foundations of Curriculum Development	54%	25%	52%	66%	52%	54%
Should be based on fact/evidenced based/not a narrative	14%	8%	15%	8%	16%	16%
Keep content age/grade appropriate/developmentally appropriate	14%	4%	10%	35%	6%	8%
Teach critical thinking/problem solving	12%	6%	12%	14%	13%	12%
Remove ideologies/no child grooming/indoctrination	6%	-	6%	3%	9%	6%
Teachers should not teach their opinions/personal beliefs	6%	-	7%	2%	6%	5%
Remove "wokeness"/social justice/victim culture	5%	-	6%	2%	8%	7%
Remove memorization	2%	-	3%	4%	1%	2%
Keep curriculum relevant/meaningful	2%	6%	2%	6%	1%	1%
Teach how to think/not what to think	2%	-	2%	2%	3%	2%
Should be balanced/all perspectives/both sides	2%	-	2%	2%	3%	1%
Should be content rich/core knowledge	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Use current/go back to the last/past curriculum	2%	-	1%	3%	1%	1%

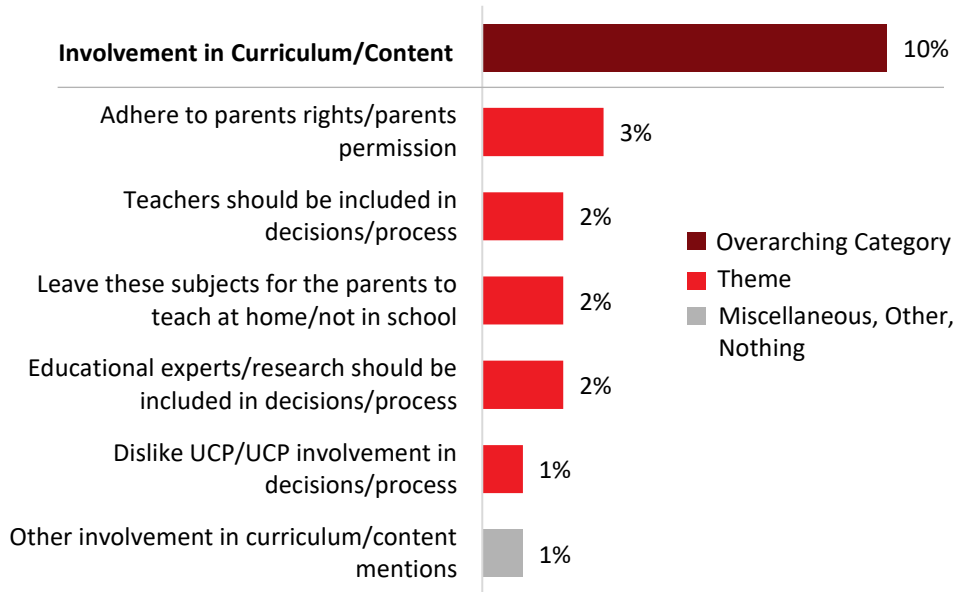
Foundations of Curriculum Development

(Detailed Results – continued)

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Foundations of Curriculum Development	54%	25%	52%	66%	52%	54%
Remove euro-centric curriculum/ include diverse groups	1%	-	1%	2%	1%	2%
Should build in more each year/increasing complexity	1%	-	1%	4%	1%	1%
Back to basics	1%	-	1%	1%	2%	2%
Should be updated/modernized	1%	2%	1%	3%	<1%	2%
Let kids be kids/leave them alone	1%	2%	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Should be a skills development curriculum	1%	-	1%	3%	<1%	<1%
Other teaching method/process mentions	5%	2%	4%	6%	4%	4%

Involvement in Curriculum/Content

A smaller proportion of Albertans mentioned topics related to various parties involved in Social Studies curriculum and content (10%).



“It would be most beneficial if the people who are working on the new curriculum be non-partisan and also have a variety of stakeholders at the table. Teachers and parents should have the biggest voice in the process. Please keep politics out of our curriculum”. (Educator)

“Talk about facts, keep activism out of any discussion. Welcome and include parents in the classroom. Parents must have more options to help teach children other than the public system”. (Interested Albertan)

“Please meaningfully engage curriculum and pedagogical experts”. (Parent/Guardian)

Involvement in Curriculum/Content (Detailed Results)

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Involvement In Curriculum/Content	10%	2%	10%	10%	11%	13%
Adhere to parents rights/parents permission	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	5%
Teachers should be included in decisions/process	2%	-	2%	5%	2%	2%
Leave these subjects for the parents to teach at home/not in school	2%	-	3%	1%	2%	3%
Educational experts/research should be included in decisions/process	2%	-	2%	2%	2%	2%
Dislike UCP/UCP involvement in decisions/process	1%	-	1%	<1%	1%	<1%
Other involvement in curriculum/content mentions	1%	-	1%	2%	2%	2%

Survey and Other (Detailed Results)

% Top Choice	Total	Student	Parent/ Guardian	Educator	Interested Albertan	Other
	<i>n=</i> 5,243	52	2,776	934	1,170	291
Survey	7%	4%	7%	10%	6%	6%
All options important/can't rank them	3%	-	3%	4%	2%	2%
Difficult survey/difficult format	1%	-	1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Dislike survey	1%	-	1%	2%	1%	<1%
Limit on text in survey/not enough to explain	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%
Thank you (all mentions)	1%	2%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%
Other survey mentions	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Miscellaneous	3%	-	3%	3%	2%	3%
Other mentions	3%	-	3%	3%	2%	3%
Nothing	2%	8%	2%	<1%	2%	1%

REPORT

Respondent Profile



Respondent Profile

	Percent of Respondents (%) n=12,853
Stakeholder	
Parent/Guardian of school aged (K-12) children	58%
Interested Albertan	21%
Educator (teacher, educational assistant, administrator, school counsellor, academic expert)	14%
Student	1%
Other	4%
No answer	1%

REPORT

Discussion Guide Feedback



Discussion Guide Feedback

Alberta Education received two completed discussion guides from principals, one based on a discussion with the school's teachers, and another from a parent evening that was hosted.

Due to the low participation rate on the discussion guides, these results should be used to provide context and understand the perspectives of the respective groups (parents, educators). Results cannot be generalized or quantified, but rather are to be considered in a qualitative frame of reference.

Focus of Social Studies Education

Educators approached the discussion guide by asking what was important for students to know upon graduating. They suggested to move past the grade/age appropriate debate but still follow a developmental sequence – starting with a foundational knowledge base, then move to critical thinking, followed by argumentation. Educators suggested that topics of focus include:

- Impact/inclusion of religion on world events (positive or negative)
- More emphasis on Canada as part of its world and relationship with other countries
- Representative/current and relevant Canadian content to keep students engaged
- Understanding local, Canadian and global events
- Developing critical thinking skills to make informed decisions
- Developing knowledge of geography and places around the world
- Respectfully interacting with others who have different ideas and opinions
- Differentiating between facts and opinion and understanding bias
- Economies, globalism, diversity and identity
- Racism, discrimination, poverty and wealth

Parents thought important topics to cover within the Social Studies curriculum include history (outcomes, economic systems, negative effects of historical regimes), religion, critical thinking, interacting respectfully with others, citizen responsibility and participation, racism, population sustainability, and knowledge of legal systems and courts.

“The emphasis would be on building a knowledge base that enabled them to respectfully interact with others who have different ideas/opinions/experiences/origins”. (Educators)

“Younger grades could focus on history and geography. As they get older introduce civics, politics and economics. For example, economics could begin in Grade 8. It wouldn’t be understood well at an earlier age. Worldview and ideology could begin at junior high and continue through the higher grades. Developing critical thinking skills to make informed decisions and respectfully interacting with others who have different ideas and opinions could be focused through all the grades”. (Educators)

“Students need to know “respect” is NOT celebrating, supporting, or agreeing with someone. It’s not about ‘suppressing some views’. And not about ‘identity’ but respecting individual people”. (Parents)

Social Studies Skills Development

Parents and educators were largely aligned in what they felt were important skills to be developed in Social Studies. These skills include:

- Critical thinking
- Media literacy
- Drawing conclusions and how they come to be developed
- Problem solving
- Communication and debate

Parents emphasized the importance of a knowledge foundation that is based in fact and recognize biases. Parents cautioned teaching civic participation too early as students may not have their own opinions based on knowledge yet. Educators also spoke on the importance of foundation skills such as geography and mapping.

“Communications – supporting arguments, especially. Train in art of debate – promote debate opportunities”. (Parents)

“Critical thinking is the most important and ties into most of the other suggestions/examples of SKILLS focus (problem solving, drawing conclusions, decision making, research and investigation, organizing information, and media literacy/bias). Critical thinking informs social participation. And basic knowledge of other countries (including geography, mapping, political worldview, population, culture) would also help our critical thinking and respectful social participation”. (Educators)

“Civic participation is good, but students need to know things first. Think about how it’s applied - promoting ‘participation’ too early can mean just parroting what teachers say”. (Parents)

“Media literacy needs to be a strong focus as that is the world in which we now live. Students are not researching in libraries or books but online and they need to learn how to decipher that information. Organizing information and drawing conclusions needs to continue into inductive reasoning”. (Educators)

Canadian History and Culture Topics

Educators noted that students are disengaged with the current curriculum, and feel they are learning the same things year over year. Educators suggest building curriculum in strands through grades (Canada, Indigenous and International) and feel by doing so knowledge and participation could grow. Additional topics with regards to Canadian history and culture include:

- Understand Canadian history and culture, but pair that with knowledge of other countries for context and comparison
- Diverse cultural groups in Canada
- Injustices and discrimination at age/grade appropriate levels
- Include knowledge of other groups than First Nations, English and French
- Canadian political movements and their impact on Canada
- Government structures

Parents want to instill pride in Canada and its history, and while students should still understand injustice and discrimination, it should be in the context of history. Parents emphasized that the focus on Social Studies education should be the shared history and what ties people together.

“Students already complain they learn about the same thing over and over again, and it disengages interest. An example of this would be the regions of Alberta in grade 4 and then the regions of Canada in grade 5, or the fur trade again in grade 4 and 5. Students feel that they aren’t learning anything new and the topic then doesn’t interest them”. (Educators)

“Make sure the emphasis is on our shared history and what we have in common”. (Parents)

“If we had strands that built through the grade like CANADA, FIRST NATIONS, and then INTERNATIONAL...it would be amazing to see how their knowledge and participation could grow. (Current events, trade and global economy, economic systems, government structure, etc. would tie into all of these strands)”. (Educators)

“Take back pride in our country & history! Teach students to take pride in their nation”. (Parents)

World History and Global Issues Topics

Parents suggested topics such as interactions with groups, human rights, different voting systems and religion. Educators still emphasized age/grade appropriate content and the importance of including international studies alongside Canadian studies. Topics suggested include:

- Indigenous studies
- Culture
- Identity
- Politics
- Geography
- Resources
- Technology
- Religion
- Language
- Environment
- Economy
- Diverse cultural groups
- Injustice and discrimination
- Current events
- Trade and the global economy, international conflict and human rights at advanced grades (9-12)

“How can we define what it means to be Canadian? How can we foster respect between different groups unless we understand what each of these groups believe and value?” (Educators)