

Nebraska Educational Standards Addressed by Capitol Forum and The CHOICES Program

What is Capitol Forum?

The Capitol Forum on America's Future is a civic education initiative that engages high school students in civic practice and consideration of current international issues. The program involves students both within their social studies classroom and beyond the classroom at their state capitol. Capitol Forum strives to raise awareness on critical international issues and to help develop a foundation for long-term civic engagement.

The program begins in the fall with a professional development workshop for participating teachers. During the year, students are engaged in classroom discussion of current and historical international issues related to these central themes: international security (terrorism and proliferation of weapons), environmental concerns, global economics and trade, and immigration. In addition, students discuss various options, or "futures", the United States could take in handling each of these important topics. The core goals of Capitol Forum are to develop in students the skills for informed, analytical consideration of international issues and the habits of responsible participation in public policy through classroom discussion, research, visual and oral presentations, and public deliberation. Through the program, students develop critical thinking and discussion skills.

The centerpiece of the program occurs in the spring, when high school students come to the State Capitol as representatives of their participating classrooms for an all-day forum. They deliberate about the role they believe the nation should play in the increasingly complex international environment in discussion groups and a larger, student-led forum. They also participate in an open forum to share their views with elected officials and policymakers. After the forum at the Capitol, the student representatives return to their own classrooms to lead their fellow students in a dialogue on international issues. The program culminates each year with a national online balloting activity in which all students participating in the classrooms vote.

Nebraska STAR Standards and the No Child Left Behind Act

Capitol Forum meets both the State of Nebraska's STAR (Standards That Are Reported) Standards and the national No Child Left Behind Policy by implementing innovative curriculum that addresses both state and federal education standards, providing flexibility and new opportunities in programming at the local level, and emphasizing teaching methods that have been proven to work. Capitol Forum provides students with an enriched and accelerated curriculum that increases the amount and quality of instruction time. The program also allows for a standard of accountability for both teachers and students.

Social Studies Standards

United States History

12.1.4: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze the impact of immigration on American life, identifying factors.

- Contributions of Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, European Americans, Asian Americans, and immigrants groups and individuals.
- Ethnic conflict and discrimination.
- The United States' domestic policies.

12.1.9: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze and explain United States foreign policy since World War II.

- Summarize the origins of the Cold War and the foreign and domestic consequences.
- Explain the new challenges to America's leadership role in the world.
- Explain NATO and other alliances and the United States' role in the United Nations.
- Describe nuclear weapons and the arms race.

12.1.12: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will develop skills for historical analysis. (STAR Standard)

- Analyze documents, records, and data, e.g., artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, journals, newspapers, and historical accounts.
- Evaluate the authenticity, authority, and credibility of sources.
- Communicate findings orally, in brief analytical essays, and in a comprehensive paper.

World History

12.2.10: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze major 20th century historical events.

- Differentiate the development of collective security organizations, e.g., League of Nations, the United Nations, NATO, and Warsaw Pact.
- Differentiate the development of world economic associations, e.g., E.C., NAFTA, WTO, World Bank, IMF.
- Summarize the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

12.2.11: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will demonstrate historical research and geographical skills. (STAR Standard)

- Identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary sources and artifacts.
- Validate sources as to their authenticity, authority, credibility, and possible bias.

The Governments and Economies of the United States and Nebraska

12.3.1: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze the fundamental concepts and challenges to democracy by using writing, discussion, and debate skills.

- Explain equality of all citizens under the law.
- Examine the worth and dignity of the individual.
- Debate majority rule and minority rights.
- Identify individual freedoms.
- Explain the necessity of compromise.
- Analyze individual rights v. public interests.

12.3.9: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will explain the rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and benefits of citizenship in the United States. (STAR Standard)

- Participate in debates, discussions, and readings by analyzing public issues, communicating with candidates, and evaluating performance of public officials and candidates.

12.3.10: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will compare the United States' political and economic systems with those of major democratic and authoritarian nations.

- Compare the structures, functions, and powers of political and economic systems.
- Compare the relationship between economic and political freedom.
- Explain the allocation of resources and its impact on productivity.
- Describe the development and implementation of personal economic decision-making skills in a democratic society.

12.3.13: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will examine the basic economic indicators and fundamentals of international trade. (STAR Standard)

- Define Gross Domestic Product.
- Define Consumer Price Index, employment statistics, and other measures of economic conditions.
- Explain comparative and absolute advantage.
- Discuss exchange rates.
- Explain international trade policies, and the United States' relationship to the global economy.

World Geography

12.4.2: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze how selected physical and ecological processes impact the earth's surface.

- Identify natural hazards, describe the characteristics, explain their impact on physical and human systems, and assess efforts to manage their consequences in developed and less developed regions.
- Explain how humans influence and are influenced by the environment.
- Relate how people's ideas and relationship to the environment change over time, particularly in response to new technologies.

12.4.4: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze the patterns of urban development, such as site and situation; the function of towns and cities; and problems related to human mobility, social structure, and the environment. (STAR Standard)

12.4.6: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will analyze the forces of conflict and cooperation. (STAR Standard)

- Explain the way in which the world is divided among independent and dependent countries.
- Explain the role of multinational organizations.

Reading/Writing Standards

12.1.1: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read. (STAR Standard)

- Read selections to develop and answer literal, inferential/interpretive, and critical questions.
- Evaluate information for relevance and accuracy.

12.1.2: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will locate, evaluate, and use primary and secondary resources for research. (STAR Standard)

- Use print reference materials (gazetteer, atlas, specialized index, handbook, manual, government document, book of quotations, college and career resources, and citation style manual).
- Use electronic resources (CD-ROM, software, online resources, and multimedia presentation tools).
- Use library resources (card/electronic catalog, bibliography, periodical, and other informational text).
- Identify and gather resources that provide relevant and reliable information.

12.1.3: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify and use characteristics to classify different types of text.

- Identify characteristics of different types of nonfiction (autobiography, biography, informational text, essay, technical, editorial, diaries, journals, news articles, memoirs).

12.1.6: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze non-fiction or informational text. (STAR Standard)

- Analyze the structure of expository text (cause/effect, sequencing, compare/contrast, fact/opinion).
- Analyze who, what, when, where, how, why, what if questions to interpret nonfiction text.
- Analyze information from charts, maps, and graphs.

12.1.8: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to analyze literary works, nonfiction, films, and media.

- Analyze philosophical arguments presented in the piece of writing.
- Analyze the author's political ideology.
- Analyze the impact of the reader's experiences on their interpretations.

12.2.2: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will write compositions with focus, related ideas, and supporting details.

- Write compositions with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Select a topic of appropriate breadth for the particular situation.
- Cite resources.
- Define plagiarism and fair use standards.

12.2.4: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will use multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

- Develop narrative, persuasive, descriptive, technical, and/or expository writing for a designated audience and purpose.
- Write to describe, explain, persuade, inform and/or entertain.

12.3.1: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will participate in student directed discussions by eliciting questions and responses.

- Participate in and lead group discussions.
- Evaluate and monitor self and peer participation in group discussion.

12.3.2: By the end of the twelfth grade, students will make oral presentations that demonstrate consideration of audience, purpose, and information. (STAR Standard)

- Deliver formal oral presentations using clear enunciation, gestures, tone, vocabulary, and organization appropriate for a particular audience.
- Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research.
- Cite resources.
- Follow required time limits and deadlines for preparation and delivery.