

I believe that the most important Government standards can be embedded into the American History standards and state assessment.

The benefits are of having a Social Studies EOC Exam in American History with an emphasis on American Government:

- It maintains the relevance of SS in our high schools. Social Studies is severely marginalized in our elementary schools. In grades K-6, SS is sometimes every other day or on “Social Studies Friday.” Ohio students are getting short-changed in civic education.
- OCSS actually supports the spirit of HB 239 in reducing EOC Exams. An American History EOC Exam with an emphasis on American Government standards would eliminate a separate Government Exam, achieving the objective of this bill.

The OCSS believes Social Studies should be on the same level of importance as the other core content areas.

- Rest assured, what would still be taught and assessed are the Founding Documents of our democracy: the Northwest

Ordinance, the Constitution, Bill of Rights and the Ohio Constitution.

- Around 40 % of the American Government standards are the Constitutional Amendments. These are often best taught in a historical context, such as the Reconstruction Era and Progressive Era Amendments. This can easily be achieved in an American History course and assessment.
- Last of all, when American Government became a state EOC Exam, the course, in many high schools, went from a traditional semester class for seniors to a year-long class for underclassmen. This created unattended consequences such as reducing electives for students such as law studies, psychology or economics.
- American Government needs to be taught at the senior year of high school, when the following are most relevant to our students:
 - Understanding citizen rights and responsibilities
 - Becoming a legal adult
 - Registering to vote
 - Signing up for the Selective Service Act
 - Enlisting in the military

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Thank you,
Jim O'Connor
Ohio Social Studies Teacher
OCSS, VP