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SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF MANDATED  
CURRICULUM CHANGES**

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IMPLEMENTING REFORM: A CASE STUDY OF SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES  
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF MANDATED CURRICULUM CHANGES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

to the faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

of

THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

at

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

New York

by

Ricky V. Papandrea Jr.

Submitted Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Catherine DiMartino, Ph.D.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **IMPLEMENTING REFORM: A CASE STUDY OF SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF MANDATED CURRICULUM CHANGES**

Ricky V. Papandrea Jr.

Since the mid-1990s there have been several attempts at wide-scale educational reform in the United States. The majority of educational research that has been conducted has focused on the impact of these reform movements on student achievement outcomes, the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for students to compete in the global economy, the financial impacts on schools and school districts for implementing mandated curriculum changes, or the evaluation of specific programs (Polleck & Jeffery, 2017; Lee & Wu, 2017). Several gaps in the existing literature have led to an incomplete picture of reform efforts, including the impact of teacher perceptions on implementing mandated curriculum changes in social studies, specifically at the secondary level.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework, implemented in 2014. The study was conducted in a suburban New York public high school and utilized data from focus groups of teacher-participants, individual interviews of teacher-participants and administrator-participants, and a content analysis of the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social studies from New York State and through department documentation.

Analysis of the data collected revealed three key findings in this study. First, that mandated curriculum changes in the social studies classroom negatively impacted social studies teachers' perception of teaching and methodology by shifting away from a traditional, content-based social studies education because the new literacy skill-based assessments became the overall driving force in their instructional practices. Second, a breakdown in communication between teachers, administrators, and New York State has caused teachers to become disheartened and frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom, resulting in them relying on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support. Third, teachers perceived the implementation of mandated curriculum changes had impacted their desire for increased opportunities for collaboration with colleagues through high-quality professional development sessions. The implications of these findings for educators, school leaders, and policy makers will be discussed.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this accomplishment and research to my wife Donna, my best friend and my rock. Thank you for all the love, support, and encouragement along this journey. I would not have been able to complete this without you. I am extremely blessed to have you in my life.

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I want to express my sincere gratitude to all the teachers and administrators that were involved with this study. They were enthusiastic to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies in an effort to understand the change process within the educational setting.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

Michael Fullan (2007, 2016) describes how education has become so accustomed to constant calls for change that most stakeholders fail to think about what change means as we are experiencing it at a personal level, or what change means for others around us that are going through the change process. Change involves loss, anxiety and struggle (Marris, 1975). According to Morris (1975), individuals have a need to maintain a connection in their goals and relationships, known as a conservative impulse. People cannot accept change, until the nature of the disruption is clearly understood and comprehended. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Over the past sixty years, there have been several attempts to improve the educational system within the United States to prepare students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be successful members of an ever-changing global society. The first attempt at wide-scale educational reform in the United States took place in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957. Fears arose that the United States would lose the "Space Race" and ultimately the Cold War to the Soviets due to the potential shortage of scientists and engineers. The reforms of the 1960s and 1970s were characterized by many system-wide innovations to bring about the desired change of increasing student achievement, particularly in mathematics and science. These innovations were characterized by open-plan schools, team teaching, and flexible scheduling (Fullan, 2007, 2016; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Mehta 2013;

Popkewitz, Tabachnick, & Wehlage 1982; Tienken & Orlich, 2013). By the mid-1970s, there was increasing evidence that there was little change taking place within the classrooms of the United States, except in small pockets (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Goodlad & Klein, 1970; Sarason, 1982).

The next attempt at wide-scale educational reform in the United States took place during the 1980s and 1990s in response to the release of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983. *A Nation at Risk*, which was commissioned by the Reagan Administration, criticized the public education system in the United States and described "a rising tide of mediocrity" (p. 5). The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by a Back to Basics approach, which was characterized by a renewed focus on the development of basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This shift in focus marginalized social studies with a focus on improvements to student achievement in English language arts and mathematics. This attempt at educational reform was marked by the standardization of curriculum and assessment, and the building up of the federal government's involvement in public education (Cuban, 1993; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Mehta 2013; Tienken & Orlich, 2013). However, there were only marginal changes in student achievement scores because there was no clear direction about how to address the crisis of low achievement identified in the Nation at Risk report (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

Another attempt at wide-scale educational reform in the United States took place at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the passing of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2001. The passage of NCLB increased the focus on educating all students and increasing accountability through testing and consequences for teachers, districts, and

states who do not meet the new standards set out in the federal legislation. The implementation of more rigorous standards, the new accountability measures, and the sustainability of the requirements that all students must have 100% proficiency levels in reading and mathematics, were complicated and have proven to be difficult to maintain (Kenna & Russell, 2014; Mehta 2013; Tienken & Orlich, 2013). Once again, the focus of wide-scale educational reform of student achievement in English and mathematics further marginalized social studies by pushing English Language Art skills within the social studies classroom by limiting instructional time from focusing on social studies content and civics education. Many contend that standards-based educational reform has transformed into test-based reform, where tests communicate expectations and inform practice more than standards (Hamilton, Stecher, & Yuan, 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014). The impact of increased accountability through testing on social studies education included the alteration of educators' schema, where tests were seen to communicate expectations and inform practice more than standards (Hamilton, Stecher, & Yuan 2009). As teachers saw that student achievement on assessments impacted their evaluations, teachers began teaching towards the test as opposed to implementing the best practices in social studies instruction (Kenna & Russell, 2014). Ultimately in the era of increased accountability, assessments drove the instructional practices of teachers in the classroom (Grant, 2000). NCLB ultimately failed to implement reform on the American education system because the state education departments created standardized assessments that lacked rigor, set low achievement thresholds and delayed the full implementation of compliance by nearly a decade (Singer, Thompson, & DiMartino, 2018).



In 2007 the United States Congress failed to reauthorize the NCLB legislation, but states were still required to meet the goals and accountability measures (Kenna & Russell, 2014). In 2009, then President Barack Obama introduced his Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative, which was a competitive grant program to encourage states to meet several indicators such as: (a) producing an environment for educational reform; (b) achieving significant improvement in student outcomes; (c) making sustainable gains in student achievement; (d) closing achievement gaps and improving high school graduation rates; (e) preparing students for college and career readiness; and (f) implementing reform in four core education areas (U.S. Education Department, 2010). In total, 18 states, including New York, were awarded funds through the RTTT initiative (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

In 2015, Congress acted upon President Obama's RTTT initiative and re-authorized and revamped the standards and accountabilities set forth under NCLB with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). ESSA is the eighth re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and each re-authorization has led to the federal government becoming more involved in setting the standards for public education in America, monitoring student outcomes through standardized assessments, and establishing an accountability system for educators (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The main goal of ESEA, NCLB, and ESSA is improving the educational opportunities and outcomes for students from lower-income families (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). ESSA includes provisions that will help to ensure success for students and schools: (a) equity; (b) college and career readiness; (c) state-wide assessment

measurements; (d) support and grow local innovations; (e) increasing access to high-quality pre-school; and (f) accountability and action to effect positive change in our lowest-performing schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The RTTT initiative strengthened the federal government's involvement in public education and continued with the standardization of curriculum and assessment (Kenna & Russell, 2014). The impact on social studies included the further marginalization of the subject with a renewed interest of student achievement in English language arts, by embedding specific literacy skills to be taught within the social studies classroom to support student achievement in English language arts.

The latest attempt at wide-scale educational reform in the United States was the adoption and endorsement of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010, sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education, and adopted by 44 out of 50 states (NGA & CCSSO, 2010). The CCSS released a set of high standards in literacy and Mathematics, along with assessments aligned to the new standards (Kenna & Russell 2015a, 2015b, 2014). Following the release of the new English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics standards and assessments, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) were released in April 2013 and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for social studies state standards were released in September 2013 (NCSS, 2013). The CCSS, NGSS, and C3 were all curriculum changes that each state could choose to adopt to meet the expectations set forth in the NCLB legislation. Many of the curriculum changes set forth within CCSS, NGSS, and C3 shifted instruction from content-based instruction to skill-based instruction (Kenna & Russell, 2015a, 2015b, 2014; NGA & CCSSO, 2010; NCSS, 2013).

In 2014, the New York State Education Department released a new K-12 Social Studies Framework to prepare students for college, careers, and civic life with courses that were rigorous and aligned to the C3 Framework to be fully implemented by the 2019-2020 school year (NYSED, 2014). The roll out of a new K-12 Social Studies Framework presented districts and teachers with the task of moving the social studies curriculum to a curriculum that supports the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students will need to be successful in the ever-changing globalized world (NYSED, 2014). The new K-12 Social Studies Framework is also met with significant changes to the state assessments in social studies, to align with this new framework (EngageNY, 2019; Polleck & Jeffery, 2017). The New York State K-12 Framework included the three foundations of the C3 Framework: (a) the inquiry arc; (b) social studies literacy skills; and (c) civics engagement (NYSED, 2014). The New York State K-12 Framework also included six instructional shifts in teaching literacy outlined by the CCSS, the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (NYSCCLS) for English Language Arts & Literacy, and the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (NYSNGLS) for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects: (a) balancing informational and literacy text; (b) knowledge in the disciplines; (c) staircase of complexity; (d) text-based answers; (e) writing from sources; and (f) academic vocabulary (NGA & CCSSO, 2010; NYSED, 2011; NYSED, 2014; NYSED, 2017). The New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies does not have content standards that relate to the specific subject and has a dramatic shift in social studies instruction from a content-based instruction, where teacher imparted knowledge on the students to an inquiry-based, student-centered learning environment in the social studies classroom

(NYSESED, 2014). Social studies teachers are also required to have a greater focus in promoting literacy skills as they pertain to their discipline (Kenna & Russell, 2015a, 2015b, 2014).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of the implementation of mandated curriculum changes under the 2014 New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. By examining the secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum change, the teachers' beliefs, feelings, opinions, and lived experiences, educators can develop a comprehensive plan that would allow for the district-wide implementation of a mandated curriculum change that includes the roll out of high quality, continuous professional development to better prepare teachers and an implementation plan that includes teachers' input to increase teacher buy in and success of the intended changes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Educational reform, aimed at improving curriculum and instructional practices, have undergone immense changes and cycles throughout the history of education in the United States, which have significantly impacted teachers and their perceptions of change (Endacott et al., 2016; Grant, 2000; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Matlock et al., 2016). Recently, some reforms movements in education have ended with student success, as measured by student achievement on standardized assessments, but most other reforms have made no lasting impact on education (Fullan, 2016, 2007; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Mehta 2013). Research studies have shown that, with proper support, teachers develop positive perceptions of change, which leads to more

successful results (Endacott et al., 2016; Grant, 2000; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Matlock et al., 2016).

Throughout the history of educational reform in the United States, curriculum mandates have been introduced to classroom teachers without the proper support to sustain these initiatives and the proper support to ensure teachers have a positive perception of change (Bridich, 2016; Endacott et al., 2016). Without teachers having a positive perception of change, minimal long-term change will take place (Bridich, 2016; Endacott et al., 2016). In understanding teacher perceptions of mandated curriculum changes, schools can provide support and instructional plans to assist teachers in the transition and to help sustain longer-term change (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Bridich, 2016; Endacott et al., 2016; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). Studies about the impact of positive perceptions or negative perceptions to change on the success of the curriculum changes in social studies are limited.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is a combination of concepts including Schein's (2004, 2000, 2017) Organizational Culture Model, Hargraves' and Fullan's (2012) Professional Capital Theory, and Popkewitz et al. (1982) theories on teaching and methodology to investigate teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes.

Schein (2004, 2000, 2017) defines organizational culture as "the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves problems of external adoption and internal integration" (p.6). If the way of solving problems is successful and effective, it will be taught to new members of the organization as the correct way to think, feel, perceive, and behave when encountering a similar problem. The Schein (2010, 2017) model is often

described as an onion, where the observer needs to peel back the different layers of the culture to have a thorough understanding of the organizations' culture and its capacity to change. The first layer of organizational culture are the artifacts, and these are the characteristics of the organization that can be observed and difficult to decipher. The second layer of organizational culture are the espoused beliefs and values of an organization and they predict the behaviors that can be observed at the artifacts level. The third layer, the center of the onion, of organizational culture is the underlying assumptions and they are a set of norms held by the members or the organization concerning what is acceptable and unacceptable, right and wrong, or allowed and not allowed within the organization.

Hargraves and Fullan (2012) discuss the need for a fundamental shift away from a business capital approach, characterized by a quick, immediate, and low-cost approach to investing in the teaching profession, toward a professional capital approach, characterized by a long-term investment in the teaching profession, to bring about true educational change and reform. Hargraves and Fullan (2012) define professional capital as:

$$PC=f(HC, SC, DC). \quad (1)$$

Professional capital is “The resources, investments, and assets that make up, define, and develop a profession and its practice” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 92). It is comprised of three components: human capital (HC), social capital (SC), and decisional capital (DC). Hargraves and Fullan (2012) conclude that organizations need to develop long-term, high-quality professional development programs that provide the necessary training to implement successful change.

Popkewitz et al. (1982) examined the implementation of Individual Guided Education (IGE) in elementary schools as a social reform effort through a multiple case study analysis. By examining the cultural patterns of the various schools in the study, the researchers were able to see the extent to which those cultural patterns impacted the social reform efforts of the IGE program. The knowledge, work, and professionalism of the schools were impacted by existing institutional patterns and beliefs as well as the context of social conditions. The researchers determined that schools fell into three categories of teaching and methodology: technical schools, constructive schools, or illusionary schools. Technical schools are defined by having work that is fragmented, isolated, and unrelated to truly purposeful activity and characterized by repetition and routine. Constructivist schools are defined by children learning through active participation in school affairs and with a variety of activities that emphasize interpersonal skills and strategies. Illusionary schools are defined by instructional processes that concern community pathology and docile student behavior and the illusion of productivity relieves pressure by producing an appearance of work (Popkewitz, et al., 1982).

### **Significance of the Study**

A review of the literature on teacher perceptions of mandated curriculum change revealed that there has been limited research conducted on the topic of secondary social studies teachers' perspectives. Most studies examining the change process do not exclusively look at teacher perceptions in the change process but focus mostly on the improvement of student achievement or an evaluation of specific resources or programs (Lee & Wu, 2017; Polleck & Jeffery, 2017). Of the studies that have been conducted on

teachers' perceptions to the change process, most have focused on the impact of curriculum changes in English language arts and mathematics and have not focused on the impact of curriculum changes in social studies (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Bridich, 2016; Burks et al., 2015; Crary, 2019; Endacott et al., 2016; Matlock et al., 2016; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). Teachers are on the front line of implementing mandated curriculum changes and examining the change process through their perspective will enable educational leaders to develop a comprehensive implementation plan to successful enact mandated curriculum changes in the classroom (Endacott et al., 2016; Grant, 2000; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Matlock et al., 2016).

By having a thorough understanding of teacher perceptions to mandated curriculum changes, administrators and instructional leaders will be provided more resources to create a plan of implementation that will support student learning in the classroom, meet the expectations set by the mandated curriculum changes, and provide the necessary support to teachers to ensure comprehensive change is successful (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Bridich, 2016; Endacott et al., 2016; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). This study and related research will benefit school administrators who are required to implement mandated curriculum changes, by providing the administrators with information that can be used to make decisions to help facilitate long-lasting, sustainable change including the development of a high-quality, ongoing professional development program, providing teachers with the necessary resources and empowering teachers in the implementation of the change process to increase teacher buy in and collaboration to increase the success of the desired change.



## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study.

1. How do secondary social studies teachers perceive mandated curriculum changes?
2. How do the secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes vary by experience, tenure status, and preparation?
3. To what extent are teachers' and administrators' perceptions aligned in regard to the change process?

## **Design and Methods**

### **Research Design and Data Analysis**

This study is a qualitative, exploratory case study analysis (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018) of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes. This study was conducted at one suburban New York high school during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This study was conducted during the 2019-2020 academic school year. The qualitative data was collected through two teacher-participant focus groups, six individual teacher-participant interviews, an individual administrator-participant interview, and a content analysis of the documents related to the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies from both New York State and department professional development opportunities. The qualitative data was stored in the computer program Dedoose and analyzed through a series of three rounds of coding including an initial descriptive coding, pattern coding, and code weaving (Saldaña, 2013). The qualitative data collected was utilized to develop a deeper understand and conceptualization of the research topic and questions.

## **Participants**

The participants for this study included twelve secondary social studies teachers and one administrator from a suburban New York high school. All participants were licensed secondary social studies teachers and had between 3 and 29 years of teaching experience. This study was conducted using two focus groups of six teachers. One focus group represented six experienced teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience and a second focus group represented six less experienced teachers with 10 years or less teaching experience. The focus group interviews were supplemented with three individual experienced teacher-participant interviews, three individual less experienced teacher-participant interviews, and an individual administrator-participant interview. The sampling techniques used for this study were deliberate to allow for the highest variation as to capture the diversity of a sample on key characteristics of experience with prior curriculum reform cycles and professional roles (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

## **Definition of Terms**

The following definitions are used throughout the study.

*Change Process* – The movement from one point to another point within the educational system and the required steps needed to allow for a successful transition.

*Curriculum* - The lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program.

*Mandated Curriculum* - A required set of content standards deemed by the state in which the standards were adopted (Ediger, 2000).

*Professional Capital* – “The resources, investments, and assets that make up, define, and develop a profession and its practice” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 92).

*Human Capital* – “The economically valuable knowledge and skills that could be developed in people – especially through education and training” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 89).

*Social Capital* – “How the quantity and quality of interactions and social relationships among people affect their access to knowledge and information; their senses of expectation, obligation, and trust; and how far they are likely to adhere to the same norms” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 90).

*Decisional Capital* – “The capital that professionals acquire and accumulate through structured and unstructured experiences, practice, and reflection – capital that enables them to make wise judgements in circumstances where there is no fixed rule or piece of incontrovertible evidence to guide them (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 93-94).

*Organizational Culture* – “The accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves problems of external adoption and internal integration” (Schein, 2017, p.6).

*New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies* – Adopted in 2014, combines the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy and Writing and the

New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies. The framework combines the content outlined in the 1998 New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies and skills outlined in the College, Career, and Civics (C3) Framework from the National Council for the Social Studies.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Introduction**

This section presents the findings from the existing research literature. The research reviewed in this section comes from peer-reviewed journals, national reports, national and state educational policy, education theory and teaching books, and websites. This chapter begins with discussion of the theoretical framework for the study. The findings from the literature have been organized into the following five themes: 1) social studies curriculum mandates; 2) social studies teaching and methodology; 3) social studies best practices; 4) the change process; and 5) teachers' perception of change. This section concludes with a discussion of the gaps in the existing research literature, which this study directly addresses.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is a combination of concepts including Organizational Culture Model developed by Edgar Schein (2004, 2010, 2017), Andy Hargraves' and Michael Fullan's (2012) Professional Capital Theory, and Thomas Popkewitz et al.'s (1982) Theories and Approaches to Teaching and Methodology to investigate teacher perceptions of mandated curriculum change. Teacher perceptions to change are affected by: (a) the underlying cultural values and assumptions of the organization (Schein, 20017, 2010, 2004); (b) the organizational investment in professional capital (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012); and (c) the teachers' ideology of work, knowledge, and professionalism (Popkewitz et al., 1982).

## **Organizational Culture**

Schein (2004, 2010, 2017) examines the culture of organizations and defines culture as the shared learning and problem solving within a group that establishes a common set of shared beliefs and values. Schein (2010, 2017) model is often described as an onion with three main layers consisting of artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions (Figure 1). Any observer of an organization needs to examine each of the different layers of the organizational culture to have a thorough understanding of the organizations' culture and its capacity to change. The first layer of organizational culture is the artifacts, and these are the characteristics of the organization that can be observed very easily. The second layer of organizational culture is the espoused beliefs and values of an organization, which predict the behaviors that the observer can see at the artifacts level. The third layer of organizational culture is the underlying assumptions, which are a set of norms held by the organization concerning what is allowed and not allowed within the organization.

The underlying cultural values and assumptions of the organization has a significant impact on how the organization will perceive educational change and reform. The underlying cultural values and assumptions of the organization are overtly visible, but a researcher would be able to uncover these beliefs from members of the organization through interviews. The underlying assumptions are taken for granted over time and new members of the organization are indoctrinated with assumptions as they become part of the organization (Schein, 2004, 2010, 2017). If the underlying cultural values and assumptions are opposed to the reforms or initiatives that are trying to be implemented, the desired reforms or initiatives will ultimately not be successful. It is important to have

a thorough understanding of the underlying cultural values and assumptions of the organization to develop an effective plan to bring about educational reform and change. In the present study, the cultural values and assumptions of the suburban New York school district were evaluated to examine the impact the organizational culture will have on secondary social studies teacher's perception to mandated curriculum changes. The collection of qualitative data through focus group interviews and individual interviews of participants allowed the researcher to expose the underlying cultural values and assumptions within the organization that have impacted teachers' perceptions to the change process and the successful implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. The uncovered values and assumptions were used as a basis for the three rounds of coding of the qualitative data, such as the breakdown in communication and disconnect between the department and the district regarding instructional expectations in the classroom and the teachers views towards social studies teaching and methodology.

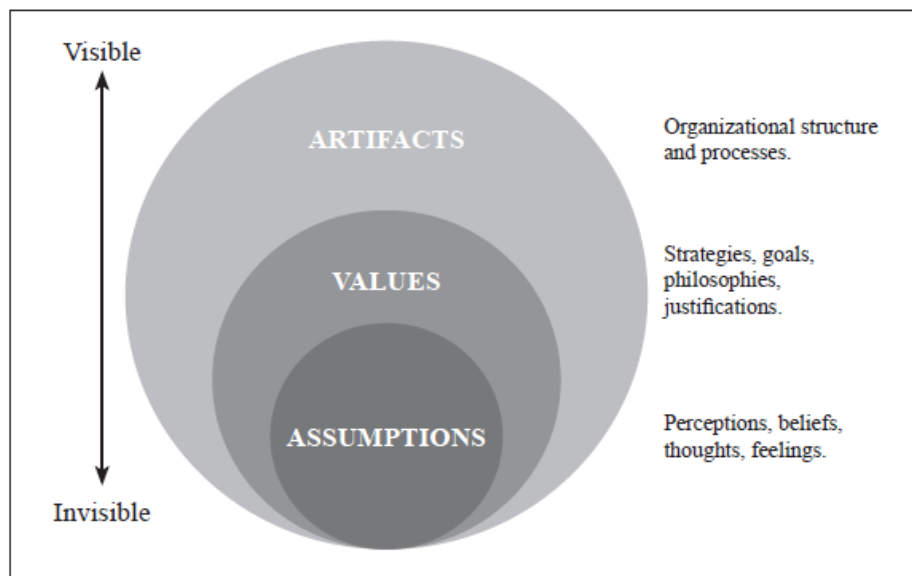


Figure 1: Schein's Multi-Layered Organizational Culture Model (Schein, 2004).

## **Professional Capital**

Hargraves and Fullan (2012) discuss how learning organizations need to abandon the current business capital approach that most organizations have adopted and transition to a professional capital approach. This shift would move away from a quick, immediate, and low-cost approach the teaching profession to a long-term investment in the teaching profession, to bring about true educational change and reform. Hargraves and Fullan (2012) Professional Capital theory is comprised of three components, human capital, social capital, and decisional capital (Figure 2). Human Capital (HC) is defined as “the economically valuable knowledge and skills that could be developed in people – especially through education and training” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 89). Social Capital (SC) is defined as “how the quantity and quality of interactions and social relationships among people affect their access to knowledge and information; their senses of expectation, obligation, and trust; and how far they are likely to adhere to the same norms” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 90). Decisional Capital (DC) is defined as “the capital that professionals acquire and accumulate through structured and unstructured experiences, practice, and reflection – capital that enables them to make wise judgements in circumstances where there is no fixed rule or piece of incontrovertible evidence to guide them (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 93-94). Hargraves and Fullan (2012) conclude that that schools have been focusing on the wrong drivers to initiate school reform because of the influences from for-profit enterprises and policy makers who embrace the philosophy of outputs versus inputs and are looking for a short-term, low cost investment to improve the educational system within the United States through mandated federal and state policies.



PC=Professional Capital  
HC=Human Capital  
SC=Social Capital  
DC=Decisional Capital

$$PC=f(HC, SC; DC)$$

Figure 2: Formula for Professional Capital (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 88).

The organizations investment in the professional capital of the teachers has a significant impact on the success of educational reform or change efforts. Professional capital requires the organization to make a long-term investment in their teachers by providing them with continuous, high quality professional development, the resources to effectively implement the desired change or reform, promoting a culture of collaboration, and empowering teachers with the ability to make decisions to help individual students succeed (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). When teachers feel invested within the reforms and initiatives, it leads to greater buy-in and success of the reform (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In the present study, during the collection of the qualitative data through focus group and individual interviews, the researcher focused on the specific professional development and resources the teachers have received from the department, building, district and state level regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the additional professional development and resources they believed were necessary for the implementing the new framework successfully. During the coding of the qualitative data, the researcher focused on the recurring themes

of professional development and resources, and the perceived disconnect that existed between the department and the district.

### **Theories and Approaches of Teaching and Methodology**

Popkewitz et al. (1982) conducted a multiple case study analysis examining the implementation of Individual Guided Education (IGE) in the elementary classroom. Popkewitz et al. (1982) began by examining the cultural patterns of the various elementary schools in the study and were able to see the extent to which cultural patterns within the learning organizations impacted the implementation of the social reform efforts within the IGE program. The researchers identified that the knowledge, work, and professionalism of the schools were significantly impacted by the existing institutional values and beliefs. As shown in Table 1, Popkewitz et al. (1982) concluded that schools fell into three categories: technical schools, constructive schools, or illusionary schools (Table 1). Technical schools are defined by having work that is fragmented, isolated, and unrelated to truly purposeful activity and characterized by repetition and routine, such as when assessments drive instruction within the classroom. Constructivist schools are defined by children learning through student-centered, project-based instruction with a variety of activities that emphasize interpersonal skills and strategies, as well as making learning meaningful for students within the classroom. Illusionary schools are defined by instructional processes that focus on giving the appearance of work and change, without any significant impact to the teaching and methodology within the classroom (Popkewitz et al., 1982).

*Table 1: Popkewitz Matrix of Technical, Constructivist, Illusory Schooling (Popkewitz, et al., 1982).*

Category	Technical Schools	Constructivist Schools	Illusionary Schools
Style and patterns of work	Technologies and procedures elevated to the status of values.	Children learn through active participation in school affairs.	Instructional processes concern community pathology and docile student behavior.
	Work is fragmented, isolated, and unrelated to truly purposeful activity.	Variety of activities that emphasize interpersonal skills and strategies.	Illusion of productivity relieves pressure by producing an appearance of work.
	Characterized by repetition and routine.	Work includes plays, art, music, and group activities.  Personal responsibility in instructional setting	Self-discipline and hard work lead to substantial achievement.
Nature and conceptions of knowledge	Excellence defined as looking busy (process) or by producing in quantity (outcomes).	Pedagogy stresses ways knowledge is created; principles are established.	Definition of knowledge is tangential to formal curriculum.
	Knowledge is standardized reducing the curriculum to that which can be measured.	Emphasis on students' responsibilities, rights, and personal knowledge.	Formal curriculum secondary to developing a controlled, morally correct student.
		Self-discovery and multiple ways of knowing are emphasized.	
		Knowledge is seen as permeable and provisional.	

Ideology of professionalism: authority, legitimacy, and social control	Poverty of professional dialogue.  Managerial nature of professional discourse limited the range of teachers' decision making.  Teachers have little or no professional autonomy over nature and character of work.  Teaching and learning are correcting children's deficiencies and managing instructional program efficiently.	Teachers exercise control by appealing to students' interests and establishing norms of behavior.  Teachers' notion of competence related more to developmental theory than a fixed notion of achievement.  Activities guided by behavior for participation and expression, not external control.  Teacher and student relationship influenced by children's intellectual and social growth.	Teachers are concerned with an image of the school that projects what they want parents to think.
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Popkewitz et al. (1982) concluded that “Educational planning must involve giving attention to the social, political, and educational complexity of schools, for when reform programs do not take into account the underlying patterns of belief and conduct, innovations may only rearrange the technological surface” (p. 21). Individual beliefs, values and assumptions about work, knowledge, and authority give deep meaning to the school culture and strongly influence the patterns of behavior within the school culture and will have a significant impact on the success of the implementation of educational change. In the present study, focus group questions and individual interview questions were used to examine participants current views of teaching and methodology in the

social studies classroom, as a result of implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. The new framework outlined a focus around the inquiry-based design model and a shift to a student-centered, evidence-based instructional design. During the three rounds of coding, teachers' views about work, knowledge, and authority were taken into account to select the major themes from the findings.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **Social Studies Curriculum Mandates**

In 2010, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) released the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (Grades 6-12) which created a shared responsibility and integrated model of literacy learning across all disciplines (NGA & CCSSO, 2010; NCSS, 2013). The CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (Grades 6-12) outlined twenty anchor standards for social studies, with ten standards for reading in history and ten standards for writing in history/social studies, science, and the technical subjects (NGA & CCSSO, 2010). The CCSS place a high emphasis on the frequent use of high-level complex texts and all the social studies standards are focused on skill acquisition and the cognitive processes of students (Russell & Kenna, 2014). The ten reading and ten writing standards for social studies teachers are intended to be used “alongside a set of state social studies standards in order to provide a guideline on the intended content” (Kenna & Russell, 2014, p. 79). The overall emphasis of the CCSS is focused on improvement of student achievement

associated with literacy and mathematics, rather than the acquisition of social studies knowledge and skills (Denton & Sink, 2015).

The New York State Education Department adopted their version of the CCSS, known as the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in January 2011 (NYSED, 2011). The NYSCCLS contained six pedagogical shifts in ELA and literacy including: (a) balancing informational and literacy text; (b) knowledge in the disciplines; (c) staircase of complexity; (d) text-based answers; (e) writing from sources; and (f) academic vocabulary (NYSED, 2011). In 2015, New York State Education Department began the process of revising the New York State Common Core Learning Standards and in 2017 adopted the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards for ELA and the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (NYSED, 2017). The changes included “revisions, additions, deletions, vertical movement, and clarifications of the current English Language Arts Standards” (NYSED, 2017, p. 2). The New York State Next Generation Learning Standards Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects promote literacy skills and values that students will need in order to succeed in social studies, science, and other technical subjects and “goals for instruction in reading and writing embedded in the content area instruction” (NYSED, 2017, p. 2).

As a result of the release and adoption of the CCSS in 2010, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), in partnership with representatives from a group of state education agencies and from the leading organizations in social studies, developed the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards in

2013 (NCSS, 2013). “The Framework aims to support states in creating standards that prepare young people for effective and successful participation in college, careers, and civic life” (NCSS, 2013, p. 6). The C3 Framework views “the literacy skills detailed in the ELA/Literacy Common Core College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards as establishing a foundation for inquiry in social studies” (NCSS, 2013, p.20). Outlined in the C3 Framework is the use of an inquiry arc, which is “a set of interlocking and mutually reinforcing ideas that feature the four dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies: 1) developing questions and planning inquiries; 2) applying disciplinary concepts and tools; 3) evaluating sources and using evidence; and 4) communicating conclusions and taking informed action” (NCSS, 2013, p17). The C3 Framework contains a major shift in instructional practice to focus on skill acquisition rather than memorization and factual recall (Kenna & Russell, 2015a, 2015b, 2014).

In 2014, the NYSED released the K-12 Framework for Social Studies that “emphasized the foundation of literacy through an integration of the New York State Common Core Learning Standards and through unique disciplinary literacies of Social Studies in civics, economics, geography, and history” (NYSED, 2014, p. 7). The New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies include the three foundations of the C3 Framework: (a) the inquiry arc; (b) social studies literacy skills; and (c) civics engagement (NYSED, 2014). In addition to the new standards and instructional focus on skill acquisition, the release of the New York State K-12 Framework included redesigned New York State Regents Exams that incorporating the shift from content knowledge to skill acquisition and the principals of evidence centered design (EngageNY, 2019). The shift in instructional focus outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social

Studies, “content-area teachers outside of English Language Arts are now supposed to emphasize literacy experiences instead of the subjects they are supposed to be teaching” (Singer et al., 2018, p. 195). Most social studies teachers have been trained to deliver content-based instruction in the social studies classroom and lack necessary training and preparation to delivery literacy-based instruction effectively. The lack of training and preparation to deliver effective literacy-based instruction, will have an impact on teachers’ perceptions to the change process and their views on social studies teaching and methodology.

### **Social Studies Teaching and Methodology**

Zevin (2015) states, in his social studies teaching methods book *Social Studies for the Twenty-First Century*, that social studies definition, pedagogy, curricula, and views on teaching can be traced back and connected to widespread philosophical movements that have impacted education within the United States. “Almost every teacher’s pattern of behavior, self-concept, and curricular decisions reflect one or more of these philosophical conscriptions” (Zevin, 2015, p. 8). The four philosophical conscriptions are: (a) Perennialism and Essentialism; (b) Scientific Empiricism and the New Criticism; (c) Pragmatism and Progressivism; and (d) Reconstructivism and Public Issues (Zevin, 2015). All four of these schools of thought have profoundly impacted the views of social studies education in the United States and are representative of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students need to acquire under mandated curriculums, such as the CCSS the College, Career, and C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards by NCSS, the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, and the Next Generation Learning Standards.



Perennialism and essentialism represent the classical view of knowledge transmission and acquisition. Perennialism centers around the ideology that absolute and unwavering truth exist throughout history and that students need to have a thorough understanding of these truths to become educated and productive members of society (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1987). Essentialism is closely related to perennialism with a focus on the acquisition of basic and essential knowledge, effectively, for students to truly be educated (Bagley, Alexander, & Smith, 1937). Modern essentialism aims to create a “coalition of essential schools” that focus on training teachers to ask, “essential questions,” as well as, students using their knowledge of the classics and using it in application in their learning (Sizer, 1992). Both perennialism and essentialism focus around an orthodox set of skill development with rigorous learning around the classic disciplines of study. Perennialism and essentialism have largely influenced the development of social studies content and the core curriculum taught in New York State.

Scientific empiricism and the new criticism represent schools of thought focused on the techniques of social scientists and the application of the scientific method in the study of individuals and culture. Scientific empiricism uses the scientific method to identify “laws, principles, theories, and rules of human thought and behavior” (Zevin, 2015, p. 9). Students attempt to identify probabilities and interpretation of evidence, as opposed to, absolute truth. The activities students are involved in allow them to see the social sciences through a variety of perspectives and interpretations. During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, scientific empiricism was the prevailing philosophy of the social sciences with the focus on quantifying the disciplines using the scientific method objectively (Zevin, 2015). However, during the late 1970s there was a movement to reject

the learning of social sciences using the scientific method alone. Jurgen Habermas (1988) and Thomas Kuhn (1996) led the new criticism movement to reject the idea that the sciences could not truly be studied free of objectivity and value claims. They argue that conclusions, research design, and methodology can be influenced by bias that exists in the researchers own values and ideology. Scientific empiricism and the new criticism have greatly influenced social studies content, methods, and curriculum over the past sixty years.

Pragmatism and Progressivism represent schools of thought centered around the development of students' reasoning and understandings being applied to the students' everyday life. John Dewey championed the progressive philosophy of education that focused more on the process of learning and that curriculum is not defined by absolute truth, grounded laws and theories (Zevin, 2015). Dewey (1933) stressed the importance of developing decision-making skills with the use of problem solving, inquiry, reflective thinking, and critical thinking. The relationship between the school, the community, and the student's individual experiences shape their education to create well-informed individuals and productive members of society. The application of students' own personal experiences and lives will engage students in the learning of the classroom and be able to apply that knowledge to construct new ideas and skills. Pragmatism and Progressivism have not only had a tremendous impact on the views and methodology of social studies education but has also shaped the ideals found in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards, the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, and the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards.

Reconstructivism and public issues are schools of thought that center around the idea of social justice and student activism. George Counts (1978) advocated the reconstructivism movement, stating that schools must play a crucial role in changing and reconstructing society. Reconstructivism was predominant during the 1930s, 1960s, and 1970s, and focused on not only learning what is just in society, but actively engaging students to go out of the classroom and make positive impacts on society. Students need to acquire important critical thinking and decision-making skills in the classroom to develop their own values, beliefs, and ideology. Once developed, students are encouraged to take actions that reflect those values, beliefs, and ideology. The ideals of Reconstructivism and public issues are schools of thought that are rooted in the civics engagement ideology engrained in the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards and the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies with a focus on preparing students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions for college, career, and civics readiness. These philosophies on social studies teaching and methodology have influenced the differing perspectives that teachers have regarding what instruction should look like within their classroom and what they deem to be the best practices in social studies instruction.

### **Best Practices in Social Studies Instruction**

Despite widespread educational reform efforts, the theoretical best practices in social studies instruction has not significantly changed over the past hundred years, however, there has been limited reform to take place within the realities of teachers' classroom instructional practices (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977; Carson, 2005; Johnson, 2010; Misco & Patterson, 2009; Russel, 2010; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005). Best

practices in social studies are characterized by many as the development of students' conceptual understandings and problem-solving skills through the use of inquiry in the social studies classroom to promote civics engagement (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977; Beyer, 1971, 2008; Grant; 2013; Johnson, 2010; NCSS, 2013; NYSED, 2014; Ratzner, 2014; Russel, 2010; Thorton, 1994; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005; Zevin, 1978). "Children and adolescents are naturally curious, and they are especially curious about the multifaceted world that they live in" (NCSS, 2103, p. 83). When learning is meaningful and relevant to students, students become more engaged and more inquisitive. Capturing this inquisitiveness of students, is the basis for the inquiry-based model of instruction that is at the heart of the C3 Framework and the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

The C3 Framework for Social Studies by the NCSS contains a four-dimension inquiry arc that provides guidance for social studies curriculum writers (Grant; 2013; NCSS, 2013). The four dimensions of the inquiry arc are: (a) developing questions and planning inquiries; (b) applying disciplinary concepts and tools; (c) evaluating sources and using evidence; and (d) communicating conclusions and taking informed action (Grant; 2013; NCSS, 2013). The inquiry arc was developed to "promote student problem-solving, intellectual growth, and moral examination of issues and controversies" and the teachers serve as the facilitators of student inquiry (Zevin, 2015, p. 139). "Young people need strong tools for, and methods of, clear and disciplined thinking in order to traverse successfully the worlds of college, career, and civic life" (NCSS, 2013, p. 15).

Each of the four-dimensions outlined in the C3 Framework for Social Studies align to the priorities outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies

(NYSED, 2014). The components of the New York State K-12 Framework include: 1) content specialization; 2) grade-level key ideas and conceptual understandings; 3) K-12 CCSS literary skills and K-12 social studies practices; 4) K-12 unifying themes; and 5) inquiry arc (NYSED, 2014). These five components work interdependently with instruction and assessment. Students through an inquiry-based approach of social studies, develop both thematic and conceptual understandings while applying social studies best practices and CCSS literacy skills in the context of social studies (NYSED, 2014). The New York State K-12 Framework includes six social studies practices listed in Table 2. These six social studies practices represent a pedagogical shift from rote memorization of facts to building inquiry and the development of skills within the social studies classroom.

Table 2: Skill Progression of Social Studies Practices in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies (NYSED, 2014).

<b>Social Studies Practices</b>	<b>Skill Progression by Grade 12</b>
<b>Gathering, Interpreting and Using Evidence</b>	Develop and frame questions about events and the world in which we live, form hypotheses as potential answers to these questions, use evidence to answer these questions, and consider and analyze counterhypotheses. Identify, describe, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral histories, and other primary and secondary sources). Analyze evidence in terms of content, authorship/creation, point of view, bias, purpose, format, and audience. Describe, analyze, and evaluate arguments of others. Deconstruct and construct plausible and persuasive arguments using evidence. Create meaningful and persuasive understandings of the past by synthesizing disparate and relevant evidence from primary and secondary sources and drawing connections to the present.

**Chronological Reasoning and Causation**

Articulate how events are related chronologically to one another in time and explain the ways in which earlier ideas and events may influence subsequent ideas and events.

Employ mathematical skills to measure time by years, decades, centuries, and millennia; to calculate time from the fixed points of the calendar system (BC or BCE and AD or CE); and to interpret the data presented in timelines.

Identify causes and effects, using examples from different time periods and courses of study across several grade levels.

Identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationship between multiple causes and effects.

Distinguish between long term and immediate causes and multiple effects of an event from current events or history.

Recognize, analyze, and evaluate dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time and investigate factors that caused those changes over time.

Recognize that choice of specific periodization favors or advantages one narrative, region, or group over another narrative, region, or group.

Relate patterns of continuity and change to larger historical processes and themes.

Describe, analyze, evaluate, and construct models of historical periodization that historians use to categorize events.

**Comparison and Contextualization**

Identify a region by describing a characteristic common to places within it. Identify similar and different geographic regions across historical time periods and relate differences in geography to different historical events and outcomes.

Identify, compare, and evaluate multiple perspectives of a given historical experience.

Describe, compare, and evaluate multiple historical developments (within societies; across and between societies; in various chronological and geographical contexts).

Describe the relationship between geography, economics, and history as a context for events and movements and as a matrix of time and place.

Connect historical developments to specific circumstances of time and place and to broader regional, national, or global processes, and draw connections to the present where appropriate.

Analyze case studies in United States history in a comparative framework, while attending to the role of chronology and sequence, as well as categories of comparison or socio-political components.

**Geographic Reasoning**

Use maps, photographs, satellite images, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions, and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.

Distinguish human activities and human-made features from “environments” (natural events or physical features—land, air, and water—that are not directly made by humans); describe and evaluate the relationship between human activities and the environment.

Identify, analyze, and evaluate how environments affect human activities and how human activities affect physical environments. Analyze how characteristics (cultural, economic, and physical-environmental) of regions affect the history of communities, civilizations, and nations.

Characterize and analyze changing interconnections between places and regions.

**Economics and Economic Systems**

Use marginal benefits and marginal costs to construct an argument for or against an approach or solution to an economic issue.

Analyze the ways in which incentives influence what is produced and distributed in a market system.

Evaluate the extent to which competition between sellers and between buyers exists in specific markets.

Describe concepts of property rights and rule of law as they apply to a market economy.

Use economic indicators to analyze the current and future state of the economy.

Analyze government economic policies and their effects on the national and global economy.

**Civic Participation**

Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates; respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument.

Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state, or national issue or problem.

Explain differing philosophies of social and political participation and the role of the individual leading to group-driven philosophies.

Identify, describe, and contrast the role of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies.

Participate in persuading, debating, negotiating, and compromising in the resolution of conflicts and differences.

Identify situations in which social actions are required and determine an appropriate course of action.

Work to influence those in positions of power to strive for extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights. Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with citizenship in a democratic society and interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process.

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Beyer (1971) in his social studies teaching and methodology book *Inquiry in the Social Studies Classroom*, defines inquiry teaching as “putting learners into situations in which they must engage in the intellectual operations that constitute inquiry” (p. 6). Inquiry learning requires students to construct their own meaning of new material based upon their individual experiences. Beyer (1971) states that the nature of inquiry is more than just asking questions and has three main components: (a) knowledge about knowing; (b) supportive attitudes and values; and (c) following the process. Beyer (2008) goes on to examine the process of teaching thinking skills to support the inquiry process in the social studies classroom. Beyer (2008), in his summary of research in thinking-skill learning and teaching, provides four guidelines that include: (a) teach thinking-skill procedures, rules, and information; (b) make these skill procedures, rules, and information explicit; (c) introduce each new skill in a lesson focusing on that skill; and (d) guide and support continuing skill practice. The inquiry-based model is a drastic shift in pedagogical practice in the social studies classroom from direct, teacher-centered instruction of facts and dates, to teachers becoming facilitators of inquiry-based, student-centered learning in the classroom by posing compelling questions and offering guidance on how to answer the posed questions or solve the complex issue, which align to and consistent with the skill progression and inquiry arc model in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.



Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1977), in their book *Defining the Social Studies*, examined social studies education and stated that social studies can be categorized into three traditions: (a) to promote social science; (b) to promote citizenship; and (c) to promote effective inquiry. Barr, Barth, and Shermis see: (a) the social sciences as promoting citizenship education by the use of analysis and evaluation of human behavior; (b) citizenship education provide a future generation equipped with the tools needed for cultural survival; and (c) the inquiry process allows students to ask important questions and develop the skills to find answers to their questions (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977; Zevin, 2015). This is consistent with the progression of skills outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies by promoting civic engagement and promoting student-centered, constructivist learning activities within the social studies classroom.

Wiggins (1989) examined curriculum in pre-collegiate schooling and the struggle between conveying knowledge to the development of knowledge in the classroom. The development of essential questions that guide curriculum in the classroom, allows for the development of the inquiry process and modeling the work of professionals. Wiggins (1989) envisions an educational system that uses class textbooks as the source for syllabus outlines and content to more of a reference book used in the inquiry process within the classroom. High-level inquiries and questioning yield some of the greatest gains possible on conventional tests of achievement, as well as better student engagement (Wiggins & Wilbur, 2015). Questions that are utilized to developed inquiry-based learning in the classroom, are more generally about concepts, excludes specifics about book, events, or facts, allow students to explore the ideas more fully and are overarching questions (McTighe & Wiggins, 2013; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, 2011). Wiggins and

McTighe (2005) suggest that teachers should instrument the Understanding by Design method of unit planning, where teachers examine the desired learning outcomes of the unit of study and develop essential and overarching questions to guide the learning in the classroom. The use of essential and overarching questions in teachers' instructional practices is engrained in the inquiry-based design model outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (2005), in their social studies teaching and methodology book *Best Practice, Today's Standards for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools*, examined educational research related to best practices in all subject areas, including social studies. Their six recommendations for best practices in teaching social studies include: (a) students of social studies should have regular opportunities to investigate topics in-depth, and to participate in the choosing of these topics; (b) social studies teaching should involve exploration of open questions that challenge students' thinking; (c) social studies should involve students in active participation in the classroom and the wider community; (d) social studies should involve students both in independent inquiry and cooperative learning; (e) social studies should involve students in reading, writing, observing, discussing, and debating to ensure their active participation in learning; and (f) evaluation in social studies should be designed to value students' thinking and their preparation to become responsible citizens, rather than rewarding memorization of decontextualized facts (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005). The six recommendations for best practices in all subject areas, including social studies align to the inquiry-based design model, evidence-based instruction, and civics engagement outlined within the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Johnson (2010), in his social studies teaching and methodology book *Making Connections in Elementary and Middle School Social Studies*, examined the best practices in social studies education and built on the practices developed by Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (2005). Johnson (2010) empathizes that the best practices in social studies education focus on: (a) student choice; (b) challenging students' thinking; (c) service learning; (d) development of important life skills through inquiry; (e) multimodal learning experiences; and (f) using authentic and alternative forms of assessment. Johnson (2010) aligned their best practices in social studies education to align with the NCSS disciplinary standards, thematic strands, pedagogical standards, and essential skills outline in the 2002 version of the NCSS National Standards for Social Studies Teachers. This was the basis for the 2013 C3 Framework for Social Studies from the NCSS and the 2014 New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Zevin (2015) examines the various instructional roles that teachers play in the social studies classroom. These include: (a) didactic roles; (b) reflective roles; and (c) affective roles (Zevin, 2015). The didactic roles involve imparting knowledge onto the students. The reflective roles engage students in higher order questioning to facilitate the formation of ideas. The affective roles engage students in examining their own behavior and the behavior of others through the lens of values, beliefs, and actions (Zevin, 2015). These instructional roles and how teachers view their own instructional practices will impact their perspective to the change process.

The above, aforementioned recommendations for best social studies practices align with many of the instructional shifts that are outlined within the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Many of the best practices in social studies promote

classroom environments with student-centered, inquiry-based skill development learning activities that promote students investigating challenging questions. The best practices in social studies also promote students to be actively participating within the classroom and out in the community by focusing on civics engagement. However, the best practices in social studies do not promote specific literacy-based instruction that is promoted by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies which leaves many teachers to feel overwhelmed and not prepared at all to implement literacy-based instruction (Singer et al. 2018).

### **Change Process**

In education there has been widespread reform movements in the United States since 1957 that have dramatically impacted curriculum and pedagogy in the classroom. For the purpose of this study, in order to understand how teachers perceive mandated curriculum changes and its impact on the change process, it is important to understand the relevant literature about the change process in the educational setting. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) developed a model for a three-stage process that has been the standard for implementing change in an educational organization and it has been further developed by others in the field including: (a) basic lessons and challenges of the change process (Fullan, 1993, 2007, 2016); (b) standard-based change (Au, Hirata, & Raphael 2005; Au, Raphael, & Mooney 2008); (c) mandated changes (Clement, 2013); and (d) evaluating the change process (Laing & Todd, 2015). Together these studies examine the 3-stage change process as it relates to the implementation of standard-based, mandated curriculum changes, similar to the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), in their case study analysis, developed a three-stage process for educational change within the organization. The three-stage process includes: 1) initiating the change; 2) implementing the change; and 3) institutionalizing the change (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The first stage is initiating the change, where the leaders of the change define the results in terms of student success and adapt existing processes and a vision to support the innovation (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The second stage is implementing the change, where the leaders of the change concentrate on what is needed to put the initiative into practice by providing constructive and supportive feedback and opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers to refine their practices and improve their results (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The final stage is institutionalizing the change, where the new practices become routine practice in its frequency, consistency, accuracy, and results (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). If any of the three stages are missing or not completed, the intended change will not be successful (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

The three-stage change model can be used for both short-term and long-term change and can be used for any initiative that organizations are looking to achieve (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The three-stage change model focuses on the individual stakeholders taking part in the change process (Ellsworth, 2000). The three-staged process of change focusses on what an administrator needs to accomplish for successful change to take place (Fogarty & Pete, 2007). James B. Ellsworth (2000) identified that the three-stage change process addresses two components: the implications of change for people or organizations promoting or opposing it at different levels and how different stakeholders promote change that addresses their needs and priorities. In this study, the

implementation of change under the New York State K-12 Framework will be examined through the lens of teachers' perceptions to help meaningful long-lasting institutional changes.

Fullan (1993) provide eight basic lessons about thinking about change. These eight basic lessons include: (a) you can't mandate what matters; (b) change is a journey not a blueprint; (c) problems are our friends; (d) vision and strategic planning come later; (e) individualism and collectivism must have equal power; (f) neither centralization nor decentralization works; (g) connection with the wider environment is critical for success; and (h) every person is a change agent (Fullan, 1993). The four elements of successful change include: (a) the ability to work with polar opposites; (b) dynamic interdependency of state accountability and local autonomy; (c) combination of individuals and societal agencies; and (d) internal connection to the organization and an external connection to the community (Fullan, 1993). Fullan (1993) believes that to begin the change process you must first have a moral purpose.

Fullan (2007) examined the importance of relationships, meaning, and motivation in effective and sustained educational change. "Collaboration makes a positive difference only when it is focused on student performance for all and on the associated innovative practices that can make improvement happen for previously disengaged students" (Fullan, 2007, p. 285). In order for change to occur in schools, educators must: (a) believe the proposed change can occur; (b) believe the proposed change makes sense; (c) feel they themselves have a meaningful role in the change; and (d) experience some success with the change (Fullan, 2007). Student must be at the center of all proposed change and

collaborative practices are the key to sustaining the changes that support student learning (Fullan, 2007).

Fullan (2016) provides a detailed overview of what educational change is and examines how to successfully navigate educational change through the lenses of the various stakeholders involved in the change process. The change processes in education takes place on many different levels including the local level, the regional/state level, and the national level (Fullan, 2016).

Au, Raphael, and Mooney (2008), in their mixed-method study, examined Fullan's three-stage process of change and further developed it into a seven-stage process to help school leaders move through the standards-based change process. The seven-step process developed initially by Au, Hirata, and Raphael (2005) and furthered by Au et al. (2008) provides instructional leaders at any level a step-by-step guide to allow change to take place within an organization. The seven stages include: (a) identify what would support improving student achievement; (b) focuses on a core group of leaders organizing the professional development needed to support the change and creates time for teachers to collaborate; (c) introduce a common school-wide vision to the staff; (d) allow the teachers to assist in the development of benchmarks to monitor student progress; (e) establish a system for continuous schoolwide conversation throughout the school year; (f) teachers created curriculum guides that define expectations at each grade level for a vertical articulation; and (g) include the students in the process (Au et al., 2008). The goal of the standards-based change process is for teachers to have continuous conversations about what they are doing to improve student achievement (Au et al., 2005). Open communication and teacher collaboration are essential for successful implementation of

standard-based change, such as the literacy-based instruction outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Clement (2013), in her multiple case study analysis grounded in Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), examined teachers' perspectives on the administration of mandated educational change to determine how to implement change more effectively. Clement (2013) conducted case studies in two secondary schools in order to answer the question: How do different amounts and types of professional learning influence the way teachers respond to the Quality Teaching (QT) model? Both schools were suburban high schools and were selected because they had different professional development programs. A survey was conducted following the different professional development program in each school and the principal of each school, selected three teachers for semi-structured in-depth interviews. Teachers experiencing mandated curriculum changes had expressed concerns about the required nature of the reform, the lack of time to understand the model before implementation, and the fear that this reform would soon be replaced by another (Clement, 2013). "Teachers' views of the conventional approach to managing mandated change indicate that it is damaging to teachers' morale and their sense of professionalism and inadequate for bringing sustainable change in education" (Clement, 2013, p. 48). Clement (2013) suggest the use of a school-oriental approach to mandated curriculum changes where the individual school leaders "take charge of mandated reforms and interpret them in terms of school goals and their own concerns" (p. 49). Clement (2013) concludes that for the change process to be effective, it must be embedded within the entire organization involving all stakeholders.



Laing and Todd (2015), in their case study analysis, examined using theories of change for development, research and evaluation. The study conducted five different case studies at five different school settings and examined a variety of qualitative data, including document analysis, observations, individual interviews, group interviews, and visual and participatory methods. Four approaches in developing their theory of change include: (a) a deductive model using existing research and knowledge; (b) an inductive model built from observations; (c) a mental model derived from stakeholders' knowledge and experience; and (d) a collaborative model co-created through academic expertise and practice expertise (Laing & Todd, 2015). Change theory should not be viewed as linear and should be viewed more as a network with links between strands of action that demonstrate complex relationships (Laing & Todd, 2015). A theory of change framework can be used in various ways, for different reasons and in different contexts.

### **Impacts on the Change Process**

Many variables and factors impact the success of the change process within an educational organization and despite many educational reform efforts over the past sixty years, the way teachers instruct, and the way students learn has not significantly changed (Hargreaves & Goodson 2006; Tyack & Cuban 1995). These factors include teachers age and career status (Hargreaves, 2005), teacher experiences in past reform efforts (Hargreaves & Goodson 2006), and professional development provided to teachers (Hord & Roussin, 2013).

Hargreaves (2005), in his qualitative study analysis of interviews with 50 elementary, middle and high school teachers, examined the relationship of the emotions of teaching to teachers' age and career stages based on experiences of educational

change. “Understanding how teachers experience and respond to educational change is essential if reform and improvement efforts are to be more successful and sustainable” (Hargraves, 2005, p. 981). People experience change through both psychological and developmental stages (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Hopkins, 1990) and “organizational and sociological dimensions” (Hargraves, 2005, p. 981). Many of the findings in previous studies of how teacher age and career stage affect teachers’ responses to educational change were confirmed and identified: 1) in the early years, teachers are enthusiastic and largely optimistic; 2) in the latter years teachers become resistant to and resilient toward change; and 3) in the middle years teachers selective about the change initiatives they adopt (Hargraves, 2005).

Hargreaves and Goodson (2006), in their qualitative study consisting of over 200 interviews across eight different high schools, examined perceptions and experiences of educational change in eight high schools in the United States and Canada among teachers and administrators who worked in the schools in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The most current mainstream educational change theory and practice fails to include the political, historical, and longitudinal aspects of change and the impacts these aspects have on the success of change (Hargraves & Goodson, 2006). Over the past thirty years, change in education has been shaped by the large-scale economic and demographic shifts that produce five change forces that have defined three distinct periods of educational change (Hargraves & Goodson, 2006). The five change forces impact education today are: 1) waves of reform; 2) changing student demographics; 3) teacher generations; 4) leadership succession; and 5) school interrelations (Hargraves & Goodson, 2006). Despite decades of educational reform, the way teachers teach, and students learn has changed little

(Hargreaves & Goodson 2006; Tyack & Cuban 1995). Not only does a teachers' career experience impact teachers' perception to the change process, but also teachers' experiences with different level of professional development and resources provided to them have an impact on the success of the educational change process.

Hord and Roussin (2013), in their book *Implementing Change Through Learning*, examined how teachers experiences with different levels of professional learning and development impacted the success of educational change. There are five interconnected phases of change as it relates to professional learning: (a) preparation; (b) incubation; (c) insight; (d) evaluation; and (e) elaboration (Hord & Roussin, 2013). Three tips for a successful change initiative include: (a) use data to inform decisions; (b) use stages of concern to help support and influence staff; and (c) the use of the Learning Forward's Innovation Configuration Maps to help navigate the change process (Hord & Roussin, 2013). Six beliefs about change include: (a) all change is based on learning; (b) implementing a change is more successful when there is social interaction; (c) individuals must change before an organization can change; (d) effective change affects emotional and behavioral responses; (e) people will embrace change more easily when they are able to see how the change enhances their work; and (f) sustainable change is more likely to occur when all stakeholders own the change initiative (Hord & Roussin, 2013). Administrators looking to implement successful educational change within their school need to be cognizant of the potential barriers to the implementation of change, including teacher age and career status, teachers' experience with change, and the level of professional development and resources available to the teachers during the change process.

## **Teachers' Perceptions of Change**

Teachers are the true change agents in education and are on the frontlines of the change process. Their perceptions will impact the ultimate success of any curriculum or initiative, whether voluntary or involuntary. Teachers' perceptions of change are significantly impacted by the culture of the organization (Bridich, 2016; Crary, 2019; Endacott et al., 2016; Matlock et al., 2016), professional development and resources provided to the teachers (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Burks et al., 2015; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019; Zulhernanda, 2018), and impacts of assessments and accountability of instruction (Grant 2000; Segul, 2003).

### **Culture**

The cultural patterns that exist within the organizational has a significant impact on how teachers perceive the implementation of reform efforts (Popkewitz, et al., 1982). When implementing the change process within schools, reform efforts must consider the underlying patterns of belief and conduct to ensure the successful implementation of the necessary changes (Popkewitz, et al., 1982). Schein (2017, 2010, 2004) states that in order to assess the organizational capacity to change, one must have a thorough understanding of the organizations culture. Hargraves and Fullan (2012) conclude that the social capital, the collaborative power of the group, that is developed within the organization has a significant impact to how teachers perceive the change process. The culture of the organization and the underlying assumptions and beliefs about collaboration among the stakeholders in the organization have a significant impact on teachers' perceptions to the change process (Bridich, 2016; Crary, 2019; Endacott et al., 2016; Hargraves & Fullan, 2012; Matlock et al., 2016; Popkewitz, et al., 1982).

Endacott, Collet, Goering, Turner, Denny, Wright, and Jennigs-Davis (2016), examined teachers' views of CCSS implementation, teaching conditions, collaboration, and job satisfaction. The study was quantitative and used descriptive survey research design utilizing an online survey with a sample of 7,700 teachers (Endacott et al., 2016). Factor analysis of the survey results revealed that the openness and activeness of school leadership had a significant effect on teachers' perceptions of implementation of the CCSS (Endacott et al., 2016). Endacott et al. (2016) concluded that consideration of the leaderships' openness and activeness is an important consideration during transition to CCSS or implementing any significant educational reform.

Bridich (2016) examined teachers' and administrators' perceptions of education reforms focusing on state legislation that altered teacher evaluations. The study was a mixed-methods study that included an electronic quantitative survey to both teachers and administrators and the qualitative data was collected through open response questions and semi-structured interviews (Bridich, 2016). Bridich (2016) found that teachers as a group and administrators as a group held similar beliefs, but "how each group perceives these elements of education policy and reform differs significantly" (p. 1). Bridich (2016) concluded that if reforms are to be implemented, "administrators will need to create school cultures where teachers and administrators talk openly about their perceptions and work together to enact reforms within their schools" (p. 4). The culture of the organization has a significant impact on teachers' perceptions to the change process including the level of collaboration amongst the teachers.

Crary (2019) examined teachers' perceptions of their own openness to change and about collaboration between a school librarian and a teacher in the context of information

literacy instruction through the lens of Michael Fullan's (2007) Change Theory. The study was an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study that utilized a quantitative survey of teacher perceptions and qualitative interview responses of school librarians (Crary, 2019). The study found that teachers had an openness to change, but teachers did report a lack of time to effectively collaborate with their peers to develop, plan, teach, and assess curriculum-based units of study (Crary, 2019). Crary (2019) concluded that the implementing of change "must include direct input from multiple stakeholders" and "that teachers need more time in their day to collaborate" (p. 22). For the change process to be successful, collaboration must be embedded in the organizational culture.

Matlock, Goering, Endacott, Collet, Denny, Jennings-Davis, and Wright (2016) examined teachers' views and support towards the Common Core State Standards and its implementation, their anticipated effects, the impact on their teaching, and their thoughts to leave the profession prematurely. The study was quantitative utilizing an online survey distributed to a sample of 6,826 teachers with 1,303 total survey responses (Matlock et al., 2016). Matlock et al. (2016) found that teachers did express some concerns with the CCSS but overall had a positive attitude towards the Common Core State Standards and its implementation. Teacher attitudes were more negative as grade-level taught increased and for those with thoughts of leaving the profession early (Matlock et al., 2016). Matlock et al. (2016) conclude that "teachers and education professionals should be involved in any reform efforts from the beginning to thwart potential backlash as witnessed in this latest reform of American education" (p. 304). A collaborative organizational culture that includes all stakeholders input, impacts teachers' perceptions to the change process.

## **Professional Development and Resources**

The investment of professional development and resources, defined as professional capital, has a significant impact the success of any wide-scale reform effort in public education (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). Hargraves and Fullan (2012) conclude that schools must make an investment in the knowledge and skills of their teachers through education and training. The amount of investment that the organization makes in the education and training of teachers during the change process will impact teachers' individual beliefs, values and assumptions about work, knowledge, and authority (Popkewitz, et al., 1982). The organizational investment in the human capital of the teachers, by providing professional development and access to resources, will impact teachers' perceptions to the change process and the ultimate success of the reform effort (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Burks et al., 2015; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Hargraves & Fullan, 2012; Popkewitz, et al., 1982; Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019; Zilhernanda, 2018).

Zulhernanda (2018) investigated teacher perceptions on the application of a new curriculum, the 2013 curriculum for elementary schools in Medan. The research was guided by the following two questions: how teachers perceive the implementation of the 2013 curriculum in their elementary school and what are the reasons for the perceptions of teachers about applying the 2013 curriculum in their elementary school (Zilhernanda, 2018, p. 63). The participant of this study were three teachers (two female and one male) that taught in different public elementary schools in the Medan Selayang subdistrict. Zulhernanda (2018) conducted a qualitative study that included interviewing the three teacher participants. The study included questions about the difficulties teachers faced

implementing the new curriculum, the solutions to those difficulties, the difficulties they faced while implementing an assessment system, their opinions on the new curriculum, and their suggestions for improvement. The data from the interviews was analyzed and categorized into inputs, process, outputs, and behavior. The main findings of Zulhernanda's (2018) study were that although curriculum changes had occurred, teachers were still using the old curriculum in their classes. The researcher was able to determine four difficulties that teachers experienced that made implementing the new curriculum a challenge. These difficulties included teachers not having a complete understanding of the new curriculum, teachers believed their misunderstanding of the new curriculum caused difficulties in using it in the learning process, the lack of resources available to them by the school, and the lack of assessments for the new curriculum (Zilhernanda, 2018).

Adams-Budde and Miller (2015) examined elementary literacy teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement the CCSS for ELA. The study was a quantitative study that used a cross-sectional survey with data collected at one point in time from participants at twenty elementary schools in two school districts to analyze teachers' knowledge, teachers' self-efficacy, and actual instructional changes made by the teachers (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015). Adams-Budde and Miller (2015) found that even though there was widespread teacher participation in professional development, overall teachers did not believe that they were fully prepared to implement the new standards under the CCSS for ELA, but they were making progress towards that goal. "Teachers reported greater levels of knowledge and self-efficacy for implementation than changes in practices (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015, p. 30). Teachers overall, felt they



needed more time, resources, and additional professional development to fully meet the demands of the more rigorous learning standards outlined in the CCSS for ELA (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015).

Burks, Beziat, Danley, Davis, Lowery, and Lucas (2015) examined secondary teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement the CCSS and their feelings about the professional development they had or had not received related to implementing the standards. This study was a mixed-methods study that used a questionnaire consisted of selected-response, Likert-type, and open-ended questions and received thirty-five respondents across four states (Burks et al., 2015). Burks et al. (2015) found that 57% of teachers in the study were either "comfortable" or "extremely comfortable" with implementing the new CCSS, however 55% of the teachers in the study reported that they had received insufficient training. Burks et al. (2015) conclude "that in spite of the inadequacy of the professional development designed to help them implement the Common Core, teachers are still confident that they can do so" (p. 258). Providing teachers with high-quality, continuous professional development will have an impact towards teachers' perceptions towards the change process.

Nordlöf, Hallström, and Höst (2019), in their qualitative study examined examine technology teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards teaching technology. They conducted ten, in-depth individual interviews of technology teachers. The findings of the study concluded that teachers' perceptions are impacted by experience, education and interest, subject knowledge, and preparation (Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019). The conclusions from the study identified that negative teacher attitudes and perceptions about implementing new technology emerged because of a perceived lack of support and

resources, which impedes their ability to teach (Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019). Nordlöf, Hallström, and Höst (2019) state the implications of their study were that it is necessary to promote teacher education, through high-quality professional development, and to reserve resources in schools for teachers to implement new technologies in their instructional practices. This would assist teachers in perceiving control over contextual and internal factors that affect their ability to teach.

Hall, Hutchinson, and White (2015) examined teachers' perceptions about the CCSS in writing. The study was mixed-method study that utilized an online survey, with Likert-style and open ended questions, of 250 language arts teachers, across eight states, designed to measure teachers' perceptions of the following four topics related to the implementation of the CCSS in Writing: 1) Preparedness to implement the CCSS in Writing; 2) Barriers to implementing the CCSS in Writing; 3) Positive and negative effects of implementing the CCSS in Writing; and 4) Professional development experiences related to implementing the standards (Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). Hall, Hutchinson, and White (2015) found teachers perceptions varied in their current level of understanding of the CCSS in Writing according to the grade level they teach, their teaching experience, and the amount of professional development they have received. "The majority of teachers still struggle with their familiarity, preparedness, and perceived barriers to implementation" (Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015, p. 97). Hall, Hutchinson, and White (2015) conclude that "beyond just providing professional development to give teachers knowledge of the standards, our findings suggest that teachers need more time to explore the standards, identify high quality resources, and collaborate with one another" (p. 98). Not only does professional development impact

teachers' perceptions to the change process, but the resources provided to the teachers will impact their perceptions as well.

### **Impact of Assessments on Teaching**

The latest rounds of wide-scale educational reform efforts in the United States have linked standard-based changes with teacher accountability and a buildup of the federal government's involvement in public education (Cuban, 1993; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Mehta 2013; Tienken & Orlich, 2013). Researchers have concluded that the link between standard-based reform efforts have transformed into a test-based reform movement, where student achievement on standardized assessments inform the instructional practices in the school more than standards and best practices (Hamilton, Stecher, & Yuan, 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014). Popkewitz et al. (1982) define schools that focus solely on test results, through the repetition and routine of fragmented and isolated work in preparation for exams as technical schools. The linking of educational reform efforts to teacher accountability and student achievement on standardized assessments have a significant impact on how teachers implement and perceive the change process in their classroom (Grant, 2000; Popkewitz et. al, 1982; Seagul, 2003).

Seagul (2003) investigated teachers' perceptions of instruction based on state mandated testing. The study was a qualitative study that focused on five social studies teachers and the impact of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). The researcher collected data through interviews conducted over a six-month period. Each interview varied between two and three hours, allowing the researcher to collect data rich with quotes from the teachers. The main findings of the study found that teachers perceived that the state assessment as an evaluative tool of their teaching and that the

assessment drove the instruction in the classroom. One of the participants stated, “Every time I have to do something specifically so that students will be successful on the MEAP, it steers me farther away from the type of teacher I wanted to be” (Seagul, 2003, p. 306). The study would be difficult to replicate because the interview questions were specific to the participants, the mandated curriculum used, and the assessment that was created to measure student achievement of the knowledge and skills embedded in the new curriculum.

Grant (2000) examined teachers' perceptions of changes in the New York State testing program. The study was qualitative, and the data consisted of interview transcripts of the focus group sessions and post-interview evaluations completed by the participants. The researchers explored the following research questions: In what ways are tests and test results used in classrooms, schools, and the districts; What do the proposed changes in state-level tests mean for teachers and learners; How are teachers being prepared to respond to the new state assessments; What challenges do teachers and administrators anticipate in moving toward new state assessments. The main findings by Grant (2000) concluded that “while teachers are not averse to change, they have real concerns about the nature of the changes proposed, the professional development opportunities available to learn about these changes, and the rationales for and consequences of the new state tests” (p. 20). Grant (2000) also concluded that differences exist in how teachers perceive reforms across grade levels.

### **Gap in the Research**

Research studies have shown, that with proper support, teachers develop positive perceptions of change, which leads to more successful long-term change (Endacott et al.,

2016; Grant, 2000; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Matlock et al., 2016). Most studies examining the change process do not look specifically at teacher perceptions in the change process but focus mostly on the improvement of student achievement or an evaluation of specific resources or programs (Lee & Wu, 2017; Polleck & Jeffery, 2017). Of the studies that have been conducted on teachers' perceptions to the change process, most studies have focused the impact of curriculum changes in English Language Arts and Mathematics and have not focused on social studies teachers' perceptions to mandated curriculum changes (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Burks et al., 2015; Bridich, 2016; Crary, 2019; Endacott et al., 2016; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Matlock et al., 2016). In understanding teacher perceptions of mandated curriculum changes, schools can provide professional development support and instructional plans to assist teachers in the transition and to help sustain longer-term change. This study will add to the limited body of research that exists by investigating secondary social studies teachers' perception towards mandated curriculum changes.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides information about the methods and procedures for data collection and analysis for this study. This study is a qualitative, explanatory, case study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018) with the purpose of examining secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes, specifically the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies in a suburban New York public high school. A case study was chosen by the researcher because the researcher has identified specific cases and within the boundaries of space and time, wants to "provide an in-depth understanding of the cases" (Creswell, 2013, p. 100). The qualitative data were collected through teacher-participant focus groups, individual teacher-participant and individual administrator-participant interviews, and a content analysis of documents related to the implementation of the mandated curriculum changes outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, from both New York State and professional development and resources provided by the district, was utilized to develop a deeper conceptualization of the research topic. This study's qualitative research approach is detailed in this chapter along with the methods and procedures for data collection, coding, and analysis. The data collection and analysis identified in this chapter provide the basis for the findings and conclusions detailed in chapter 5 of this study.

## **Methods and Procedures**

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study.

1. How do secondary social studies teachers perceive mandated curriculum changes?
2. How do the secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes vary by experience, tenure status, and preparation?
3. To what extent are teachers' and administrators' perceptions aligned in regard to the change process?

### **Setting**

This study included a deliberately selected setting to conduct a case study analysis of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This case study site was chosen based on demographics, socio-economic statistics, and location within suburban New York. Deliberate sampling is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

The setting that was selected by the researcher was Harbor View High School (pseudonym). Harbor View High School is located in suburban New York state. As shown in Table 3, Harbor View High School in 2017-2018 had a total student population of 1,587 students, with 796 males and 791 females. The ethnicity of Harbor View High School is comprised of 49% Black/African American; 27% Hispanic/Latino; 17% White; 5% Asian; and 3% Multiracial (NYSED Data Site, 2018). The student population also includes 32% that are economically disadvantaged, 2% that are homeless; 14% that are

classified as students with disabilities; and 5% that are classified as English Language Learners (ELL) (NYSED Data Site, 2018). The community in which the school district resides has a median household income of \$105,888 and a per capita household income of \$38,163 (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, 2018). The average expenditure per pupil for students in the district is \$25,844 (NYSED Data Site, 2018). Among high school seniors, the district has an overall graduation rate of 95% (NYSED Data Site, 2018). The teacher turnover rate in the district is 4% with a 21% turnover rate for teachers with five years of experience or less (NYSED Data Site, 2018). Approval to perform this study within this school district was granted through written permission from the Superintendent’s Office (Appendix I).

Table 3: 2017-2018 Enrollment Data Harbor View High School (NYSED Data Site, n.d.).

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0%
Black or African American	773	49%
Hispanic or Latino	421	27%
Asian	75	5%
White	276	17%
Multiracial	41	3%
Total	1,587	100%
English Language Learners	82	5%
Students with Disabilities	229	14%
Economically Disadvantaged	509	32%
Homeless	27	2%

## **Participants**

The participants for this study included twelve secondary social studies teachers and one administrator from a suburban New York public high school that are in the process of implementing the mandated curriculum changes outlined in the New York



State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. All participants were licensed secondary social studies teachers who possessed between 3 and 29 years of teaching experience (Table 4). This study used purposeful and deliberate sampling to select the suburban New York public high school and the participants. This case study included two focus groups, one including less experienced teachers (10 years or less experience) and the other with more experienced teachers (over 10 years of experience). Research has indicated that teachers' age and career status (Hargraves, 2005) and past experiences with the change process (Hargraves & Goodson, 2006, Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019) impacts teachers' perceptions to the change process. These categories of experienced teachers and less experienced teachers were constructed in order to provide a comprehensive overview of social studies teachers experiences and reflections.

Table 4: Description of Participants

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Tenure Status</b>	<b>Subject(s)/Level Taught</b>
<b>Focus Group 1</b>			
Roger	29 years	Tenured	A.P., Regents
Scott	20 years	Tenured	A.P., Regents
Melissa	15 years	Tenured	College Level, Regents, Electives
Barbara	18 years	Tenured	College Level, Regents, Electives
Andrew	14 years	Tenured	A.P., Regents
Rachel	20 years	Tenured	A.P., College Level, Regents, Electives
<b>Focus Group 2</b>			
Kristen	5 years	Untenured	College Level, Regents, Electives
Tiffany	5 years	Untenured	Regents
Carl	7 years	Tenured	Regents, Electives
Jessica	6 years	Untenured	Regents
Anna	3 years	Untenured	Regents
Allison	3 years	Untenured	Regents, Electives
<b>Administrator</b>			
Rocco	14 years		Administrator

This case study also included six individual teacher-participant interviews, three experienced teachers and three less experienced teachers, and one administrator-participant interview. These categories were beneficial since these distinct groups of social studies teachers have had different experiences with the change process. This case study used deliberate sampling that allowed for variation on key characteristics to capture the diversity of a sample which is recommended (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The sampling technique is used to gain maximal variation to develop many perspectives about secondary social studies teachers' perspectives towards mandated curriculum changes by examining differences between across the sample including teacher age, career status, and past experiences with the change process.

The sample of volunteer participants represented different experiences: years of experience; tenure status, levels taught, and courses taught (Table 4). The initial recruitment of volunteer participants took place via electronic mail to the department along with the informed consent and recruitment flier (Appendix B and Appendix C). All participants in the study took part in focus groups and/or individual interviews. Following the conclusion of the focus group of six experienced teachers and the focus group of six inexperienced teachers, three participants from each group, experienced and less experienced, were selected to participate in an additional follow-up, one-on-one semi-structured interview. An administrator also participated in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. The interviews were utilized in order to provide more depth regarding the themes that emerged out of the initial rounds of coding and data analysis.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

### **Focus Groups**

Two teacher-participant focus groups, one of experienced teachers and one of inexperienced teachers, were facilitated to social studies teacher-participants at a suburban New York public high school. Focus groups can provide important insights into minimally understood topics (Berg, 2007). The researcher conducted the focus groups using a semi-structured interview protocol to guide the conversation (See Appendix D). Systematic procedures facilitate a more effectively run focus group, especially for the beginner facilitator (Berg, 2007). To be able to identify trends in perceptions and opinions, the researcher replicated the focus group interviews with six individuals in each of the two focus groups, experienced teachers and less experienced teachers, being conducted. Two focus groups were conducted at the setting following a department meeting during the 2019-2020 academic year. The first focus group consisted of six teachers that have more than ten years of teaching experience and the second focus group were six teachers that have ten or less years of teaching experience. The research indicates that teacher age, career status and past experiences with the change process impacts teachers' perception towards change (Hargraves, 2005; Hargraves & Goodson, 2006; Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019). By having the two focus groups of teachers based of numbers of years of teaching experience, the researcher analyzed the trends across and between the focus groups to examine the impact that teachers' experience has on their perception towards mandated curriculum changes. The format of the focus group interviews allowed for the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues that may have been mentioned during the initial conversation (Creswell, 2013). The focus group interviews

would allow the researcher to assess the social studies teachers' perceptions to mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

### **Interviews**

Six individual teacher-participant interviews and one individual administrator-participant interview was conducted. Three individual teacher-participant interviews were conducted from each of the two focus groups to gain a more in-depth perspective of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions to mandated curriculum changes (See Appendix E). One individual supervisor-participant interview was conducted to gain a more in-depth perspectives of the supervisors' role in implementing mandated curriculum changes and the impact that implementation has had on social studies teachers' perspectives to the mandated curriculum changes (See Appendix F). Individual interviews were chosen to allow the researcher to have an "understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of their experience" (Seidman, 2019, p. 9). The interviews allowed for a deeper examination of teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. The researcher followed a semi-structured interview protocol that included a few major questions, sub-questions, and follow up questions to obtain detailed and in-depth answers (Seidman, 2019). Semi-structured interviews are often used in case studies and allows the researcher to explore issues and topics that emerge, during the interview, with follow-up questions and immediate clarifications (Seidman, 2019). Having interview participants from each of the two focus groups allowed the researcher to analyze secondary social studies teacher perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes across teacher experience.

## **Content Analysis**

The researcher also conducted a content analysis related to the implementation of mandated curriculum changes in social studies under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies which began implementation in 2014. A content analysis provided background and context to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). A content analysis is an objective and neutral way of generalizing a qualitative description of the content (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The content analysis provided the researcher a method for describing and interpreting the documentation pertaining to the research topic. The 2014 New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and New Framework Regents Examinations were analyzed alongside the 1998 Core Curriculum for Social Studies and Core Curriculum Regents Exams to determine the shift in pedagogy and instruction in the secondary social studies classroom in New York State. Documents from department meetings and department professional development, from August 2018 through March 2020, were also analyzed to examine the experience of the participants within the study. A content analysis allows the research to not interrupt ongoing events and allows the researcher to determine where the prominent themes lies after the data has been collected (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). By conducting a content analysis of the New York State K-12 Framework and the supporting documentation, the research will be able to evaluate the changes to standards, instruction, and pedagogy that secondary social studies teachers had to implement when making a shift from the 1998 Core Curriculum for Social Studies. The analysis of the department meeting and department professional development opportunities allowed the researcher to analyze the experience of the participants in the change process.

## **Trustworthiness of the Design**

Triangulation, where multiple sources of data are utilized to substantiate claims, were used in the data analysis portion of this research study in order to ensure trustworthiness (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). The multiple sources of qualitative data utilized to support the findings and conclusions include data from two focus group settings, six teacher-participant individual interviews, one supervisor-participant interview, and a content analysis of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, the 1998 Core Curriculum, department meeting and supporting documentation department professional development documents.

Member checking, where a copy of the focus group and interview transcripts are given to each respective participant so they can review the transcripts, was conducted after the transcription of each focus group and individual participant interview. This was done to ensure participants had an opportunity to review what they said, add more information if they wanted to, and to edit what they said (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

## **Research Ethics**

After receiving approval from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), letters of consent were sent, along with copies of this research proposal, to the superintendent of schools. Once consent was received from the superintendent of schools, the teachers were informed of the study and their option to participate. Letters of consent were distributed to willing teachers-participants at that time to participate in the focus group interviews and individual interviews that were audio recorded. Participants were informed that they may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed, that includes their participation in the focus groups and/or

individual interviews. During the collection of the qualitative data during the focus groups and individual interviews, teachers and supervisors were given a pseudonym in order to maintain confidentiality. The collected qualitative data was stored securely, with password protection, in the computer program Dedoose.

### **Data Analysis**

All qualitative data collected through the focus groups, individual interviews, and the content analysis were coded following the model presented by Saldaña (2013). First, the researcher transcribed the audio-recordings from the focus groups and individual interviews. Next, the researcher analyzed the data and used the computer program Dedoose to house the data. All data including transcripts and documents were uploaded to Dedoose for coding. A code is often a word or short phrase that represents a “summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 3). Coding is the crucial link between data collection and the evaluation of the meaning (Saldaña, 2013).

The data were analyzed through three rounds of coding. The first round of coding was an initial descriptive coding using attribute coding that logs the essential information about the data and demographic characteristics of the participants (Saldaña, 2013). The second round of coding consisted of pattern coding, a way of grouping summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs to look for themes and identify connections related to secondary social studies teacher perceptions of mandated curriculum change and the change process. The third round of coding involved code weaving, the integration of key code words and phrases into narrative to see how they connect to the research questions in order to develop the themes further (Saldaña, 2013). Three main themes

emerged from the analysis of the collected data, which included social studies teaching and methodology, collaboration and communication, and professional development and resources. This allowed the researcher to draw multiple conclusions and present the findings of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions to mandated curriculum changes while implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

### **Researcher Role**

The researcher's professional role, which had an influence on the present study was to serve in the capacity as a facilitator, manager, and responder for the implementation and roll-out of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. As a Supervisor of Social Studies, the researcher during the course of his job responsibilities, was responsible for developing an implementation plan for the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, designing new district curriculums that align with the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, and managing the roll-out of standards and assessments aligned to the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. During this process the researcher was tasked with unpacking the new standards and benchmarks, facilitating professional development for the staff, and responding to concerns that teachers would have throughout the implementation process. Understanding teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes would help the researcher develop strategies to help successfully implement the current and future mandated curriculum changes.

While conducting qualitative research, it was important for the researcher to identify possible researcher and participant biases that could impact the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2013). To avoid potential confirmation bias, where the researcher



interprets the data to support their hypothesis, the researcher considered all the data obtained and analyzed it with a clear and unbiased mind and continually re-evaluated the impressions and responses, and ensured that pre-existing assumptions did not influence the data collected (Creswell, 2013). To avoid potential leading questions and wording bias, where questions lead or prompt the participants in the direction of probable outcomes that may result in biased answers, the researcher kept the questions simple and was careful to avoid words that could introduce bias (Creswell, 2013). To avoid potential acquiescence bias, where the participant chooses to agree with the moderator or researcher, the researcher framed questions that were open-ended to prevent the participant from simply agreeing or disagreeing and guide them to provide a truthful and honest answer (Creswell, 2013).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This study utilized two focus groups of teacher-participants, six individual interviews of teacher-participants, one individual interview of an administrator-participant, as well as a content analysis of documents pertaining to New York State's rollout of the K-12 Framework for Social Studies and department documents pertaining to professional development centered around the implementation of the New York K-12 Framework for Social Studies, from August 2018 to March 2020. This chapter provides analysis of the collected data according to themes that emerged within the context of the research questions.

There were three overarching themes that emerged from the analysis of the collected data from the study. The first major theme to emerge was the social studies teaching and methodology. Within the first overarching theme, three sub-themes emerged that included social studies content vs. literacy skills, the impact of assessments, and the impact on student learning and motivation. The second overarching theme that emerged was collaboration and communication. Within the second overarching theme, three sub-themes emerged that included teacher collaboration, disconnect between the department and the district, and the New York State rollout of the K-12 Framework and assessments. The third overarching theme that emerged was professional development and resources. Within the third overarching theme, two sub-themes emerged that included professional development and resources received and additional professional development and

resources wanted (Table 5). This chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings according to the research questions of the study.

**Table 5: Overarching Themes and Sub-themes**

Overarching Theme	Sub-theme 1	Sub-theme 2	Sub-theme 3
Social Studies Teaching and Methodology	Social Studies Content vs. Literacy Skills	Impact of Assessments	Impact on Student Learning and Motivation
Collaboration and Communication	Teacher Collaboration	Disconnect Between the Department and the District	New York State Rollout of the K-12 Framework and Assessments
Professional Development and Resources	Professional Development and Resources Received	Additional Professional Development and Resources Wanted	

## **Findings**

### **Theme 1: Social Studies Teaching and Methodology**

An overarching theme that emerged during the analysis of collected data was social studies teaching and methodology. Each of the participants shared their views on the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the impact the implementation of the new framework has had on their teaching and methodology in the social studies classroom. Within the theme of social studies teaching and methodology, three sub-themes emerged from the collected data. The first sub-theme was social studies content vs. literacy skills. The second sub-theme to emerge was the impact of assessments. The third sub-theme to emerge was the impact to student learning and motivation. Together, these three sub-themes encompass teachers’ perceptions towards the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the impact the

implementation of the new framework has had on their teaching and methodology in the secondary social studies classroom.

### **Social Studies Content vs. Literacy Skills**

The first sub-theme to emerge regarding social studies teaching and methodology, from the collected data, was the struggle of balancing important social studies content while incorporating the literacy skills outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and how their instructional practices have changed as a result of implementing the new framework in their classroom. Most participants viewed social studies content and literacy skills outlined in the new framework as independent of each other, as opposed to using the social studies content to teach the literacy skills.

There was consensus among experienced teachers about the concern over the perceived loss of time in the curriculum to teach literacy skills that are outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies at the expense of teaching the social studies content. Barbara, an experienced social studies teacher of 18 years, expressed frustration with implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies by stating:

It is less focused-on content and more focused on reading text, and how to write, what to write, how to compare two types of texts, the analysis of it. And it's kind of sad to leave the content behind for the skill.

Rachel, an experienced social studies teacher of 20 years, agreed and added about the changing roles of the social studies teacher in the classroom, "And also our roles, I think are changing from history teacher to reading teacher. And it's not necessarily a

degree everybody holds, so it's frustrating.” Andrew, an teacher of 14 years underscored the focus on the literacy skills over the social studies content, “An emphasis now on much more in depth and lengthy text, less content focused, more on the ability for students to analyze different types of texts, corroborate sources, analyze for point of view, more skills based than content base.” Scott, an experienced social studies teacher of 20 years, expressed concern on the time he has in the curriculum to teach both the content and the skills, “I feel like I'm really rushing through content.” Roger, an experienced teacher of 29 years, expressed aggravation about the loss of time to focus on the social studies content in the classroom, “I spend significant more time on longer documents and working on those skills at the cost of being able to cover the content or being able to spend appropriate time on content.” He added, disappointedly, “And reducing the content to make room for the process has reduced the opportunities to mold kids to be more empathetic and more ethical. And that's very disappointing.” Barbara echoed the concerns of losing time to teach content to teaching the literacy skills by stating, “They're taking the history, and the knowledge of history, out of it for the favor of knowing how to read.” Melissa, an experienced social studies teacher of 15 years felt that she spends “less time on content, more time on long winded readings.” Experienced teachers mostly viewed social studies content and literacy skills independent of one another and that there is no time in the current curriculum to effectively incorporate both.

Most less experienced teachers also expressed a concern regarding the loss of time in the classroom to cover both the social studies content and the literacy skills but were more supportive of a balance between content and skills in the social studies classroom. Kristen, a less experienced social studies teacher of 5 years, shared her

observations regarding the impact she has seen, “I think that there's a fear within not just our department, but in general over losing content to the skills.” Carl, a less experienced social studies teacher of 6 years, expressed the struggle he has seen regarding the balance between social studies content and literacy skills:

I think there's a lot of pros and cons to it also, and in content, not to say this to seem selfish at the same time, but I also just really, really love history, and with the new framework and the tasks and what we have seen in the past, it's become so focused on skills that I think teachers now are kind of in a limbo where we don't really know how much we're supposed to teach of a certain area or what specific topic we're supposed to go into a certain area.

Tiffany, a less experienced teacher of 5 years, added that when focusing on skill development, “It's very easy to fall behind in terms of content.” Carl echoed with, “trying to balance between how do I get to all the content while teaching skills simultaneously sometimes can be over challenging.” However, Carl saw the value in teaching the skills, “I like how they are trying to implement a wide variety of skill work for the students. I think it's vital for their success both inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom.” Kristen echoed with seeing the positives of the literacy skill development, “I think that the change from just dates and content-based to a little bit more of a focus on critical thinking and connections over time is definitely a positive.” Tiffany also had a positive view about the literacy skills, “I like the shift towards skills because with the access that our kids have to technology, knowing so many of the old school specific names and dates of historical events isn't what's going to help our students pass school and college.” Most inexperienced teachers expressed their love for social studies and social studies content and found balancing the content and the skills difficult. However,

most also saw the value to incorporate the literacy skills to prepare their students for life beyond high school.

Rocco, the administrator, has observed a positive impact to student learning within the classroom, but expressed concerned that more experienced teachers are resistant to the shift from content focus to skill focused within their social studies instruction. Rocco stated:

I think overall student learning has improved with a social studies classroom because students are engaging in deeper thought and analysis of documents. However, I do feel that it is at expense of the content. And social studies being a very content rich subject, I feel that a lot of veteran teachers resent this shift because they have been taught the importance of content within social studies.

He continued by expressing some of the challenges he sees as an administrator, “some of the challenges that I faced is getting some of the veteran teachers to see the importance of teaching the kids the necessary skills in order to be successful in the 21st century.”

During the content analysis of the department professional development documents, the collected data showed that there has been an emphasis within the department to use the social studies content to teach the literacy skills outlined in the new framework. The historical thinking skills professional development in September 2018, that focused on specific literacy-based social studies practices, and the literacy skills in social studies professional development in November of 2019 and February 2020 showed a focus, “using the content to teach the skills.” Throughout department meeting agendas, from September 2018 to March 2020, the theme that the social studies content and the literacy skills should be taught in conjunction with one another and not viewed as two separate entities was interwoven.

An analysis of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies showed that both the content and the skills should be taught together. The New York State Framework for Social Studies specifically states that “literacy skills and social studies practices that should be developed and fostered by students, using the content for each grade.” The course sequence and content requirements outlined within the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies are similar to the Social Studies Resource Guide released with the Core Curriculum in 1998. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers have focused on the literacy skills outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, however, teachers perceived that the focus on teaching literacy skills in the social studies classroom negatively impacted their ability to cover the social studies content.

### **Impact of Assessments**

The second sub-theme to emerge regarding social studies teaching and methodology, from the collected data, was the impact of the new framework assessments. Participants across both focus groups and individual interviews were asked about their views of the new framework assessments and how their instructional practices have changed as a result of the new framework assessments. Most teachers expressed that the new framework assessments impacted their instructional practices by focusing on more independent reading and a focus on preparing students for the types of questions that are on the new framework assessments. All of the experienced teachers, most of the less experienced teachers, and the administrator all expressed concern on the format of the



new framework assessments and how the assessments have impacted instruction within the social studies classroom.

There was consensus amongst experienced teachers that they did not feel the new assessments were an effective measure of what the students learned throughout the year and that they tailored their instructional practices to prepare students to perform well on the new assessments. This included a focus on the use of longer documents and more independent practice analyzing documents. Scott, began the conversation:

They created this exam that is, we're talking about kids again that have less than the attention span, but we've made it a longer exam with more documents to read, and not necessarily being tested on anything that we've taught them, except for the skills.

Roger echoed his displeasure with the new assessments and the inability to effectively marry the social studies content and the literacy skills:

They're not doing a good job of marrying content with skills. They're not doing a good job of making it fair for the students to be able to demonstrate their skills because they may not be aware of the content being asked and they're not able to demonstrate their knowledge of content because a lot of content is omitted on the test. They need to do something about the tests.

Barbara, agreed that the new assessments are not an accurate measure of what the students have learned throughout the year and focused on the social studies content that does appear on the exam:

Not a fan. I feel like it's more of a reading test. And also, when they do decide to throw in some social studies content, it's meant to trick the kids on very random vague facts instead of overview of ideas.

She went on to add that her current teaching practices did not necessarily match the expectations present on the new framework assessments, "I believe there is a disconnect

in terms of the skills with the style of teaching, kind of creates a problem trying to prepare the students.” Melissa discussed the struggle the format of the exam presents for the students, “It’s hard for them, and I feel like maybe the design of the exam, giving them so many options is difficult.” Rachel expressed frustration by the omission of large units of study from the exam, “Big topics, big units are totally left out, whereas something that maybe you spend a day on is covered in three questions.” As a result of the structure of the exam, experienced teachers discussed the changes they made to their instructional practices to help prepare students for the new assessments. Roger discussed some of the changes he had to make:

I cut content that may or may not be on the Regents, like the Irish Potato Famine, the battles of World War I and World War II, the generals, the leadership. I’ve eliminated that so I can spend two more days on the Holocaust. I spend less time on, say, Southeast Asia so I can spend more time discussing Gandhi or Nelson Mandela. To hold onto the idea of molding kids to be ethical and empathetic, I’m potentially harming them on their Regents scores.

Melissa focused on the need to prepare the students for the lengthy documents on the new framework assessments, “That has changed the fact that I feel like I can do less group work because we have to spend more time reading these documents to build up students’ reading stamina for the exam.” Alex agreed that building students reading stamina in class was important because of the amount of independent reading is on the new framework assessments:

Now it seems that we need to actually require them to maintain that focus for a longer period of time. So lengthier documents would be the biggest, lengthier and hard, not shying away from whole documents to prepare them for the Regents.

Rachel also added that she also focuses on reading stamina in the classroom, “Just so much time that has to be devoted to spending reading, working on the skills. It’s just so hard. It’s hard to get there.” All of the experienced teachers expressed concern regarding

the new framework assessments, particularly the length and the number of documents that appear on the new framework assessments. Most experienced teachers expressed that their instructional practices in the classroom has changed as a result of the new framework assessments, including a focus on more independent reading of longer, more complex documents.

Most less experienced teachers did not feel the new assessments were an effective measure on what the students learned throughout the year and felt there was a disconnect between the type of instructional outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the way the students are evaluated on the new assessments. Carl expressed concern that major units of study are being omitted on the new framework assessment, “Then the state decides we're going to give a test and that topic now is completely overlooked, which might be one of the more monumental parts of history such as World War II.” He continued by stating this caused a problem for teachers pacing of the curriculum, “It makes it challenging for us as teachers to know where we're supposed to focus, how much we're supposed to focus on.” Kristen, also focused on the omission of major topics from the new framework assessments, “It was mentioned before that the Global History Regents didn't have a single question about World War II. Then that sort of begs the question of is that important for students to know?” Tiffany expressed concern regarding the length of the new framework assessments and the impact on the students:

I think the Regents exam is a very long test, and I think that that detracts almost from the effective teaching of the skills, that while the skill that the test is teaching for I really like, but I think the length of the test and the amount the kids have to do in that amount of time is not effective for the kids.

Allison, also shared her views regarding the length of the assessments and the difficulty for students to focus for the length of time required to be successful, “I think it's kind of ironic that they're pushing so hard to way increase the stamina when we're dealing with a generation of kids whose attention span is nothing because of technology.” As a result of the format and expectations of the new assessments, most inexperienced teachers felt there was disconnect between the type of instruction in their classroom, including student-centered, collaborative activities and how the new framework assessments evaluated the students at the end of the course. Allison began the conversation, “So, it's kind of a weird almost disconnect between what's expected in the classroom versus what's expected at the end of the year and the state assessment.”

Kristen, concurred and discussed everything she is trying to juggle to prepare her students for the new framework assessments:

I do agree that there's a major disconnect between what's going to be on the exam or what we believe is going to be on the exam with what students need to know for the exam, and be able to do, and what we're expected to do in our day to day teaching.

Carl continued and discussed the perceived disconnect between the style of instruction in his classroom and the way students are evaluated on the new framework assessments:

I've been thinking about this a lot actually, that with the changes to the way that we're expected to give instruction, and the way that the Regents exam has changed, I think it's kind of ironic that they're pushing so hard to way increase the stamina when we're dealing with a generation of kids whose attention span is nothing because of technology.

Anna, a less experienced teacher of 3 years agreed and also saw the disconnect, “Our current in the classroom expectations don't necessarily match the formatting and expectations of the test.” Most of the less experienced teachers expressed concern

regarding the new framework assessments, particularly the length and the number of documents that appear on the new framework assessments. Most of the less experienced teachers also saw a disconnect between the style of instruction expected in their classroom and the way students are evaluated on the new framework assessments.

Rocco, the administrator, shared some of the same concerns, with both experienced and inexperienced teachers, with the amount of reading required for students to be successful on the new assessments, “I also feel that the assessments really pushed the limit of students' stamina when it comes to reading.” He added that there is a need to increase the reading stamina of the students, “I feel that students that are not used to having that sort of test stamina or being able to read documents for an extended period of time.” Rocco, the administrator observed that, “The importance of the Regents exam has led teachers to try to tailor their instruction for the students to be successful on those exams.” Rocco, all of the experienced teachers, and most of the less experienced teachers all expressed concern on the format of the new framework assessments and how the assessments have impacted instruction within the social studies classroom.

During the content analysis of the New York State Core Curriculum Regents Exams and New York State New Framework Regents Exams, the collected data showed a significant change in the format, structure, and expectations of the assessments. The New Framework Regents for Global History and Geography II, first administered in June 2019, was organized into three parts; part one contained 28 stimulus-based multiple-choice questions, based on the analysis of 12-14 documents; part two contained critical response questions based off the analysis of two separate two document sets; and part three contained an Enduring Issues Essay based off of five documents, with no

scaffolding questions. The documents in the New Framework Regents Exam were longer in length and complexity, compared to the assessments for the 1998 New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies. The students also were not provided a historical context for the writing prompts, as was past practice on previous assessments and had to determine, based on their analysis of the documents, what enduring issue in global history is present in the documents. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers have focused their instruction in the social studies classroom towards the format of the new assessments and the perceived practice and skills students need to be successful on the end of the course, high-stakes assessment.

### **Student Learning and Motivation**

The third sub-theme to emerge regarding social studies teaching and methodology from the collected data was the impact on student learning and motivation in the social studies classroom. Participants across both focus groups and individual interviews were asked about the impact to student learning and their instructional practices as a result of implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Most experienced teachers emphasized the lack of student motivation in the social studies classroom as a result of the changes to their instructional practices to prepare students for the new framework assessments. Most less experienced teachers focused more on trying to create more engaging lesson for their students that incorporate both the content and the skills the students need to be successful.

Most of the experienced teachers expressed frustration and were disheartened by the perceived lack of motivation that students showed as a result of the increased reading and writing skills being implemented within the social studies classroom. Roger expressed annoyance with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, “I have to juggle the content with the skills, with the metacognition, with the hunting for things, with the creating multiple choice stimulus-based questions, and still making this doable, and interesting.” Scott echoed those concerns with the lack of motivation with the students in his classroom:

I think that's something that I struggle with is that motivation when they walk in, that thing to pull them in. I think I've lost a little bit of that, because of such an emphasis on them sitting down and reading.

Barbara echoed those concerns regarding student motivation in her classroom because of the new focus on reading and writing skills, “I feel like you can't infuse as much fun into the curriculum as you used to.” She added:

All the reading and the writing and the understanding and analyzing that has taken over rather than doing fun projects that might make social studies a little bit more memorable and relatable to kids.

Melissa agreed and shared her concerns regarding student motivation in her classroom, “How can I get this to them in a way that I can still motivate them to do something?” She doesn't see how the students are benefiting by the change taking place within the social studies classroom, “I think that they're learning coping skills more than reading skills.” Regarding the changes to their instructional practices Melissa stated that she is:

Making sure that every lesson has a document, a reading source in there, so that they can get themselves conditioned really for the lengthy reading that they're going to expect at the end of the year to prep them for it

Alex agreed that he has to make changes in his instructional practice to help prepare students for the new assessments, “I've always kind of steered away from having long periods of quiet reading in class, and now I feel like that's what we need to do.” Scott also discussed the planning for his class, “Creating documents and trying to figure out a way of delivering to them that's not the same thing every day either.” Most experienced teachers expressed concern regarding and frustrated by a perceived decrease in student motivation in the social studies classroom as a result of them altering their instructional practices to help prepare the students for the new assessments by increasing their focus on literacy skills.

Most of the less experienced teachers focused mostly on being creative and designing lessons that engage the students and support student collaboration, while introducing the necessary literacy skills for the students to be successful on the new framework assessments. All of the less experienced teachers expressed they have not really seen a shift in social studies instruction within their classrooms because the new framework is all they have ever known. Allison stated that the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies is “definitely aiming to have things be more student centered, more project based, more hands on for students.” Carl agreed while discussing his instructional practices, “I really haven't seen really too much of a change. I think as a relatively new teacher still the way I was taught in college was to be creative, and focus on skills, and try to make history come alive for students.” Carl discussed how he engages his students in the social studies classroom:

What I try to do personally is I think group work is essential. I think it's really important. Students need to be able to work together cooperatively as the workforce is geared towards this, so I try to focus on that also.



Kristen agreed and shared how instruction is based in her classroom, “So in my classroom a lot of the learning in social studies is based on group work, so a lot of the times students work together and collaborate to complete their classwork.” Kristen continued and expressed how she really has not seen a change in her instructional practices:

I came right when the new framework came out. So it is all that I've known as far as teaching, and I do think that the skill-based learning is good, I think that encouraging students to work together and collaborate more, and start self-advocating for themselves more is definitely something that's good and positive

Tiffany agreed and shared, “But for me there really hasn't been any kind of a shift because this is all I've ever taught towards.” Anna concurred and discussed how she viewed the skills within her classroom:

I'm not sure how much the social studies instruction has changed based on the new framework. I feel like skills have always been important, and I'm not sure any kind of framework or upgraded standards or anything like that, how much that revolutionizes how we teach and what we teach, because I feel like teachers always emphasize skills and group work and all these different topics and thought processes.

All of the less experienced teachers expressed that they have not seen a significant change to their instructional practices within the social studies classroom, because the new framework is all they know and have taught. Most of the less experienced teachers were excited to create engaging, student centered lesson plans that balanced the necessary social studies content and literacy skills for the students to be successful.

During the content analysis of the department meeting agendas and the professional development documents from August 2018 through March 2020, the collected data showed an emphasis on student-centered protocols were modeled for teachers, by administrators, to implement these various protocols to engage the students

in inquiry and problem solving. These protocols modeled were a mixture of protocols from EL Education, AVID, and Facing History. Rocco, the administrator discussed the instructional expectations within the district:

Well, our district has always been a supporter of a student-centered classroom design where students are producers. And I think that the inquiry-based model within the social studies framework allows teachers to facilitate that type of instruction where students are actually leading the discussion in the classroom.

Student inquiry and collaboration is at the heart of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, as well as, the C3 Framework from the National Council for the Social Studies. The inquiry arc centers around students developing conceptual and thematic understandings while applying social studies practices and literacy skills in the context of the social studies content. The focus of inquiry in the classroom is on the implementation of compelling and supporting questions within the social studies classroom that are both teacher and student created. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that most experienced teachers perceived a negative impact to student motivation and learning in the social studies classroom, while some less experienced teachers and the administrator focused on a balance between teaching the necessary skills and content in an engaging way for students.

## **Theme 2: Collaboration and Communication**

A second overarching theme that emerged during the analysis of collected data was collaboration and communication. Each of the participants shared their views on the impact the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies has had on their instructional day. Within the theme of collaboration and communication, three sub-themes emerged from the collected data. The first sub-theme that emerged was

teacher collaboration. The second sub-theme to emerge was the disconnect between the department and the district. The third sub-theme to emerge was the New York State Rollout of the framework and assessments. Together, these three sub-themes encompass teachers' perceptions towards the impact the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies has had on collaboration and communication.

### **Teacher Collaboration**

The first sub-theme to emerge regarding collaboration and communication, from the collected data, the importance of teacher collaboration with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and how their instructional days have changed as a result of implementing the new standards in their classroom. All participants expressed the importance of teacher collaboration, for planning and support, as they implemented the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies within their classrooms.

There was consensus amongst the experienced teachers that teacher collaboration was instrumental in the transition to the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Harbor View High School decided to transition to the new framework and new assessments as they were released. Alex stated as the new framework was coming out, the department worked collaboratively to decide their implementation plan:

As a department we decided early on that we were going to just go for it instead of taking the approach of waiting and see and, "Maybe we'll do transitional exams," but we just went for it. We all decided that it's inevitable; we're going to have to do it anyway, so might as well get started.

Rachel shared her views regarding teacher collaboration within the department, “There's a really good collaboration in our department especially.” Roger elaborated on the teacher collaboration that occurs within the department:

We're all reflective in our practices and we all verbalize our successes and our failures and listening, and sharing has helped me avoid some pitfalls and hopefully I've helped others avoid some pitfalls of all this document work that we're doing.

Barbara shared, “I collaborate with anyone who's willing” and Melissa echoed, “I've collaborated with my colleagues, we collaborate on creating lessons, exams, and resources.” All of the experienced teachers empathized the importance of teacher collaboration, for planning and support, while implementing the new framework and new assessments.

There was also a consensus amongst less experienced teachers that teacher collaboration was important during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Allison commented on the department collaboration by stating, “As a department I think, been really good about offering support in terms of breaking down the changes.” Carl echoed those sentiments and elaborated by sharing:

I think that our department is supremely collaborative and has done a legitimate absolute excellent job with working with each grade level on this to improve. I don't think any specific grade works amongst themselves to just work the content. We legitimately collaborate. Nine will work with the 10, and 10 will work with 11, and these are the skills that they're doing, and here's what we're recognizing as far as multiple choice and stimulus-based questions.

Kristen agreed about the teacher collaboration within the department by sharing, “The people within the department, the veteran teachers are working with the new teachers and everyone's super positive and helpful and willing to share.” She also expressed gratitude for the teacher collaboration that takes place in the department, “I

think that we're really lucky and fortunate to have that because I have experienced districts where that hasn't been true.” Anna was gracious as well about the support and teacher collaboration that exists within the department:

I feel so supported and collaborative, and once again, I feel like we can go to anybody in the department including the chairperson and say, "This is what I need, this is what I'm struggling with," and you're just going to get the help that you need.

Tiffany stressed the importance of teacher collaboration, “It's almost necessary to collaborate with colleagues in terms of teaching the new standards.” All less experienced teachers stressed the importance of teacher collaboration, for planning and support, while implementing the new framework and new assessments.

During the content analysis of the department meeting agendas and professional development, from August 2018 to March 2020, the collected data showed significant department time provided for teachers to apply what they learned in the professional development and providing teachers time to meet collaboratively to plan. Examples from the documents include, the creation of stimulus-based multiple-choice question bank, creation of quarterly and midterm exams, analysis of assessment data, unpacking updates from NYSED regarding the new assessments, as well as, the new district curriculums that were developed to incorporate the standards in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Rocco, the administrator discussed his views regarding teacher collaboration, “I think it's important to allow teachers time to collaborate together in order to kind of tackle the challenges that they're facing and make adjustments as they need.” He continued and discussed how he has overcome some of the challenges of implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies:

One of the big things that I've done to try to overcome those challenges is to provide staff as much time as possible to meet together in grade level teams or in professional learning communities to kind of talk and discuss some of the challenges that they're facing in the classroom, and coming up with a strategy to overcome that as well.

The administrator interview and content analysis emphasized the importance of teacher collaboration within the department. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers and administrator have focused on a culture of teacher collaboration during the implementation of mandated curriculum changes outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

### **Disconnect Between the Department and District**

The second sub-theme to emerge regarding collaboration and communication, from the collected data, was the perceived disconnect that exists between department and district classroom expectations during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and how their instructional days have changed as a result of implementing the new standards in their classroom. All participants expressed that there was a disconnect that existed between the supports they have received from department regarding the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and supports they received from the district.

There was consensus amongst the experienced teachers that there was a disconnect between implementing the New York State K-12 Framework at the

department level and the expectation put forth by the district regarding classroom instruction. Roger stated:

The state expects certain practices and at the department level where we're going at it. And at the district level, it's almost like their heads are in the sand, and they're just like, "Do instruction this particular way," and no effort on the district's part to try to marry the two or help us marry the two.

Andrew continued with Roger's thought by stating, "Or even understand what it is that we are being asked to do." Rachel agreed, "It doesn't give a lot of confidence that they know what we're supposed to be doing. How much have they even looked into what our exams actually look like? Do they know?" Scott emphatically interjected, "They don't want the kids working independently. They don't want them ever working independently. So that means that they don't understand that they have to be able to sit and read for 41 minutes straight." Melissa discussed the perceived lack of support from the district regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, "I think they do have a lack of support for what we do, just based on the expectations when we have observations." Roger frustratedly interjected and added:

And I think that's evidenced by, when the option came up to take the transition and a new test, district office said, "Take the transition or do both," because they had no idea of the level of confidence that we had in the kids and in ourselves to just go through the transition to the new test rather than the old test. That was shocking to me that they didn't understand how long we've been working on this, or they didn't understand what it was that we were doing at all.

All of the experienced teachers focused on the perceived lack of support they received from the district during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Many experienced teachers expressed that they feel administrators outside of the department do not recognize the significant shifts taking place with the new framework and new assessments.

There was also consensus amongst the less experienced teachers that they perceived a bigger disconnect between implementing the New York State K-12 Framework at the department level and the expectation put forth by the district regarding classroom instruction. Tiffany stated, “I think that where we are, you do have that disconnect where the expectation is to work in collaboration and while those skills are in the framework.” She continued to discuss how she perceived a disconnect between the expectations of the district and of the state, “So I like the skills, but what the district wants versus what the test is, that does become really difficult to navigate, especially as an untenured teacher.” Carl expressed frustration by the challenges he faces by trying to meet different expectations:

When we're told to do group report and group collaboration, I think it's really good and it's really helpful. But when the test is now gearing itself towards heavy reading comprehension, not even just for the scaffolding, but also for the multiple choice, it's more difficult for the students, and I find it's sometimes challenging to gear my lesson towards breaking down documents for a day.

Kristen added by discussing the lack of support they have received outside of the department, “A lot of times they don't necessarily know what the framework is. I'll also say that we've been in a position where we've been flipping through administrators the past couple of year.” Anna interjected to discuss the professional development that new teachers are receiving from the district:

We get district office professional development, but I can be candid, I can say it, it's a waste of time, because we walk into these two hour meetings, and we're expected to play games with our kids for 40 minutes, and then give them a New York State Regents that's three hours long in 12 point font, and it's single spaced text.

Tiffany jumped in and added:



All right, so now I'm thinking about it, and I'm thinking about how our district harps on data, and how every point matters and we get the Regents scores get shown at us at every district wide thing, and every point literally matters, and our grades are examined, and the scores and the tests and everything, in that. So when you have an administration that is consistently harping on the data and making sure that the numbers are good and our numbers are comparable to everyone else in our county and state, and then you get these PDs that are, "Let's go play some games," then we wear costumes, and it's insane because it's like, "Don't yell at me about data and our numbers, and then take me to go play games.

Kristen discussed the struggle she faces within the classroom because of the different expectations:

Our district puts a really big emphasis on things like group work, we expect students to be working together every day. And I think that there's definitely a place for that. However, I think sometimes it gets a little bit extreme and they'd almost dissuade the idea of just students sitting and doing close reads and doing work on their own. And I do think that that plays a really big role in the classroom, especially in regard to the new Regents exam. That's something they're going to have to do. So, I'd say that balancing that is the biggest struggle.

All the less experienced teachers expressed even more frustration than the experience teachers by the disconnect between the department and the district in regard to the lack of support that they received from outside of the department.

During the content analysis of the department meeting agendas and professional development, from August 2018 to March 2020, the collected data showed an emphasis on student-centered instruction with the use of self-regulating classroom protocols. These protocols, including Socratic seminars, Four Corners Debate, Chalk Talk, Frayer Model, and Carousels/Gallery Walks, were modeled for staff during professional development with the expectation that these protocols would be used in class to help promote student-centered, inquiry-based learning. Rocco, acknowledged the struggle for the social studies teachers and observed:

I think teachers have been challenged with kind of juggling directives from the state, directives from the district as well as, following the Danielson rubric in order to make sure that their evaluations are good. And teachers have expressed concerns that their evaluations or that they're the inability to be able to hit all the different categories or all the different components of the Danielson rubric within the lesson as a result of trying to implement all of these particular changes.

The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers perceive a disconnect that between the supports they have received from the social studies department regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and supports they received from the district.

### **New York State Rollout of Standards and Assessments**

The third sub-theme to emerge regarding collaboration and communication from the collected data was the rollout by New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, the new assessments and how their instructional days have changed as a result of implementing the new standards in their classroom. Most participants expressed frustration and concern over the rollout of the new framework and new assessments by New York State. Participants, in both groups, highlight the lack of resources provided by the state regarding the new literacy skills and the format of the new assessments.

Most experienced teachers expressed frustration by the roll out of the new framework and assessments by the state. They expressed a concern in the lack of documents and assessment questions being released. Andrew began the discussion by highlighting the amount of social studies content and literacy skills in the current

curriculum, “The state needs to revise their curriculum. They need a different starting point or a different ending point that's concrete.” Roger agreed about the pacing and added that New York State needs to provide teachers exemplars of the documents the students will need to analyze on the new assessments:

Regarding the skills and the documents, they need to give us a library of documents that they will pull from for a time frame. And this way teachers can plan ahead to cover to documents that they may need to cover and still cover the social and empathetic and ethical aspects of history.

Barbara echoed those concerns regarding documents:

I think that if New York state provided us with a set of documents that they might pull from would be helpful, or if they were going to focus on certain topics more than others. For instance, we always talk a lot about World War I and World War II, but then for the past two assessments it wasn't even on there and it was barely mentioned.

Melissa shared in the frustration on the lack of new assessment questions being provided by New York State, “The state could put out some questions, right? Samples of questions that could be used. I feel like more access to information that we could use to help our kids.” Most experienced teachers focused on the lack of documents and assessment questions being released by New York State. They expressed frustration in being able to plan out the curriculum and preparing students for the new framework assessments.

Most less experienced teachers also expressed frustration by the roll out of the new framework and assessments by the state. Carl focused on the lack of documents from the new framework assessments being released by New York State:

One frustration is the fact the state has not released a bank of documents for us to create new questions on. The old Regents documents are much shorter than the documents being used. It is hard to create these assessments without knowing the types of documents being used. I would appreciate a bank of documents for each unit, even if its 500 documents.

Kristen added about information regarding the new assessments and the impact it had on her ability to plan out her year:

It would be good for the state to release the information on the Regents exam prior to the beginning of the year. This would allow us to plan effectively on how to marry the content and the skills that need to be covered.

Tiffany echoed the concern about the lack of questions available from the new framework assessments, “I think it would be nice if the state provided us a bank of sample questions from the new Regents exam.” Anna expressed frustration from the last-minute changes to assessments by New York State:

Then the fact that New York State really didn't give too much guidance, and then they switched the CRQs halfway through the year. It just felt look like everything was so up in the air, but meanwhile we were supposed to teach our kids to where they're getting 85+ mastery levels of success.

Most less experienced teachers also focused on the lack of documents and new framework assessment questions being released by New York State. They expressed how the rollout of the new framework and assessments has hindered their ability to effectively plan out the curriculum and preparing the students for the new framework assessments.

During the content analysis of the 1998 New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies, the New York State K-12 Framework, and the assessments for each of the frameworks, the collected data provided support to most of the teachers' perceptions towards the New York State rollout of the new framework and assessments. There was a bank of documents that were provided when the state released the 1998 New York State Social Studies Core Curriculum, however, no bank of documents were released with the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Rocco, the administrator discussed the lack of documents being provided to teachers from New York State:

Teachers do not have access to the number of documents to be able to create stimulus-based multiple-choice questions, CRQ's, short essay questions, enduring issues essays or civics literacy essays. I think that if the state provided these teachers with a bank of documents, whether it's a couple of hundred documents or even a thousand documents that teachers could pull from in order to create these new questions.

Besides, documents, there was a lack of assessment questions released by the state. The Educator's Guide for the Global History and Geography II Regents and the Educator's Guide for the United States History and Government Regents were not released until after the school year started during the year the first administration would be given. The Educator's Guide for Global History and Geography II was released in September 2018 and revised in February 2019 with the first administration in June 2019. The Educator's Guide for United States History and Government was not released until October 2019 with its first planned administration to be in June 2020. Each of the Educator's Guides for the new framework assessments contained a limited number of new assessment questions and student responses. Rocco, the administrator discussed the lack of assessment questions:

The problem is with the new assessment type, there are no assessment questions for the teachers to use so they're spending a lot of their time outside of the classroom looking at documents, creating these questions, and it's taking away from time that they can be using to provide critical feedback to students to improve their reading and writing skills within the social studies classroom.

Rocco went on to talk about the rollout of the framework and assessments and compared it to New York State's rollout of the Common Core State Standards:

There are a lot of comparisons between the rollout of this framework and the rollout that the state had at the common core state standards, which I think soured a lot of teacher's views towards those particular standards. I think overall the state just needs a better plan with rolling out and implementing new standards and I think that they kind of rushed to do this without really knowing exactly what they wanted to do.

An analysis of the department meeting agendas and professional development documents, from August 2018 to March 2020, showed the department was kept up to date with information released from the state regarding the assessments and changes to the assessments as they were released. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers and administrator perceive the rollout of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and new assessments as hindering their ability to effectively plan out and implement the curriculum, which negatively impacts student preparation for the new framework assessments.

### **Theme 3: Professional Development and Resources**

A third overarching theme that emerged during the analysis of collected data was professional development and resources. Each of the participants shared their views on the professional development and resources they received regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Within the theme of professional development and resources, two sub-themes emerged from the collected data. The first sub-theme to emerge was professional development and resources received. The second sub-theme to emerge additional professional development and resources wanted. Together, these two sub-themes encompass teachers' perceptions towards the professional development and resources during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

#### **Professional Development and Resources Received**

The first sub-theme to emerge regarding professional development and resources, from the collected data, was the professional development and resources received by the

participants regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the regarding the professional development and resources they have received and sought out to help with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. Most participants saw a disconnect between the professional development and resources received from the department and the professional development and resources received by the district.

Most experienced teachers expressed that most of their provided professional development regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments came from the department level, including a focus on academic vocabulary, literacy skills in the social studies classroom, and time to collaborate on lessons and assessments. Some of the experienced teachers also sought outside professional development, such as the [Regional] Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference and graduate classes. Melissa stated, “Department meetings with contract hours and that's I feel like where we really get the instruction, and there we're provided with the framework. We're told what is expected, how to create.” Roger added, “My supervisors provided me with several opportunities for professional development, working on vocabulary and working on the acquisition of documents.” Barbara talked about the resources provided by the department:

All the materials posted on the department Google Classroom too are helpful, like the test question bank, the stems. So that helps make at least figuring out what the questions you could use are.

Andrew mentioned some outside professional development:

We've been preparing ourselves with our staff development and also going to the [Regional] Council for the Social Studies. I attended one of those early on to get some input and to get some info on that. So, I feel like we've had a lot, but it's new; it's different.

Melissa interjected with, “What's interesting is when I went into the [Regional] Council for Social Studies, I found that the information that I got from our department meetings was much greater than what I was getting from them.” Roger mentioned some outside professional development he has sought, “I'm taking a course right now about reading across the curriculum to improve my instruction.” Barbara mentioned:

I'm lucky that my chairperson puts forth so much effort in giving us professional development, so I don't have to seek it out so much, as it is brought to me because it is a big push in school to make sure that we are well prepared and that our students are well prepared.

Most experienced teachers viewed the professional development and resources they received from the department helped prepare them for the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Most less experienced teachers also expressed that most of their provided professional development regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments came from the department level, including a focus on academic vocabulary, literacy skills in the social studies classroom, and time to collaborate on lessons and assessments. Some less experienced teachers sought outside professional development from the [Regional] Council for the Social Studies, the National Council for the Social Studies, and graduate classes. Allison began the conversation:

I think we've been really fortunate that we've gotten a lot of support. We had a lot of department meetings where we've reviewed the framework, where we've reviewed the new exams, any time information went out about changes that were



released by New York State, because other people in our group had said gradually those things were announced.

Tiffany added:

So here's it's been really nice to be in a department of people where it is proactive, and we're, as things get released from the state, we review it in meetings, we go over it in groups, to where we can start to do it the next day.

Jessica agreed and focused on academic vocabulary, “So for support implementing the framework, I also noted that we have the vocabulary given to us at the beginning of the year that helps us support academic skills.” Anna agreed, “So the past two years we've been focusing on academic vocabulary.” Jessica also added, “Most PDs, they use a protocol that they're modeling for us to use with our students, not just read this and that.” Carl discussed some of the additional professional development opportunities he has sought out, “I've also taken various PDs ranging from Socratic seminars, having students read and pull out ideas from readings, and speak about it more as a group.”

Kristen discussed the professional developments that she has attended:

I've been attending professional development along with the other people in my department. We've had an ELA professional developer come and talked to us about academic vocabulary on four separate occasions. We also in our department meetings have been pretty regularly going over any changes that have been made within the Regents exam or any time New York state comes out with any more information, our department chair is pretty quick to give us that information. We also attended the [Regional] Social Studies conference in October and they did have a workshop meeting, a presentation on that as well.

Most less experienced teachers felt that the professional development and resources received from the department help prepare them for the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

During the content analysis of the department meeting agendas and professional development, from August 2018 to March 2020, the collected data showed that the

department provided extensive professional development regarding the use of academic vocabulary and a focus on building literacy skills in the social studies classroom.

Between August 2018 to March 2020, the department had an ELA professional developer come to work with the department for four full day professional development sessions to work on how to teach the literacy skills in the social studies classroom. All department meeting agendas, from August 2018 to March 2020, discussed the use of academic vocabulary in the classroom and a reminder to work on the monthly list of terms in their instruction. The content analysis also showed that information was relayed in a timely manner to the department regarding information released by New York State regarding the rollout of the new assessments. Rocco, the administrator discussed the professional development the department as offered to the teachers within the department:

We also conducted a vast amount of professional development opportunities for the staff. These professional development opportunities included work on academic vocabulary, improving literacy skills within a social studies classroom, providing teachers with tools to be able to teach literacy effectively, to be able to teach vocabulary effectively, and also allowing time for teachers to meet together in grade level teams to help construct some of these stimulus-based multiple choice questions, CRQ questions, short essay questions, enduring issues essays and civics literacy essays.

Rocco also mentioned how his job has evolved as a result of the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies:

Well, my job has changed significantly, and it's providing more professional development, providing clearer direction of the updates coming from the state as well as constantly communicating and promoting a collaborative culture within the social studies department.

The content analysis highlighted a comprehensive professional development program within the department to help prepare the teachers for the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and support for the incorporation of

literacy skills within the social studies classroom. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers and administrator perceive a disconnect and no alignment between the professional development and resources offered at the department for implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, compared to the professional development and resources offered at the building and district level.

### **Additional Professional Development and Resources Wanted**

The second sub-theme to emerge regarding professional development and resources, from the collected data, was additional professional development and resources wanted by the participants regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. Participants, across both focus groups and individual interviews, were asked about their views of the regarding additional professional development and resources they have wanted to help with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. Most participants saw a significant difference in the professional development and resources offered by the district and the professional development and resources offered by the district and New York State.

Most experienced teachers discussed additional professional development opportunities and resources that they would want, with a focus on what the building, district, or state could do to assist the teachers with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Scott focused on wanting more time for collaboration and creation:

We have contractual hours within the department, but when we look at our contractual hours from the district level or from the building level, it's never geared towards time for creation. And it's a lot of teaching instruction that doesn't really help our style of test. The things that we would go back to, the things they want us to do don't with what the state wants us to do, but they keep on forcing that on us, and we don't have the time to create. More time to create our tests, more time to collect documents, things like that would be helpful, but they don't seem to realize that's what's going on.

Melissa echoed Scott's feelings:

Well if they're going to implement faculty development during our faculty meetings as opposed to using faculty meetings for what they're supposed to be, then maybe it would be beneficial if they categorized it by each department so that it could be useful time, as opposed to something that, for example, the last one, the cultural one that we spent hours on, could have been great for instructional time.

Rachel mentioned that she feels the district needs to show, "just some awareness of what we actually have to do would be nice." Roger added, "I would like recognition as to the struggles that we're facing." In regard to resources from the state, Roger stated, "Regarding the skills and the documents, they need to give us a library of documents that they will pull from for a time frame." Barbara agreed, "I think that if New York State provided us with a set of documents that they might pull from would be helpful." Most experienced teachers expressed the feeling that the district and the state could help better prepare the teachers for the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

Most less experienced teachers discussed additional professional development opportunities and resources that they would want, with a focus on what the district or state could do to assist the teachers with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Carl began talking about the new teacher meetings offered by the district, "I think that they should definitely be doing something else/something

different/something more than what they're already doing right now. It's two hours that I didn't really think were used for the purpose of something that could be used." Carl added, "Maybe if they were to go over parental relationships, and maybe how to work with everybody on different levels, administrative, or parents, how to talk to them about it if a student is struggling, where we could improve." Kristen agreed:

I think that our cohort meetings really could be used better than they are. They're very general, they throw in all of the new teachers into the same room for two hour and expect that our experiences are all the same. That being said, there are a lot of experiences that are the same.

Anna added:

I definitely think that we need more PD in current teaching, because I feel like I don't really know, and it's trial and error unfortunately, but we have an extremely diverse school, we have students of all different walks of life, all different identities.

Carl went on to discuss the creation of common planning period for grade level teachers:

Time with a whole bunch of other teachers so it's easy to work with. For example, maybe a period a day, or a period a week, that all the 9th grade teacher be with one another so we could, not even necessarily plan together, but we could just talk more about what are we using to work on skills in the classroom.

Tiffany discussed the idea of pooling department resources together, "In terms of being provided with resources, not necessarily, but I think as a department, it might be helpful. And I just thought of this now. To create a shared Google folder, where if you find a document."

Rocco, the administrator was supportive of teacher collaboration and providing more time for teachers to collaborate. Rocco stated:

I would definitely provide the teachers with more time. I think that time to collaborate with their peers would be the best thing for the students to do, however, it becomes very hectic within our schedules to be able to find that time.

Rocco went on to discuss what he would like to try and provide the teachers in the future:

I think that one of the things going forward I would like to do is try to create a common planning period for teachers of a certain grade level, for them to bounce ideas off of each other, to reflect and to be able to guide each other through this transition period of taking a look at the new standards and preparing students for the skills necessary to be successful, not only on the Regents exam, but also to be successful with 21st century skills and preparing them for college.

Most less experienced teachers expressed that the district and New York State could provide more professional development and resources to assist teachers with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. The analysis of the collected data, including focus group interviews, individual interviews, and content analysis revealed that secondary social studies teachers and the administrator wanted more professional development, time to collaborate and create, and more information from New York State regarding the New York State k-12 Framework for Social Studies and its implementation in their classrooms.

### **Conclusion**

The first research question in this study investigated secondary social studies teachers' perception towards mandated curriculum changes. The analysis of the data found that mandated curriculum changes resulted in fundamental shifts within the field of social studies that increased the frustration levels of teachers. Teachers perceived that the fundamental shifts in social studies resulted in a number of negative consequences that has impacted their classrooms. The most frustrating aspect of the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies perceived by teachers was a loss of

valuable instructional time to teach literacy skills at the expense of covering social studies content. Many teachers perceived a minimization of historical content, a lack of available resources aligned to the new standards and a general lack of knowledge and information from New York State regarding the new assessments. The teachers perceived a shift from content-based instruction to skill-based instruction took away the ability to make social studies fun and has negatively impacted student motivation in the classroom because of the focus of reading and analyzing complex documents. Teachers viewed social studies content and literacy skills as separate entities, as opposed to using the content to teach the skills. Another perception by teachers was how the format of the new assessments impacted their instructional practices in the social studies classroom and ultimately, drove their instruction. A common theme emerged that teachers felt they had to move away from a student-centered, inquiry-based approach and focus on individual reading and writing to train the students to be successful on the new assessments. Teachers perceived the professional development they received from the department level was helpful but saw a disconnect with professional development from the building/district level and the resources provided by New York State.

The second research question in this study investigated how secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes vary by experience, tenure status, and preparation. The analysis of the data found that experienced teachers were more frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum because of their past experiences with the change process. Less experienced teachers were more open to incorporating the new skills within the social studies classroom and saw a value with a balance between social studies content and skills. The less experienced teachers

mentioned that this is the way they have always taught and have not seen a significant change in their instructional practices. Experienced teachers were focused mostly on how they had to revamp their instructional practice to help prepare the students for the format of the new assessments. Teachers across experience, tenure status, and preparation shared their displeasure with the way New York State rolled out the new standards and assessments. Teachers focused on the fact that New York State did not provide resources, such as documents or assessment questions, and did not release exam information until the school year of the first administration of the exam. Teachers across experience, tenure status, and experience also highlighted the disconnect between the professional development provided by the department, compared to professional development offered by the building or district. Teachers from both groups in the study, emphasized the importance of teacher collaboration and common planning time.

The third research question in this study investigated to what extent are teachers' and administrators' perceptions aligned in regard to the change process. The analysis of the data found that the teachers' and administrator's perception towards the change process found that their views aligned regarding the rollout of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the changes to instructional practices within the social studies classroom. Teachers and the administrator agreed that New York State needs to provide more resources, in a timely manner, for the planning and implementation of the necessary skills and assessment questions within the classroom. The administrator was empathetic to the challenges that teachers are facing in the classroom regarding the balancing of content vs. skills and balancing the instructional expectations set forth by the district, while preparing the students to be successful on the new framework assessments.



Both the teachers and the administrator emphasized the importance of teacher collaboration and providing common planning time for teachers to create lessons and assessments and provide support to each other while implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Introduction**

This study was an exploratory, case study of secondary social studies teachers in a suburban New York high school. This study examined secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes relating to the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This study addressed three research questions. The first question inquired about secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes. The second research question investigated whether social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes varied by experience, tenure status, and preparation. The third research question examined whether teachers' and administrators' perceptions align in regard to the change process.

The data analyzed in this study consisted of focus groups, follow-up one-on-one interviews, and a content analysis of the 1998 New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies and assessments, the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and assessments, department meeting agendas, and professional development documentation. Analysis of the data collected revealed three key findings that emerged across the sub-groups of experienced and less experienced teachers, the administrator and the content analysis. First, that mandated curriculum changes in the social studies classroom negatively impacted social studies teachers' perception of teaching and methodology by shifting away from a traditional, content-based social studies education because the new literacy skill-based assessments became the overall driving force in their instructional practices. Second, a breakdown in communication between teachers,

administrators, and New York State has caused teachers to become disheartened and frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom, resulting in them relying on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support. Third, teachers perceived the implementation of mandated curriculum changes impacted their desire for increased opportunities for collaboration with colleagues through high-quality professional development sessions. This chapter will discuss the major findings, from the analyzed data, to address each of the three research questions, as well as, connecting the findings to the existing literature, that was reviewed in chapter two.

## **Interpretation of the Findings**

### **Research Question #1**

The first research question in this study investigated the overall perceptions that secondary social studies teachers have towards mandated curriculum changes regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies adopted by NYSED in 2014. The analysis of the data found that the implementation of mandated curriculum changes resulted in fundamental shifts in teaching and methodology within the social studies classroom and exposed a perceived disconnect in the professional development, resources, and supports being offered by the department, building/district, and New York State. Teachers' views of knowledge, work, and professionalism are impacted by the existing institutional patterns and beliefs and has a significant impact of their views regarding teaching and methodology in the classroom (Popkewitz et al., 1982). How teachers ultimately view teaching and methodology will influence the success of the implementation of any educational change or reform.

Teacher participants perceived, and expressed frustration, that the instructional shifts outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies resulted in a number of consequences that has negatively impacted their classrooms. Two negative consequences emerged through the analysis of the data collected from the focus groups and interviews. The first negative consequence was the perceived loss of valuable instructional time to teach social studies content as a result of the literacy-skill focus of the New York State K-12 Framework. The second negative consequence was that the new assessments aligned to the New York State K-12 Framework ultimately drove their instructional practices. Teachers, across both focus groups and individual interviews, focused on a loss of valuable instructional time to teach the literacy skills at the expense of covering valuable social studies content. Most of the teachers expressed frustration by the lack of time available in the social studies curricula to cover both the content and the skill effectively. Teachers viewed social studies content and literacy skills as separate entities, as opposed to using the content to teach the skills, which is outlined within the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This belief of the teachers is supported by the research literature that there was a focus on improving students' achievement in literacy at the expense of social studies content and skills (Denton & Sink, 2015). Teachers saw the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the literacy skills outlined in the Common Core State Standards as inhibiting them from providing a quality social studies education (Singer et al., 2018).

The administration of high-stakes, literacy skill-based standardized assessments negatively impacted social studies teachers' perception of teaching and methodology by shifting away from a traditional, content-based social studies education because the new

literacy skill-based assessments became the overall driving force in their instructional practices. Many teachers focused on building up students' reading stamina to handle the longer and more complex documents that appear on the assessments, modeling the new assessment questions on their own in-class assessments, and the writing skills necessary for the new style essays. This belief is supported by the research literature that the new framework places a big emphasis on the frequent use of high-level complex texts and all the social studies standards are focused on skill acquisition and the cognitive processes of students (Russell & Kenna, 2014). Participants shared that they perceived a fundamental instructional shift from content-based instruction to skill-based instruction that took away their ability to make social studies fun and has negatively impacted student motivation in the classroom. A common theme emerged that teachers felt they had to move away from a student-centered, inquiry-based instructional approach and focus more time on individual reading and writing to train the students to be successful on the new assessments. As a result of the focus on the reading and analysis of longer, more complex documents, students have become disengaged within the social studies classroom. Many teachers expressed frustration because they believed that they were ill prepared to implement literacy-based instruction because of their lack of preparation to teach those skills effectively (Singer et al., 2018).

Teachers across both groups perceived the professional development they received regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies from the department level was helpful with the transition in instructional practices, but they believed there was a disconnect with the professional development being offered from building/district level and the resources provided by New York State.

Teachers discussed how the department had prepared them well for the implementation for the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and pointed to the professional development opportunities offered, which included academic vocabulary, literacy skills in the classroom, student-centered, inquiry-based protocols, and the department time given to collaborate with colleagues to create resources. Teachers discussed the disconnect they saw with the professional development being offered at the building and district level as disconnected from the department professional development and did not really help with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, which included cultural sensitivity training and protocols they viewed as not being aligned with the desired learning outcomes within the social studies classroom. The research literature supports that professional development and resources provided to the teachers impacted their perception to the change process (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Burks et al., 2015; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Zulhernanda, 2018). An investment in professional capital, where teachers receive high-quality, continuous professional development, by the learning organization is needed to be able to effectively implement educational change and reform (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012).

### **Research Question #2**

The second research question in this study investigated how secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes vary by experience, tenure status, and preparation. The analysis of the data found that there were differences that existed between the perceptions of experienced teachers and less experienced teachers regarding frustration level of implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies in their classrooms. However, teachers across experience, tenure status,

and preparation shared their displeasure with the way New York State rolled out the new standards and assessments and highlighted the perceived disconnect between the professional development and supports provided by the department, compared to the professional development and supports offered at the building or district level. There was a misalignment in the values and beliefs of the organization, where the stakeholders' principles, ideologies and policies were competing against one another and impacting the successful implementation of educational change and reform (Schein, 2004, 2010, 2017).

Teachers across experience, tenure status, and preparation differed in their frustration levels regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies in their classrooms. The experienced teacher group expressed more frustration and displeasure with the implementation of mandated curriculum change because of their past experiences with the change process. This is supported by existing research literature that states teacher experiences in past reform efforts impact their perception of the change process (Hargreaves & Goodson 2006). Less experienced teachers were more open to incorporating the new skills within the social studies classroom and saw a value with a balance between social studies content and skills. The less experienced teachers mentioned that this is the way they have always taught and have not seen a significant change in their instructional practices. This finding is supported by the existing research literature that states factors include teachers age and career status impact their perception to the change process (Hargreaves, 2005; Matlock et al., 2016; Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019). Experienced teachers were focused mostly on how they had to revamp their instructional practice to help prepare the students for the

format of the new assessments, while less experienced teachers did not feel a significant impact to their instructional practices.

Teachers across experience, tenure status, and preparation shared their displeasure with the way New York State rolled out the new standards and assessments. Teachers focused on the fact that New York State did not provide resources, such as documents or assessment questions, and did not release information regarding the new assessments until the school year of the first administration. Both experienced teachers and less experienced teachers focused on the amount of time that was spent planning lessons around the new literacy skills, looking for longer, more complex documents, and creating new assessment questions. Teachers also expressed frustration with the limited amount of information regarding the new assessments, with the Educator's Guides being released the same year as the implementation of the assessment. Many teachers remarked how we focus on backwards design but were not able to plan that way without knowing the format of the new assessments and the desired results that would be assessed by the state. Not knowing what the high-stakes, end product looks like presents teachers difficulty in developing a sequenced planning of the curriculum, by not being to identify the desired results (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). This finding was supported by the existing research literature that teachers felt they needed more time, resources, and additional professional development to implement the new framework successfully (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015) and that teachers questioned the rationales for and consequences of the new state tests (Grant, 2000), which makes it difficult to implement a backwards design of the curriculum (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).



Teachers across age, experience, and tenure status also highlighted the disconnect between the professional development and supports provided by the department, compared to the professional development and supports offered at the building or district level. Teachers across both groups, discussed how the professional development and resources at the department level was focused on the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and addressed areas, such as building academic vocabulary and literacy skills in the social studies classroom. Both groups of participants expressed displeasure in the lack of cohesion in the professional development and supports at the building and district level. The participants expressed how they have not been provided with any direct professional development or resources regarding the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Many expressed that they felt the building and district did not understand what they were experiencing with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and that many of the professional development sessions they did receive, did not assist them with implementing the new framework. Participants expressed the desire for more time to collaborate with their colleagues, focusing on creation and planning, as opposed to professional development on cultural sensitivity or learning protocols that are perceived for the elementary level. This finding is supported by the existing research literature that states that the teachers should be given, beyond professional development, more time to collaborate with their colleagues to explore the new framework, find resources, and plan the implementation of the new framework (Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). Teachers have relied on the social capital (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012) within the department to facilitate the implementation of the new framework.

### **Research Question #3**

The third research question in the study examined whether teachers' and administrators' perceptions align in regard to the change process. One administrator-participant and the content analysis of documents from the department, provided the basis to compare with the perceptions of the twelve social studies teachers in the study. The analysis of the data found that the teachers' and administrator's perception towards the change process were aligned regarding the perceived poor rollout of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies by New York State, difficulties with the implementation of instructional changes outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies within classroom, and emphasized the importance of teacher collaboration and providing common planning time for teachers to create lessons, create assessments and provide support to each other. Social studies teacher's and the administrator's values and beliefs were aligned regarding the change process but were competing against the values and beliefs of the district and New York State (Schein, 2004, 2010, 2017).

Teachers' and the administrator's perceptions aligned regarding the perceived poor rollout of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and assessments. Teachers across both groups and the administrator believed that the lack of resources made available by the state and not releasing information regarding the new assessments until the year of the first administration made it extremely difficult to plan and implement the curriculum. Many of the teachers discussed how difficult it was to plan and implement a new curriculum without knowing the desired results and how they would be assessed on the new framework assessments. The teachers and administrator offered

similar suggestions for New York State, which included releasing sample documents and sample assessment questions to assist teachers in the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This would allow teachers to focus their attention to the application of skills within the classroom and their instructional practices, as opposed to, hunting for documents and creating assessment questions for an exam they have not seen. There needs to be an investment in providing high-quality, continuous professional development and providing teachers with resources to effectively implement educational change and reform (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012).

Teachers across both groups and the administrator shared in their views that there was a struggle between teaching social studies content and literacy skills in the classroom. Teachers expressed that the curriculum did not afford them ample time to effectively teach both the content and the skills. Teachers also felt at odds between the instructional expectations of the district and preparing students for the new framework assessments. The district has a philosophy of promoting student-centered, project-based instructions where students are producers within the classroom. The teachers felt that it was difficult to implement those instructional practices, aligned to the district and inquiry arc in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies, because of the limited time available within the curriculum and how they perceived the skills on the new framework assessments not aligning to this philosophy. The administrator was empathetic to the challenges that teachers are facing in the classroom regarding the balancing of content versus skills and balancing the instructional expectations set forth by the district, while preparing the students to be successful on the new framework assessments. This is supported by the research literature that states that teachers and

administrators held similar beliefs, but elements of education policy and reform differs significantly (Bridich, 2016).

Teachers within both groups and the administrator emphasized the importance of teacher collaboration and providing common planning time for teachers to create lessons and assessments and provide support to each other while implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Teachers focused on the valuable time that was given during department meetings for them to meet with their colleagues to plan their instructional units, plan individual lessons, and create assessments aligned to the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Teachers viewed that there was an investment in the human capital and social capital at the departmental level (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). The administrator stressed how he felt building a collaborative culture within the department and providing teachers time with their colleagues to plan the implementation of the new framework and assessments. This is supported by existing research literature that the amount of investment that the organization makes in the education and training of teachers during the change process will impact teachers' individual beliefs, values and assumptions about work, knowledge, and authority (Popkewitz, et al., 1982). Teachers wanted even more time to collaborate with their peers, and even suggested the idea of common planning time for grade level teachers. Teachers had a willingness to implement the new framework but wanted more time to effectively collaborate with their peers to develop, plan, teach, and assess curriculum-based units of study (Crary 2019). The administrator remarked how he wanted to try and provide teachers with additional time outside of the required departmental time.

## **Relationship Between Findings and Prior Research**

### **Social Studies Teaching and Methodology**

The first major finding from this study was that mandated curriculum changes in the social studies classroom and the administration of high-stakes, literacy skill-based standardized assessments negatively impacted social studies teachers' perception of teaching and methodology by shifting away from a traditional, content-based social studies education because the new literacy skill-based assessments became the overall driving force in their instructional practices. This discovery affirmed existing research literature by showing that teachers also viewed the overall emphasis of the mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies as a focus on improving student achievement in literacy, rather than the acquisition of social studies content and skills (Denton & Sink, 2015). Many teachers believed that the new mandated curriculum changes placed a high emphasis on the frequent use of high-level complex texts and all the social studies standards are focused on skill acquisition and the cognitive processes of students (Russell & Kenna, 2014). This study also affirmed existing research literature by revealing that teachers viewed state assessment as an evaluative tool of their teaching and that the assessment drove the instruction in the classroom (Seagul 2003). Many of the teachers in this study were not necessarily opposed to the mandated curriculum changes outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies but questioned the rationale and consequences of the new assessments (Grant 2000).

With the passage of the NCLB Legislation, wide-scale educational reform has linked standard-based changes with teacher evaluations (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009;

Tienken & Orlich, 2013). Past research has concluded that the standard-based reform movement has transformed into a test-based reform movement, where the new high-stakes assessments drove the instructional practices in the classroom more than the standards and what are perceived as the best practices in the classroom (Hamilton, Stecher, & Yuan, 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014). Popkewitz et al. (1982) concluded that schools that focus on test results, through repetition and routine through fragmented and isolated work have the teaching and methodology of a technical school. This study supports the existing research literature that the coupling of wide-scale educational reform movements to teacher accountability and student achievement on high-stakes, standardized assessments has had a significant negative effect on how teachers perceive and implement the change process in their classroom (Grant 2000; Hargraves & Shirley, 2009; Seagul 2003).

### **Collaboration and Communication**

The second major finding from this study was a breakdown in communication between teachers, administrators, and New York State that has caused teachers to become disheartened and frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom, resulting in them relying on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support. Teachers, across both focus groups, perceived a failure in New York State to provide teachers with adequate resources, such as a bank of new style documents or new assessment questions to successfully implement the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the new assessments. This discovery affirmed existing research literature by teachers expressing difficulties with the implementation of mandated curriculum changes outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for

Social Studies by teachers expressing their misunderstandings of the new curriculum has caused difficulties in the learning process for their students, a lack of resources made available to the teachers to implement the new curriculum, and a lack of assessments aligned to the new curriculum (Zilhernanda, 2018). Teachers need access to high quality resources and collaborative time to plan out the curriculum effectively (Crary, 2019; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015).

Teachers perceived a breakdown in communication between the professional development they were receiving from the building and district level, as well as, the instructional expectations in the classroom as a disconnect to the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Teachers perceived the professional development, resources, and supports from the department administrator positively with an openness of communication aligned to actively assisting teachers with the implementation of the new framework. However, they viewed the professional development, resources, and supports from the building and district level negatively with a lack of open communication and not aligned to assisting teachers with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This finding is supported by the research literature that teachers' perceptions to leaders' openness and activeness impact the implementation of any significant educational reform (Endacott et al., 2016). Administrators need to create school cultures that have open lines of communications between teachers and administrators to work together to implement educational reforms in schools (Bridich, 2016). Districts need to promote professional capital within their districts that promote the human capital and social capital of the teachers (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012).

As a result of the perceived breakdowns in communication between New York State, the district, and the social studies department, teachers expressed how they relied upon collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support. Teachers, across both groups, expressed how collaboration with their colleagues was essential for a successful implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Teachers discussed how they would collaborate in planning their individual units and lesson, creating questions aligned to the new assessments, searching for longer, more complex documents, and analyzing data. This finding is supported by the research literature that teachers' perception to the change process is directly impacted by the social capital, the collaborative power of the group (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). Crary (2019) concluded that teachers collaborating with their peers had an impact on the successful implementation of the reform. Teachers, across both groups, also discussed the collaborative culture that existed within the department. The teachers had a willingness to work with their colleagues, and this was supported by the administrator on the department level by providing department time for teachers to come together to plan, create, and assess. Hall, Hutchinson, and White (2015) concluded that time to explore the new standards, find resources, and collaborating with colleagues was essential for the successful implementation of any educational reform.

This study supports the existing research literature that a breakdown in communication between teachers, administrators, and New York State has caused teachers to become disheartened and frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom, resulting in them relying on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support.



## **Professional Development and Resources**

The third major finding from this study was that teachers perceived the implementation of mandated curriculum changes impacted their desire for increased opportunities for collaboration with colleagues through high-quality professional development sessions. Teachers, across both groups, discussed the importance of collaboration during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies and the desire to have more time to do so. Teachers perceived the use of professional development time for collaboration by the department administrator favorably, but wish the professional development offered by the building and district administrators was more aligned to the implementation of the new framework and provided more time for teachers to come together and collaborate. This discovery is supported by the existing research literature that teachers overall desired more time, resources, and professional development opportunities to successfully implement educational change (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015). Hall, Hutchinson, and White (2015) conclude that beyond providing professional development to teachers, teachers need more time to explore the standards, find resources, and collaborate with their colleagues. Crary (2019) supported that teachers needed more time in their day to collaborate for the change process to be successful. The creation of a collaborative culture, with an investment in the social capital of the teachers, is essential for the implementation of successful educational reforms and changes (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). Despite a perceived inadequacy of professional development from the building, district, and state, teachers felt confident that they could effectively implement the new framework (Burks et al., 2015).

This study supports the existing research literature that teachers perceived the implementation of mandated curriculum changes impacted their desire for increased opportunities for collaboration with colleagues through high-quality professional development sessions (Adams-Budde & Miller, 2015; Burks et al., 2015; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015; Hargraves & Fullan, 2012; Nordlöf, Hallström, & Höst, 2019; Popkewitz, et al., 1982; Zilhernanda, 2018).

The New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies has attempted to transform the teaching and methodology in the social studies classroom by having a foundation of instructional practices rooted in the inquiry arc. The inquiry arc supports a what Popkewitz et al. (1982) would classify as a constructivist approach to teaching and methodology that presents students with real-world problems and relating the learning experiences in the classroom to the students' lives. The district vision also aligns to a constructivist philosophy of providing students with student-centered, project-based activities that focused on real world experiences rooted in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Despite the best efforts of the NYSED and the district to promote a constructivist philosophy towards teaching and methodology, teachers have let the new high-stakes assessments drive their instruction, creating a technical philosophy of teaching, focused on reputation of skills and allowing the assessment to drive the curriculum (Popkewitz et al., 1982). The breakdown in communication from NYSED, the district, and the teachers stemmed from the underlying cultural values and assumptions (Schein, 2017, 2010, 2004) of each group of stakeholders not being taken into account with the rollout and implementation of the mandated curriculum change and developed divulging philosophies of teaching and learning. This breakdown in communication can

be attributed to a perceived lack of investment in the professional capital of the teachers (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). An investment in professional capital would have provided teachers with a high-quality, continuous professional development program and resources, that promote collaboration, and taking into the underlying values and assumptions of the teachers (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). With the development of different views emerging regarding teaching and methodology between the teachers, with a technical approach, and the district, with a constructivist approach, the organization has developed an illusionist approach. An illusionist approach where there is an illusion of productivity relieves pressure by producing an appearance of work (Popkewitz et al., 1982).

### **Limitations of the Study**

Due to the nature of a qualitative, single-case research study, the small sample size may limit the external validity of the findings. According to Yin (2018), the external validity of the case study analysis is an apparent inability to generalize the findings because the goal is to study what makes a particular group or circumstance unique. However, like single experiments, single case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations (Yin, 2018).

Originally, the present study was to be a comparative case study between two suburban New York high schools, but as a result of the Covid-19 global pandemic, the researcher was not able to gain access to a second site as a result of the state-wide closure of schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. In changing the methodology to a single case study, the researcher increased the number of participants in the focus groups, tripled the number of individual interviews, and included additional

documents from the social studies department to provide a deeper and richer analysis of the case study.

Another limitation is that the sample was chosen through purposeful and deliberate sampling. The sample chosen for this study was purposeful and deliberate, as all participants worked as teachers or administrators in the same district where the researcher is employed. Since the researcher facilitated both focus groups and seven individual interviews it may have had an influence on participants' responses because of the personal relationship to the researcher. However, the participants were fully aware that they were not going to be penalized or disciplined for the responses or their willingness to participate in the study.

A third limitation is that the study is that the data collection took place over the course of one month during the 2019-2020 school year. A number of factors contributed to the short timeframe, including the closing of schools for the remainder of the academic year to the global Covid-19 pandemic. Since educational policy is ever changing and new waves of educational reforms emerge, the findings within this study may be limited to this one particular circumstance.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Future studies into teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes could replicate the methodology and protocols from this study with teachers from different school districts in different settings to produce a larger body of research on the topic. Originally, this case study was intended to be a comparable case study to take place at two different suburban New York high schools, where the findings from each case would be compared across and within each other. A comparative case study would reveal

whether the findings regarding teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum changes would enhance the external validity of the findings. While the findings of this study are limited to how secondary social studies teachers perceived mandated curriculum changes, future studies could investigate mandated curriculum changes on participants from other subject areas. New York State will be rolling out new standards and assessments in science, ELA, and Mathematics over the course of the next several years. If this research was combined with research into the other subject areas, it could be useful in developing future educational policy regarding the implementation of mandated curriculum changes.

Another suggestion for future research would be to incorporate the methodology of this study with a quantitative survey that measures secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes. A mixed methods study would be able to expand the sample of participants and allow for the research to see if the findings from this study are transferable.

A final suggestion would be to acquire more descriptive information regarding the participants, such as teacher preparation program and college major. Since less experienced teachers reported less negativity and changes to their instructional practices as a result of the mandated curriculum changes, it would be interesting to see if there was a correlation between teacher preparation programs and college majors on their perceptions towards implementing mandated curriculum changes in the social studies classroom.

### **Implications for Future Practice**

Since 1957, there have been many wide-scale educational reform efforts within the United States that have been geared to closing the global achievement gap and

increasing student performance. The implementation of these reforms in social studies has resulted in the creation of mandated curriculum changes, including new standards, a new curriculum framework, and new assessments (NYSESED, 2014). As a result of implementing mandated curriculum changes, teachers have experienced high levels of stress and frustration that could have a negative impact on the successful implementation of the reform. This present study revealed three themes regarding teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes, which included social studies teaching and methodology, collaboration and communication, and professional development and resources. Table 6 outlines targeted suggestions on ways each stakeholder group could improve and do things differently in terms of social studies.

Table 6: Suggestions for Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Suggestions
State Department of Education	<p>Provide timely information regarding new framework and assessments including exemplar documents and assessment questions for teachers</p> <p>Provide professional development to district leaders to turnkey to teachers to create a uniform implementation plan</p> <p>Reduce the emphasis of student achievement on high-stakes, standardized assessments tied to teacher evaluations</p>
Board of Education	<p>Provide financial resources and support to implement a high-quality, continuous professional development program</p> <p>Work with the State Department of Education towards reducing the high stakes testing culture that currently exists within education</p> <p>Embrace a culture that focuses on building the professional capital of the school district and staff</p>
District	<p>Create a comprehensive district-wide professional development plan that includes all stakeholders in the planning process and uses a data-driven approach of evaluating the trainings being provided to staff</p> <p>Support staff that seeks outside professional development opportunities to expand their educational toolbox and encourage staff to turnkey the training to their colleagues</p>

	Focus on other measures of student learning, such as authentic assessments, as opposed to student achievement on high stakes standardized assessments
Building	<p>Provide teachers grade level/subject common planning periods in teachers schedule</p> <p>Provide teachers more time to explore new standards and create resources to implement in the classroom</p> <p>Align professional development to the needs of the staff by including teachers on the professional development planning committee</p>
Teacher	<p>Volunteer to attend outside professional development opportunities and turnkey the training to colleagues</p> <p>Collaborate with grade level/subject colleagues to continually review and calibrate the curriculum</p> <p>Create learning opportunities for students within the classroom that uses the content to teach the skills in a student-centered, inquiry-based approach</p>

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The findings of this study exposed the first major theme of social studies teaching and methodology. First, experienced social studies teachers did not agree with the philosophy of reform, outlined by the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies because of the shift in focus from content-based instruction to literacy-based instruction in the social studies classroom. When developing a plan for implementing mandated curriculum changes, the district needs to take into account the values and beliefs of all the stakeholders when developing their plan for implementation. All stakeholders should be involved in the planning of the implementation to ensure that the needs and priorities of all the stakeholders (Ellsworth, 2000). This could be accomplished by forming a professional development committee, with teacher representation, to make recommendations on training for teachers based on teachers needs and wants or by forming a curriculum committee, with teacher representatives, explores the new standards and calibrates the district curriculum to meet the desired learning outcomes of the

standards. Second, teachers report a lack of resources to prepare students for high stakes assessments. For educational change and reform to be successful, an investment needs to be made in the high-quality resources for the teachers to use. When implementing reform, districts need to identify high-quality resources, with the input from the teachers. Sustainable change is more likely to occur when all stakeholders own the change initiative by being involved in the change process (Hord & Roussin, 2013). Third, social studies teachers reported lowering of student motivation, now there are increased demands to read and write within the social studies classroom. Districts need to provide high-quality, continuous professional development for teachers that look at specific classroom protocols that can align the desired learning outcomes, with engaging, student-centered learning activities. The district needs to model these protocols and show teachers ways they can integrate them into their subject and grade level. Social studies teachers expressed that they felt frustrated and overwhelmed by teaching literacy skills that they did not have the proper training for (Singer et al., 2018). The professional development offered by the district have to promote the inquiry-based design and using the social studies content to teach the literacy skills. This professional development should also be geared towards specific levels taught, subject specific and provide exemplar models for teachers to visualize the incorporation of the specific skills with their content. School of Education and teacher preparation programs need to also embrace the shift to literacy-based instruction within the social studies classroom, based on inquiry-based learning activities and evidence-based designed instruction. Teacher preparation programs have historically focused specifically on content-based instruction and prospective teachers graduate ill prepared to successfully teach the literacy-based



skills outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies (Singer et al., 2018).

The findings of this study exposed a second major theme of collaboration and communication. First, social studies teachers relied heavily on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support. The district needs to establish an organizational culture that supports and enhances teacher collaboration. The social capital, the collaborative power of the group, that is developed within the organization has a significant impact the success of implementing mandated curriculum changes (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). Districts need to plan for and build in time for teacher collaboration, which include: (a) common planning time by grade level and/or subject; (b) meeting time to collaborate in exploring, planning, and creating curriculum; and (c) providing collaborative tools, such as shared drives of resources, question banks, and documents. Second, teachers expressed a disconnect between the supports they received at the department level and the supports they received at building/district level. Districts need to make sure that all stakeholders are involved in process of developing a plan for the implementation of mandated curriculum changes. Clement (2013) suggested educational leaders use of a school-wide approach to mandated curriculum changes where they interpret them in the terms of the school goals and for the change process to be effective, it must be embedded within the entire organization involving all stakeholders. When all stakeholders are involved in the planning process, the underlying values and assumptions are exposed and the organization can develop a plan taking into account the unique beliefs of the stakeholders within their organization (Schein 2004, 2010, 2017). Third, social studies teachers expressed their frustration with the rollout of the K-12 Framework

for Social Studies and assessments by New York State. New York State needs to provide information regarding the implementation of a new framework and assessments in a timely manner that allows teachers the opportunity to have time to explore the standards and to plan their curriculum around the desired learning outcomes. New York State did not release information regarding the new assessments until the school year in which the new assessment would be implemented. New York State even changed the format of the Critical Response Questions (CRQ) of the Global History Regents exam two months before the first administration. New York State also did not supply the teachers with resources, such as documents and assessment questions, for the successful implementation of the new framework as they did with the release of the 1998 Core Curriculum. New York State should also establish a professional development plan for department leaders to be able to turnkey the training to the teachers to establish clear expectations and resources for all teachers within the state.

The findings of this study exposed a third major theme of professional development and resources. Teachers expressed that most of the professional development and resources they received for the implementation of mandated curriculum changes was from the department level and the professional development and resources received from the building/district level did not align with the implementation of the new framework. Educational leaders must establish an organizational culture that stresses teacher collaboration and open lines of communication that align to providing teachers with high quality, continuous professional development, access to resources, and time to collaborate with their colleagues. “The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture (Schein, 2004, p. 11). Research literature supports the

investment in professional capital, “the resources, investments, and assets that make up, define, and develop a profession and its practice” (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012, p. 92). Schools must move away from the business capital approach that exists in most schools and make an investment in the knowledge and skills of the teachers through education and training, known as human capital (Hargraves & Fullan, 2012). Popkewitz, et al. (1982) states that the amount of investment that the organization makes in the education and training of teachers during the change process will impact teachers’ individual beliefs, values and assumptions about work, knowledge, and authority. Schools need to develop a comprehensive, high-quality, professional development program that is geared towards assisting teachers with the implementation of mandated curriculum changes. All stakeholders need to be involved in the process of developing a plan for the implementation of mandated curriculum changes. When all stakeholders are involved in the planning process, it leads to all stakeholders taking ownership of the change process, leading to greater success of the change (Ellsworth, 2000; Fogarty & Pete, 2007; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Teachers need to be involved in the development of a comprehensive professional development program that they feel will assist them with the implementation of mandated curriculum changes. Teachers want to have continuous conversations about curriculum and helping student perform well (Au et al., 2005), as well as, more time to collaborate with their colleagues for exploring the new standards and to create materials for the classroom (Crary, 2019; Hall, Hutchinson, & White, 2015). Educational leaders should work on developing a culture where collaboration and communication are the cornerstones of developing a comprehensive, high-quality, continuous professional development program.

The above-mentioned implications for future practice present numerous challenges for educational leaders and school districts including: (a) budgetary concerns for districts with the cost of providing high quality, continuous professional development to the staff; (b) support for the investment in a comprehensive professional development program from the local Board of Education and the community; (c) cooperation and support from collective bargaining units, such as the teachers' union; (d) reducing the emphasis of student achievement on high-stakes standardized assessments tied to teacher evaluations at the national, state, and local level; and (e) Buy-in from Schools of Education and teacher preparations to embrace the shifts taking place in the social studies classroom and prepare prospective teachers to use the social studies content to teach the necessary literacy-based skills outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. The challenges present numerous obstacles for educational leaders that need to be mitigated to bring about true educational reform and change. To reduce the cost of bringing in outside professional developers, select teachers can be sent to turnkey the training they received to their colleagues. Another way to reduce the cost of a high quality, continuous professional development program would be to tap into the resources of the staff to provide training on classroom protocols, instructional technology, and strategies that have been successful in their classroom. In addressing the emphasis on student achievement on high-stakes standardized assessments, the district can focus on student achievement on different formative and summative assessments that would reflect true student learning that takes place within the classroom. To ensure buy-in, the district will need to take a collaborative approach and bring in all stakeholders into the planning

process that takes into consideration of the underlying assumptions and values that each group of stakeholders holds.

### **Conclusion**

The findings in this study reveal secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. As the recommendations for future practice suggests, these findings highlighted the need for educational leaders to create an organizational culture based on collaboration, communication, and high quality, continuous professional development for teachers to successfully implement mandated curriculum changes. Overall, the system of mandated curriculum changes, over the past sixty years, has produced a feeling of frustration and increased stress for teachers. As a result, secondary social studies teachers see a shift away from a traditional, content-based social studies education because the new literacy skill-based assessments became the overall driving force in their instructional practices; a breakdown in communication between teachers, administrators, and New York State has caused teachers to become disheartened and frustrated with the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom, resulting in them relying on collaboration with their colleagues for planning and support; and impacted their desire for increased opportunities for collaboration with colleagues through high-quality professional development sessions. The research literature on the impact of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes is limited. The existing gap in the change process does not look specifically at teacher perceptions, but rather focused on student achievement or an evaluation of an existing program. Of the research studies that do explore specifics about

teachers' perception to the change process, they mostly focus on the perceptions of elementary teachers or teachers in English Language Arts or Mathematics. The inclusion of secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes addresses the gap in the existing research literature.

## APPENDIX A: LETTER OF CONSENT (SUPERINTENDENT)



██████████ Superintendent of Schools  
██████████ Union Free School District  
██████████  
██████████ New York ██████████

Dear Dr. ██████████:

I am currently a Doctoral student at St. John's University in Queens, New York. I am writing to request your support in conducting a research study that I believe will have an impact on social studies education. As a Supervisor of Social Studies, grades 6-12, it is my goal to ensure that every teacher has the tools and support necessary to deliver high quality social studies instruction. The current body of research indicates that teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes have an impact on the success of implementing the change process. A gap in the research exists when examining mandated curriculum changes in the field of social studies.

I will be investigating secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies that align to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards.

I am reaching out to you to request permission to conduct focus group and individual interviews of secondary social studies teachers during the 2019-2020 academic school year. If permission is granted, you will be provided with a copy of the invitation to participate in the research study, which will be sent, electronically, to the secondary social studies teachers in your school district. During the collection of the qualitative data during the focus groups and individual interviews, teachers will be given a pseudonym in order to maintain confidentiality. The results of this research study will be shared with the Superintendent of Schools.

Copies of both the focus group questions and individual interview questions are attached if you would like to preview them.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you would like to grant permission, please email the approval to ██████████. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at ██████████. Or my faculty sponsor, Dr. Catherine DiMartino, at ██████████. For questions about rights of research participants, you may contact the University's Human Subjects Review Board, St. John's University, ██████████. The results of this study will inform educational leadership of the relationship between teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes and the success of implementing the change process.

Respectfully,

Ricky V. Papandrea Jr.

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT (FOCUS GROUP)



### Invitation and Consent to Participate in a Research Study (Focus Group)

Dear Participant:

You are being invited to participate in a research study to investigate secondary social studies teachers' perception towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This study will help to better inform educational leadership on implementing mandated curriculum changes in the social studies.

I will be conducting this study as part of my doctoral dissertation for St. John's University, Department of Administration and Instructional Leadership.

This portion of the research study will consist of a focus group lasting from 30 – 60 minutes. Audio recordings of the focus groups will be made so that the data can be transcribed and analyzed. You may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed, that includes your participation. Pseudonyms will be used during transcription for all proper names in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

All consent forms will be kept separate from the transcription data to ensure that the names and identities of all participants will not be known or linked to any information provided. Participation in this study is voluntary and at any point during the study you have the right to end your participation.

All responses and feedback will be confidential and anonymous throughout the entire research study. This study has been approved by the Superintendent of Schools and the Institutional Review Board of St. John's University.

If you have any questions or concerns please email me at [REDACTED], or call [REDACTED]. You may contact my Faculty advisor, Dr. Catherine DiMartino at [REDACTED], or call [REDACTED]. For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Human Subjects Review Board, St. John's University, [REDACTED].

Thank you! I truly appreciate your time and participation in this study!

Respectfully,

Ricky V. Papandrea Jr.

### Agreement to Participate

Yes, I agree to participate in the study described above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONCENT (INTERVIEWS)



### Invitation and Consent to Participate in a Research Study (Interviews)

Dear Participant:

You are being invited to participate in a research study to investigate secondary social studies teachers' perception towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. This study will help to better inform educational leadership on implementing mandated curriculum changes in the social studies.

I will be conducting this study as part of my doctoral dissertation for St. John's University, Department of Administration and Instructional Leadership.

This portion of the research study will consist of individual phone interviews lasting from 30 – 60 minutes. Audio recordings of the phone interviews will be made so that the data can be transcribed and analyzed. You may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed. All audio recordings and transcriptions of phone interviews will be kept secured on a password protected drive and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. Pseudonyms will be used during transcription for all proper names in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

All consent forms will be kept separate from the transcription data to ensure that the names and identities of all participants will not be known or linked to any information provided. Participation in this study is voluntary and at any point during the study you have the right to end your participation.

All responses and feedback will be confidential and anonymous throughout the entire research study. This study has been approved by the Superintendent of Schools and the Institutional Review Board of St. John's University.

If you have any questions or concerns please email me at [REDACTED], or call [REDACTED]. You may contact my Faculty advisor, Dr. Catherine DiMartino at [REDACTED], or call [REDACTED]. For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Human Subjects Review Board, St. John's University, [REDACTED].

Thank you! I truly appreciate your time and participation in this study  
Respectfully,

Ricky V. Papandrea Jr.

### Agreement to Participate

Yes, I agree to participate in the study described above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

### Focus Group Protocol

#### Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group concerning secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your participation in this focus group supports my research study on how teachers' perceptions impact the change process. The goal of this focus group is to discuss how implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies have impacted your perceptions implementing change in the social studies classroom. Before we begin, is there anyone who does not want to participate in the focus group? If any of you decide at any point during the focus group that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

#### Overview:

During the focus group I am going to ask a few questions. After each question is asked, I will ask that each participant share their ideas in discussion with myself and the other group members. The entire focus group session will be captured in an audio recording in order to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The only people who will know what is said are those of us in this room during the focus group session. The discussion and transcripts from the focus group is completely confidential. When the results of the focus group are shared none of your names will be included. Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

#### Focus Group Questions:

1. What do you know about the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
2. How do you feel about the changes to social studies instruction in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
  - a. Instructional changes?
  - b. Content changes?
  - c. New pressures?
  - d. Shifts?
3. How did your instructional day change with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
4. What type of support have you received from department in implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
  - a. How has the Social Studies Department been involved in the implementation?
  - b. What type of professional development have been provided?
  - c. What type of resources have been provided?
5. What type of support have you received from your administrative team?
  - a. Department Supervisor?
  - b. Principal?
  - c. District Office?
6. Are there additional supports you would want to receive from your administrative team?
7. How do you feel about new assessments?
8. What else should I know about these changes? What could have been done differently? The same?

#### Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our ability to support secondary social studies teachers implementing mandated curriculum changes.

## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (TEACHER)**

### **Interview Protocol**

#### **Opening:**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview concerning secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your participation in this interview supports my research study on how teachers' perceptions impact the change process. The goal of this interview is to discuss how implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies have impacted your perceptions implementing change in the social studies classroom. If any of you decide at any point during the interview that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

#### **Overview:**

During the interview I am going to ask a few questions. The entire interview session will be captured in an audio recording in order to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The only people who will know what is said are those of us in this room during the interview. The discussion and transcript from the interview are completely confidential. When the results of the interview are shared your names will not be included. Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### **Interview Questions:**

1. What grade level do you teach?
  - a. How long have you been teaching?
  - b. How long have you been teaching this grade level?
2. What are your views of the new standards outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
3. What are your views of the new assessments created for the New York State K-12 Framework?
4. Can you give me an example or examples of significant changes in your professional life as it relates to the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
  - a. What impact, if any, has the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies had on your teaching methods in the classroom?
  - b. How have you adapted to teaching literacy skills through social studies instruction?
5. How has the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies impacted your instructional practices?
  - a. How has the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies impacted students' learning in the classroom?
6. Have you done anything to help facilitate a successful implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
  - a. What professional development opportunities have you sought out? Was it helpful?
  - b. Have you collaborated with your colleagues? How? Why?
7. Have you encountered any difficulties or challenges during the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
  - a. What difficulties or challenges?
  - b. What do you need to overcome or make the challenges easier?
  - c. How have you overcome some of the challenges in implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?

#### **Closing:**

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our ability to support secondary social studies teachers implementing mandated curriculum changes.

## APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (ADMINISTRATOR)

### Interview Protocol

#### Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview concerning secondary social studies teachers' perceptions towards mandated curriculum changes under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your participation in this interview supports my research study on how teachers' perceptions impact the change process. The goal of this interview is to discuss how implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies have impacted your perceptions implementing change in the social studies classroom. If any of you decide at any point during the interview that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

#### Overview:

During the interview I am going to ask a few questions. The entire interview session will be captured in an audio recording in order to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The only people who will know what is said are those of us in this room during the interview. The discussion and transcripts from the focus group is completely confidential. When the results of the interview are shared your names will not be included. Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### Interview Questions:

1. How long have you been the administrator overseeing the Social Studies Department?
  - a. How long were you a social studies teacher?
2. What are your views of the new standards outlined in the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
3. What are your views of the new assessments created for the New York State K-12 Framework?
4. Can you give me an example or examples of significant changes in the teachers' professional life as it relates to the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
5. How has the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies impacted the instructional practices in the department you supervise?
  - a. What is the most important change you have made on your curriculum?
  - b. Do you think new K-12 Framework for Social Studies has helped improve students' learning? Why or why not?
6. What are some examples of things you have done to help the teachers with the implementation of the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies change process?
7. What are some examples of challenges you had to face in implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies change process?
  - a. What supports do you need to provide teachers to overcome or make the challenges easier?
  - b. How have you overcome some of the challenges in implementing the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies?
8. How has the changes under the K-12 Framework for Social Studies impacted the evaluation of social studies teachers?
9. How has your job changed?
  - a. Recommendations for State?
  - b. What would you do the same/differently?

#### Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about the implementation of mandated curriculum in the social studies classroom under the New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our ability to support secondary social studies teachers implementing mandated curriculum changes.

## APPENDIX G: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

**Document Analysis Protocol** - *adapted from O'Leary (2014).*

1. Gather relevant texts.
  - a. New York State K-12 Framework for Social Studies (Introduction, K-8, and 9-12)
  - b. C3 Framework
  - c. New York State Next Generation Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and the Technical Subjects
  - d. Educator's Guide for the New Framework Global History and Geography II Regents Exam
  - e. Educator's Guide for the New Framework United States History and Government Regents Exam
  - f. New York State Education Department Office of Assessment Website
  - g. Department Meeting Agendas (September 2018-March 2020)
  - h. Professional Development Documents (August 2018-March 2020)
2. Develop an organization and management scheme.
  - a. Upload to Dedoose to store and manage all data
3. Make copies of the originals for annotation.
4. Assess authenticity of documents.
5. Explore document's agenda and biases.
6. Explore background information
7. Ask questions about document
  - a. Who produced it?
  - b. Why?
  - c. When?
  - d. Type of data?
8. Explore content
  - a. Data Analysis through multiple rounds of coding
    - i. Attribute coding
    - ii. Pattern coding
    - iii. Code Weaving

## APPENDIX H: IRB APPROVAL



Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Feb 24, 2020 2:22 PM EST

PI: Ricky Papandrea  
CO-PI: Catherine DiMartino  
Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Expedited Review - Initial - **IRB-FY2020-395** *Secondary Social Studies Teachers' Perception To Mandated Curriculum Changes*

Dear Ricky Papandrea:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *Secondary Social Studies Teachers' Perception To Mandated Curriculum Changes*. The approval is effective from February 22, 2020 through February 20, 2021

Decision: Approved

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP  
Chair, Institutional Review Board  
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.  
IRB Coordinator

**APPENDIX I: SUPERINTENDENT APPROVAL**

Attn: St. Johns Institutional Review Board

I have reviewed Ricky Papandrea’s approved IRB research protocol, including any letters of consent or assent, titled “Secondary Social Studies Teachers’ Perceptions Towards Mandated Curriculum Changes.” I understand what he is asking of the individuals and grant him permission to conduct his study at [REDACTED]. I have the authority to do so.

If I have any further questions about this research study, I understand that Ricky Papandrea can be reached at [REDACTED] or via e-mail at [REDACTED]. I also understand that if I have any questions regarding this IRB approval or the rights of research participants, I can contact Raymond DiGiuseppe, Ph.D., Chair, St. John’s Institutional Review Board, at [REDACTED] or via e-mail at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]  
Superintendent of Schools  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(SIGNATURE)

3/2/2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
( Date )

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