

## **Vision/Mission/Core Values**

*The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.*

The Social Studies Department in West Orange is dedicated to working collaboratively with different organizations/institutions such as the NJ Amistad Commission, Montclair State University Network for Education Renewal, Kean University's Diversity Council, Garden State Equality, Morristown Historical Park, the Thomas Edison Historical Park, the Africana Institute at Essex County Community College, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and other organizations/institutions to engage our students in authentic learning experiences that will prepare them for the worlds of professional, college, and civil life. With the upcoming incorporation of the College, Career and Readiness Framework in the NJ Social Studies Standards effective September of 2022, emphasis in the social studies curriculum is placed not only on content, but on understanding and development of concepts that enable students to think critically which will allow the learners to systematically make connections to real world experiences.

To accomplish this, the social studies curriculum will:

- Be aligned to the NJ Social Studies Standards in grades K-12 based on the Career, Civic and College Readiness (C3) framework.
- Provide a comprehensive program that meets the needs of our diverse learners in which our students can personally connect with the content.
- Provide performance based assessments which allow the learners to develop their content knowledge, social studies, literacy, and communication skills.
- Incorporate non-fiction and historical fiction texts which will further enhance the learning of diverse perspectives.
- Provide cross curricular opportunities which engage other content areas.
- Provide students with the democratic dispositions, values, and attitudes needed for civic engagement.
- Provide students with an opportunity to apply social studies skills learned (map reading, geography, primary/secondary source analysis) to other disciplines both in and out of the classroom.