

**SANTA ROSA CITY SCHOOLS  
CONTENT AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS  
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

***Principles and Ideal of the American Political System:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: Revolution, liberty, power, authority, limited government, federalism, citizenship, written constitution**

<b>Enduring Understanding</b>	<b>EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS</b>
<b>12.1 The student will identify and analyze the fundamental ideas and principles of the American political system as well as the culture.</b>	Students may demonstrate these performance standards by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing an essay on the causes and effects of the American Revolution;</li> <li>▪ Writing a paper that discusses the philosophy and historical context of the Declaration of Independence;</li> <li>▪ Taking a test on the Constitution;</li> <li>▪ Drawing a chart that delineates the branches of government and the functions of each branch.</li> </ul>
<b>Important to Know and Do</b>	
12.1.2 The student will describe the fundamental principles underlying the Constitution.	
12.1.3 The student will discuss how the Constitution provides the basic structure of our government.	
<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	
12.1.1 The student will discuss the causes and effects of the American Revolution.	

***Informal Political Institutions and Processes:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: Political participation: voting, political parties, interest groups, the media**

<b>Enduring Understanding</b>	<b>EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS</b>
<b>12.2 The student will analyze and evaluate the informal political institutions and political processes that lead to participation in the governmental/political system.</b>	Students may demonstrate these performance standards by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drawing a timeline that shows the inclusion of various groups in the voting process;</li> <li>▪ Taking a test on political parties,</li> </ul>

<b>Important to Know and Do</b>	<p>interest groups and the media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participating in mock and real elections;</li> <li>▪ Working with a partner and using the Internet to research political parties and, then, placing the findings on a political spectrum.</li> </ul>
12.2.2 The student will describe the function and importance of political parties.	
12.2.3 The student will discuss the role of interest groups and the media in the political system.	
<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	
12.2.1 The student will discuss the progression of voting rights in America.	

***The Congress:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: Separation of powers, legislative powers, checks and balances, law making process, amendment process:**

Enduring Understanding	EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS
<p><b>12.3 The student will analyze and explain the function, powers and organizational structure of Congress.</b></p> <p>12.3.2 The student will demonstrate an understanding of the different powers of Congress.</p>	<p>Students may demonstrate these performance standards by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drawing a flow chart on how a bill becomes a law;</li> <li>▪ Taking a test on the structure, function and powers of Congress</li> </ul>
<b>Important to Know and Do</b>	
12.3.1 The student will compare and contrast the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.	
<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	

***The Presidency and the Executive Branch:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: Executive powers, bureaucracy, veto, institutional change**

Enduring Understanding	EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS
	Students may demonstrate these performance standards by:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Important to Know and Do</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating a chart that identifies the roles of the President and explains the function of each role;</li> </ul>
<p><b>12.4 The student will identify and explain the growth and function of the Presidency and the executive branch of government.</b></p> <p>12.4.1 The student will enumerate the many roles of the President and discuss the formal and informal powers of the Presidency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Taking a test on the evolution and powers of the Executive Branch.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Worth Being Familiar With</b></p>	

***The Judicial System:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: Federal court system, judicial powers, judicial review, justice:**

Enduring Understanding	EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS
<p>12.5.1 The student will describe the nature of the court system and explain the importance of the Supreme Court in the governmental/political system including its role in interpreting the Bill of Rights.</p>	Students may demonstrate these performance standards by:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Important to Know and Do</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating a flow chart that demonstrates the pyramidal structure of the court system;</li> <li>▪ Participating in a mock trial;</li> </ul>
<p><b>12.5 The student will analyze and explain the structure, function and dynamics of the federal court system and the role of the Supreme Court in interpreting the Constitution.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Citing several Supreme Court cases that have had a lasting impact on our governmental system and explaining</li> </ul>

<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	<p>each;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing a methodology for analyzing court cases.</li> </ul>

***Public Policy Making:***

**CONCEPTS ADDRESSED: National security, economic regulation, equality, minority rights, due process, equal protection:**

<b>Enduring Understanding</b>	<b>EXAMPLES/ILLUSTRATIONS</b>
<p><b>12.6 The student will describe and explain the politics of public policy making including foreign policy, economic policy, social policy, civil rights and civil liberties.</b></p>	<p>Students may demonstrate these performance standards by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Taking a test on how public policy is created and the process of its implementation;</li> <li>▪ Creating a list of First Amendment freedoms and procedural rights that explain the court's current interpretations in these areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Important to Know and Do</b>	
<p>12.6.1 The student will discuss the controversy surrounding the meaning of national security and describe the agencies involved in the implementation of national security.</p> <p>12.6.2 The student will describe how government acts as a regulator of the economy and the major issues surrounding this function.</p> <p>12.6.3 The student will describe how government protects unpopular views and how it imposes rules on itself to protect citizens from arbitrary power.</p>	
<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	

*American Government Skills Emphasis:*

<b>Enduring Understandings</b>	<b>Teacher Notes</b>
⇒ Content reading	
<b>Important to Know and Do</b>	
⇒ Multi-paragraph essay ⇒ Controversial issue essay/research paper ⇒ Research skills including the Internet ⇒ Analysis of primary source documents ⇒ Note taking ⇒ Outlining ⇒ Public speaking ⇒ Test taking	
<b>Worth Being Familiar With</b>	
⇒ Timed essays	