**Course Description:**

**8th Grade Social Studies Team**

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Our class this year examines the history of the early United States, as well as our “Civic Ideals.” The basic idea of this class is to use the ideals of. . .

* Freedom
* Justice
* Equality
* Opportunity
* Democracy

. . . as a lens for viewing our country’s history. We want our students to decide how much or how little our history (and events today) match up with those ideals.

It is the job of every American citizen to be critical of how well our country held to those ideals in the past, holds to those ideals in the present, and to move our country closer to making those ideals a reality. Students will need to ask questions like. . .

* How much freedom did we/do we have?
* What limits to freedom are most appropriate?
* What is justice? Was that/is this justice?
* How do we protect every person’s right to equal treatment/equal rights?
* Does our country provide equal opportunity?
* Do we allow everyone’s voice to be part of the decision making process?

The answers students come up with will represent their judgments of our country’s history, and will help them decide how much to push our country to be better today and into the future.

**Course Expectations:**

Here at Harding, we have five core values:

* We are scholars, and class comes first
	+ We expect students to be in class, and we expect them to come prepared with a **binder** that includes a **writing utensil and their notebook**
* We respect ***everyone’s*** personal space and their belongings
* Phones, headphones, and electronics are not to be used unless a student has teacher permission
* Indirect or direct profanity will not be tolerated
* We will follow staff redirections the first time we are asked

If a student is not following staff expectations, teachers will follow the Rule of Three:

1. First violation will result in a private conversation with the student

2. Second violation will result in a phone call home

3. Third violation will result in a consequence (detention, parent teacher conference, phone

contract, etc.) for the student based on the specific value being violated

***Units and Learning Targets***

**Unit 1: Colonization**

3A - Compare and contrast reasons for migration to the precolonial United States (SS.8.19 & SS.8.20)

3B - Examine similarities and differences of colonial settlements (SS.8.18)

3C - Differentiate the effects of precolonial migration (SS.8.19)

**Unit 2: Revolution and Founding**

3A- Form conclusions about factors that contributed to the development of colonial identities (SS.8.18)

3B- Differentiate patterns of economic development within the colonial United States (SS.8.16 & SS.8.17)

3C- Critique the effect of different political systems in the colonies (SS.8.22)

3D- Identify the circumstances that led to the Revolutionary War (SS.8.23)

**Unit 3: A New Nation**

U.S. Government Purpose

3A- Assess how the goals of the Declaration of Independence were represented in the founding of the new government (SS.8. 14 & SS.8.24)

3B- Examine similarities and differences between compromises during the development of the US Constitution (SS.8.14, SS.8.23, & SS.8.24)

U.S. Government Structure

3A- Differentiate the roles of the three branches of government in the law making process (SS.8.14)

3B- Evaluate the structure of Federalism (SS.8.14)

3C – Assess the impact of the US government structure on citizens (SS.8.14)

**Unit 4: Westward Migration**

3A- Form conclusions about what life was like for multiple groups on the eve of Westward Expansion (SS.8.22)

3B- Examine the similarities and differences in the reasons for westward movement for different groups (SS.8.19 & SS.8.20)

3C- Assess the impact of westward migration (SS.8.18, SS.8.19, & SS.8.21)

**Unit 5: Domestic Conflict**

3A- Examine similarities and differences in political and economic issues between North and South prior to the Civil War (SS.8.17)

3B- Discuss the impact of the early years of the Civil War on Americans (SS.8.21)

3C- Discuss the impact of the latter years of the Civil War on Americans (SS.8.21)

**Unit 6: United States Identity**

Reconstruction

3A- Identify how the lives of people in the United States changed after the war (SS.8.23)

3B- Evaluate the influence of Reconstruction on society (SS.8.22)

United States Identity

3A- Evaluate the immediate cultural impacts of the Civil War (SS.8.22)

3B- Form conclusions about how the outcomes of the civil war alter the powers and responsibilities of citizens and political parties (SS.8.13)