VOTING, ORGANIZING, RECOGNIZING

Members of the Connecticut Council for the Social Studies have had a productive couple of months. We voted to approve the proposed changes to the Constitution that created a new position of Legislative Liaison within the Board of Directors. Our organizing efforts are beginning to have some results. And finally, we will end the academic year by recognizing our colleagues at the Annual Spring Meeting and Awards Reception. We still have a long road ahead before we congratulate ourselves, however, and we need to work together.

The results of the voting on the Constitutional changes were clear. The amendment to change the officer position of “Secretary” to “Administrative Officer” passed by a vote of 63-3. This change reflects the evolving nature of the position from one of only taking minutes to one with the responsibility to organize and maintain the various databases, electronic records, and organizational mission documents. The vote to create the position of Legislative Liaison was similarly decisive. By a vote of 64-2, we voted to enhance the public affairs role of CCSS by dedicating an Executive Committee office to this mission. I have been appointed interim Legislative Liaison until our voting at the

Well, as they say, “whodathunkit?” Here we were ready to write an editorial excoriating Connecticut’s Commissioner of Education Stephen Pryor for failing to meet with CCSS/NCSS leadership over the past fifteen months and, lo and behold, he has agreed to a meeting later this month with CCSS President John Tully, NCSS President-elect Steve Armstrong and Connecticut Teacher of the Year and National Social Studies Teacher of the Year David Bosso. We will wait for the results of that meeting before we break into loud “hozannas” but at this point any step forward for social studies, however small, can only be positive. Elsewhere in this issue John Tully and others will bring you all up to speed on our efforts to move social studies from the educational shadows into something approximating sunlight. That message includes a call to all of us who presumably know something about how government works, to do our part to make sure we arrive at and stay in the bright sun of academic prominence.

Metaphors aside, we cannot let this issue of Yankee Post pass without our own brief reflection on the courage of our teaching colleagues in Newtown who stood firm against evil and paid the ultimate price. Whether it’s the Newtown six or the science teacher at Columbine who died while herding his students into a classroom out of harm’s way, or whether it’s simply every committed teacher doing his or her best every day to make learning come alive for students, we know that teachers have always stood tall. David Bosso said it best in an op-ed piece in the Hartford Courant, reprinted here on page 5.

We have lots more in this issue. Steve Armstrong brings us up to speed on the progress toward adoption by NCSS of the Social Studies Common Core (see page 3). Summer workshop information is available on pages 10-13. Those of you seeking to promote social studies in your high school should check page 9 for information on how to start a chapter of Rho Kappa. Also note the upcoming dates of two conferences: NERC and the CCSS annual dinner. Information is available on pages 3-4. Remember that the May annual dinner is also an awards night: a chance to celebrate the contributions of the best among us. We encourage you all to be there to stand up for teaching and social studies.

(continued on page 2)
President’s Message (continued from page 1)

May meeting.

Our organizational efforts will be aided by this position, but our success will depend on the extent that all of us get involved. We have had some good initial meetings with the Secretary of the State, various legislative leaders in the General Assembly, and very soon we will be meeting with Commissioner Pryor. While all of these are good first steps, be ready to answer my call to initiate a groundswell of action to make sure these policymakers know that these issues are important to all of us, to our students’ success, and to the future of our state.

Finally, we will soon be having one of the best days on the CCSS calendar, our annual Awards Program. I urge you to follow the links on the home page to nominate a colleague for one of our awards. It is an honor to see how much of a difference we make in students’ lives, but we often do not get the chance to celebrate that publicly. I hope you give us the chance to do that; please complete the registration form on page 4 and join us on May 16.

Best,
John Tully, CCSS President

Editors’ Note (continued from page 1)

We have included an item on page 9 from Education Week that challenges us to think about if and how we should teach values. Finally, in the never-ending saga of standards setting, we share information from yet one more state. Social studies seems to be the one academic area where everyone is an expert; think about that everyday as you work to inspire that kid slouched in the back of your classroom. Twenty years from now, s/he could be a parent AND chair of the school board! Back in the day, students used to ask us, “so why do you teach this stuff?” Our response, said only partially in jest: “Because in a few years your vote will be equal to mine, and right now that thought has me terrified.” Keep the faith! Better yet, write us and share your “best practice.”

Dan  danielcoughlin@charter.net
Tim  thomas.weinland@uconn.edu

PS: After hectoring you all these years about writing a letter we finally got one. That’s the good news. The bad news is that this letter sat around in a folder for almost three years! With very red faces, we share Bill Spaulding’s ideas in the column to the right. Write us; we’ll do better with the next contribution.

To the Editors

I have been a teacher for 19 years, 11 of these year in Connecticut. I have valued the professional opportunities that the annual CCSS conference has afforded me and I have enjoyed reading the Yankee Post. For some time I’ve been mulling over ideas about how to better tap the professional resources that we as an association of educators can offer our colleagues and students.

I wonder if Connecticut social studies educators need
a. a vehicle for sharing and exchange of resources,
b. a means for discussing relevant pedagogical and policy issues,
c. a directory of selected resources within the state, and
d. a means for rapid sharing of professional opportunities.

One year ago I spent a year teaching at an international school in South Korea. One of the benefits of living abroad is that it takes a concentrated effort to remain professionally aware. One result of this year is a personal conviction that, in developed nations, the internet offers unparalleled opportunities for the professional development and the exchange of ideas.

I am grateful for the current CCSS website which has served us well for many years. Perhaps we will benefit from some significant site changes that can take advantage of Web 2.0 interactivity. The website could include:

a. an active (at least twice-a-month) blog addressing current professional issues
b. a discussion board for sharing of professional concerns and questions -- somewhat akin to the message boards that the College Board uses for AP teachers
c. a mechanism to offer periodic professional meetings via the internet (see this article:

As a colleague, Bill Spaulding
College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Social Studies Frameworks to Be Released

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) will be releasing a new national framework for social studies instruction in June. This document has been created by representatives from 24 states and 15 social studies organizations, including the National Council for the Social Studies. The Vision for the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework of Inquiry in Social Studies Standards provides guidance for states to use in enhancing their standards for rigor in civics, economics, geography, and history in K-12 schools. The C3 Framework, presently in final stages of development, will ultimately focus on the disciplinary and multidisciplinary concepts and practices that make up the process of investigation, analysis and explanation which will be informative to states looking to upgrade their social studies standards. It will include descriptions of the structure and tools of the disciplines (civics, economics, geography, and history) as well of the habits of mind common in those disciplines. The C3 Framework will also include an inquiry arc: a set of interlocking and mutually supportive ideas that frame the ways students learn social studies content. The framework and background of standards development to be covered in C3 all point to the states’ collective interest in students using the disciplines of civics, economics, geography and history as they develop questions and plan investigations; apply disciplinary concepts and tools; gather, evaluate, and use evidence; and work collaboratively and communicate their conclusions.

The C3 Framework will focus primarily on inquiry and concepts, and will guide—not prescribe—the content necessary for a rigorous social studies program. CCSSO recognizes the critical importance of content to the disciplines within social studies and supports individual state leadership in selecting the appropriate and relevant content.

Like the Common Core State Standards, the C3 Framework will be based on evidence and will aim at college and career readiness. As a core area of the K-12 curriculum, social studies prepares students for college and career including the disciplinary practices and literacies that are needed for college-level work in social studies academic courses and the critical thinking, problem solving, and collaborative skills needed for the workplace.

The C3 Framework also adds a third essential component to college and career readiness—civic life. Learning to be actively and responsibly engaged in civic life requires knowledge and experience; children learn to be citizens by working individually and together as citizens. An essential element of social studies education, therefore, is experiential: practicing the arts and habits of civic life collaboratively.

(Taken from www.ccsso.org)

Steve Armstrong, President-Elect
National Council for the Social Studies

PLAN AHEAD - DATES TO WATCH

NERC APRIL 8-10  -  Sturbridge, MA
Register online at http://www.masscouncil.org/?page_id=1308

NOMINATIONS for CCSS AWARDS -  by April 1
See nomination information at http://www.ctsocialstudies.org

CCSS Annual Dinner - MAY 16 - CT. Historical Society, Hartford CT
(See page 4)

NCSS ANNUAL CONVENTION - NOVEMBER 22-24  ST Louis, MO
Please join us for our annual Spring Social & Awards Dinner

- Recognize and be inspired by the accomplishments of some of our outstanding colleagues.
- Explore the new “Making Connecticut” exhibit at the Connecticut Historical Society
- Hear a fascinating talk by Walt Woodward, Connecticut State Historian.
- Socialize with social studies professionals from across the state.
- Be informed about activities of our organization:

Connecticut Council for the Social Studies

Thursday, May 16, 2013 Connecticut Historical Society (CHS)

1 Elizabeth Street, Hartford

4:00 – 5:00 – Activity based on the CHS “Making Connecticut” exhibit featuring objects from throughout the span of Connecticut history.
6:00 – 6:30 – Social time– Connect with colleagues from throughout the state and meet this year’s award winners. Wine and beer cash bar.
6:30 – 6:45 – CCSS Election of Officers and Board for 2013-2014
6:45 – 8:00 – Dinner and Award Presentations (Excellence in Social Studies Education, Friend of Social Studies, CCSS Service Award, John Stedman Passion for the Social Studies Award, Addazio Honor Award).

Registration Form

Name: ___________________________________________ Email: __________________________

Address: ________________________________________ Phone: __________________________

_____________________________________________ __ I am a member of CCSS.

The cost of the program and dinner is $30.00. Please make checks payable to CCSS and mail payment and registration form by May 1, 2013 to: Max Amoh, CCSS Treasurer, 10 Clark Street Apt 2, New Haven, CT 06511-3802
Opinion: Sandy Hook Shows Teachers’ Enduring Values  
by David Bosso

I have spent much of this year imploring educators to never again say that we are “just” teachers. Because of the tremendously vital work that educators carry out on a daily basis, I have spoken and written about the need to enhance the cultural perception of teachers, in particular, and education in general. This was before Friday’s incomprehensible tragedy at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown. Shaken, emotionally numb and feeling helpless, I found myself thinking that, after all, maybe I am just a teacher. What could I possibly do or say that could make a difference?

Then, stories of heroism and selflessness from Newtown began to make their way onto social media sites and the reports from news outlets. Stories of the educators who gave their lives protecting their beloved students emerged. There were the reports of teachers who read to their classes or gave them paper and crayons to draw on to maintain a sense of calm. Other accounts of educators doing everything in their power to care for and shelter their students certainly will come to light in the coming days. In the face of unspeakable circumstances, they continued to fulfill the same responsibilities they carry out every day: to nurture, support, and love their children regardless of ethnic, religious, socioeconomic or other differences.

Although many will say how fortunate their students are to have them, I’m sure that these educators would say how lucky they have been to know and teach their students. I’m sure that in each case, every one of these educators would claim that there was nothing heroic in their acts, that they were only doing what they could to keep their children from harm. They would perhaps say that they did what anyone with the genuine heart of a teacher, or a parent or a first responder would do.

Perhaps part of their legacy will be a societal re-examination of the significance of educators and a better appreciation for our sense of duty to our students and our profession. Across the country, our educators commit countless deeds of kindness and altruism for the good of their students, colleagues, schools and communities. They expect nothing in return but to know that they have made a difference.

In other countries, the respect afforded the teaching profession bolsters their societies and helps to sustain it in so many ways. We should find ways to emulate these values and perceptions. We can honor the memories of the deceased by honoring the teachers who perform their noble duties daily. We can collectively elevate the status of education in our society and better support our teachers, students and schools. Prospective and beginning teachers need supportive colleagues who act as professional models and guides. What is often overlooked, however, is that experienced teachers need motivation and encouragement as well.

To so many, the educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School demonstrate that the core values of education mirror the greatest ideals of humanity, and they are exemplars in this regard. They offer us hope, and reinforce our belief in the goodness of others and the power of education. In an era of accountability, standards, testing and data, they affirm that what ultimately matters most are the immeasurable lessons and the enduring relationships teachers cultivate with their students.

To the educators of Sandy Hook Elementary School, thank you for the powerful, inspiring example of dedication and compassion you have given us. You have made, and continue to make, a difference to so many. In the midst of this unfathomable loss and profound sorrow, you have buoyed our spirits and given us hope. Because of your passion, courage, sacrifice, and devotion, I am once again reassured to proudly declare to educators everywhere: Never again say, “I am just a teacher.”

Please Note: This column first appeared in the Hartford Courant on December 18

PLEASE NOTE: Yankee Post is Available Only Online
To receive Yankee Post via email, and notification of a new issue . . . please join CCSS and send your email address to: ctsocialstudies@yahoo.com
'Dramatic' Increase in Reading Needed for Common Core, Guides Say

By Catherine Gewertz on January 10, 2013 11:51 AM

A set of new guides to the Common Core State Standards offers a solution, of sorts, to a brewing controversy about the balance of fiction and nonfiction in U.S. classrooms. "Informational text" doesn't have to displace fiction, the guides say, if the overall amount of reading students do increases "dramatically."

The "action guides" are meant to help counselors and school principals put the common standards into practice. Issued by Achieve, College Summit, and the two groups that represent elementary- and secondary-level principals, the guides include a primer on the standards, talking points, and an array of tips.

But in exploring the instructional shifts in the standards, they also offer common-core advocates' answer to teachers who are worried that assigning a much heftier chunk of nonfiction will force them to drop cherished parts of their literary canon.

"A shift to more informational text does not mean an abandonment of nonfiction or literature," the guides say. "Because literacy is now a shared responsibility among all teachers, reading should dramatically increase in all content areas. While English teachers may use more informational text, students may actually read more literature not less."

The booklets also downplay the immensity of the shift to nonfiction for older students, choosing not to repeat the part of the shift that has sparked the strongest reaction: that 70 percent of what students read in high school should be informational text. All three guides—even the one for high school principals—mention only the elementary-level balance: fifty-fifty.

"Balancing informational and literary text [in grades preK-5], students read a true balance of informational and literary texts," the guides say. "Elementary school classrooms are, therefore, places where students access the world—science, social studies, the arts, and literature—through text. At least 50 percent of what students read is informational."

The booklets also make note of how much schools have to do in order to be up to the challenge of cross-disciplinary literacy envisioned by the common standards. Principals have a crucial role to play in helping teachers of social studies, science, and other subjects learn how to teach the literacy skills specific to their disciplines, they say.

"From a practical standpoint, middle schools and high schools currently lack the capacity to integrate literacy instruction in the content areas. Even if teachers are receptive to the idea of incorporating literacy into their daily instruction, they lack the training and resources needed to deliver that instruction. The result is the need for building principals to begin immediately to start building teacher capacity, which begins with addressing common misconceptions about literacy instruction."

Another important challenge in implementing the standards, according to the booklets, lies in the daily practice of "leveling" texts, or matching texts to readers based on their skill level. Because the common standards expect students to read at their grade level—rather than at their reading skill level—learning to match texts to readers becomes a new ballgame that will require "additional training in evaluating the appropriateness of the material for their students," the guides say.

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/01/three_new_publications_from_ac.html
Far from the classroom, an intense but nearly invisible battle is being waged for the hearts and minds of Minnesota's schoolchildren. The fight is over how history and other social studies topics will be taught, long a flashpoint for political strife in Minnesota. At issue is the state Department of Education's proposed revision of social studies standards -- a massive overhaul two years in the making. An administrative law judge will decide whether schools can teach the new standards beginning this fall.

Critics say the new standards favor an "America the Ugly" narrative of U.S. history. They say there is too much focus on slavery and oppression of American Indians and too little on "American exceptionalism," the nation's inherent greatness and God-given rights as laid out in the Declaration of Independence.

Meanwhile, social studies teachers see a conservative attempt to "indoctrinate students with ideological and religious values." As was the case during the controversy surrounding the Profile of Learning standards in the 1990s, which launched the career of U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann, Minnesota cares a lot about how history, economics, geography and civics are taught in K-12 classrooms. "If we don't understand -- if our students and children don't understand -- the basic workings of our republic, it won't be there for very long," said Karen Effrem, president of Education Liberty Watch, which has led the charge against the new standards.

Social studies teachers like Bob Ihrig of Mankato see the battle as one of professional research vs. narrow political viewpoints. Ihrig told Administrative Law Judge Barbara Neilson, who will decide whether the revised standards can go forward, that the critics would "move away from the professional factual domain to an effort to indoctrinate students with ideological and religious values."

Beth Aune, the state Education Department's director of academic standards, defends the revision, which she said favors research and expertise over religious texts and special interests. "It is impossible to create state standards without some level of controversy," she said. In Minnesota and across the country, debates over academic standards have become intense battles of competing ideas and the framing of the American story for the next generation.

When Bachmann began agitating against the Profile standards in the early 1990s, she was an unknown Stillwater education activist. By 2003, she was a Minnesota state senator who helped kill the standards. The long political battle ended with a legislative compromise under Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty that produced new standards in 2004 that Profile critics found more acceptable.

Other states have had their own struggles. A 2010 debate over standards in Texas produced a document that dismissed the separation of church and state and all but eliminated discussion of native peoples and slavery, according to a history standards analysis by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, an education research and advocacy group. The institute finds fault with both ends of the political spectrum in these debates.

Minnesota's existing History and Social Studies Academic Standards spans 80 pages and breaks down the main subject areas -- history, geography, economics and citizenship -- into goals for students to master at various grade-levels. The proposed revision, at 146 pages, covers the same topics and is the result of committees of social studies teachers and topic area experts. (View both documents at www.startribune.com/a2018.)

But Julie Quist, an education activist and Bachmann ally whose work goes back to the Profile debate, wrote that the revised standards still fall short. In particular, she said, inalienable rights -- life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness -- "are almost completely erased from existence" in the revision. Effrem said that is a major departure. "Those are inherent, God-given rights as opposed to granted by a government entity," Effrem said. She and other critics want this distinction made crystal-clear in the standards.

Aune said the standards refer numerous times to those rights without "talking about the sources of those rights... That's the purview of parents. If they want to talk about God granting certain rights, they certainly can do that."

Both sides agree the new standards go deeper on such issues as slavery and exploitation of American Indians. That is as it should be, said veteran social studies teacher Eric Beckman of Anoka High School. Beckman said he does not want to teach "a sanitized view of American history," which in itself would be "a kind of political correctness." Several tribal educators sent letters of support for the new standards, saying the standards are an "attempt to remedy the invisibility of American Indian students."

Aune said that "American exceptionalism," the concept that the United States serves a unique role in the world, is generally a positive portrayal of American history, government and economy. She said the committee "decided to have a balanced narrative of the American story.... That means calling attention to progress as well as setbacks in the American story."

A national critic of Minnesota's standards, John Fonte, wrote a critique for National Review Online titled "America the Ugly." State Sen. Sean Nienow, R-Cambridge, suggested that the standards "promote an anti-American world view." Marjorie Holsten, of Education Liberty Watch, told the judge the new standards have "an incredibly out-of-balance emphasis on the concept of America as an oppressive culture with an almost obsessive focus on racism, slavery and the wrongs done to indigenous peoples."

The Southern Poverty Law Center, an anti-discrimination group with a liberal history, gave the Minnesota standards (along with those of most states) an "F" for failing to spell out specifics and heroes of the civil rights movement. The center preferred the 2004 standards, which it said were far more specific and detailed. Aune said the revision focuses on general concepts, not specific figures and events.
Common Assessments Hold Promise, Face Challenges, Study Finds
By Catherine Gewertz on January 16, 2013 11:20 AM
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/01/common_assessments_hold_promis.html

Tests now being designed for the common standards are likely to gauge deeper levels of learning and have a major impact on classroom instruction, according to a study of the common assessments released today.

UCLA's National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing, or CRESST, analyzed the work done so far by the two consortia of states designing the tests. The center concludes that the assessments hold a lot of promise for improving teacher practice and student learning. But its report also cautions that the test-making projects face key financial, technical, and political challenges that could affect their success.

With the “essential relationship between what is assessed and what is taught” in mind, co-authors Joan Herman and Robert Linn sought to explore the extent to which the common assessments will gauge “deeper learning.” Their study was funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (which also provides support for Education Week’s coverage of deeper learning).

In examining the potential rigor of the coming tests, Herman and Linn were guided by Norman Webb’s “depth of knowledge” classification system, which assigns four levels to learning, from Level 1, which features basic comprehension and recall of facts and terms, to Level 4, which involves extended analysis, investigation, or synthesis. Herman and Linn examined the work so far of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium for signs that they would demand the kinds of learning at Levels 3 and 4 of the so-called “DOK” framework.

The researchers found reason for optimism that the assessments will demand those skills. They singled out, in particular, the more lengthy, complex performance tasks being crafted by the two groups, saying they seemed likely to assess skills at DOK Level 4. “It appears that the consortia are moving testing practice forward substantially in representing deeper learning, but the nature of available data make it difficult to determine precisely the extent of the change,” since the tests are still in the design phase, the study says.

Herman and Linn noted a RAND study from last year that examined released items from 17 states reputed to have challenging exams and found “depth of knowledge” levels overwhelmingly in the 1s and 2s in mathematics, and those in English/language arts a bit more rigorous. While the unfinished work of the two consortia can’t be directly compared with existing state tests, they said, the two groups still appear to be on track to creating tests that are more rigorous than what most states currently administer.

Important questions remain, however, about how well the two consortia’s plans will be realized, the study says. Among them:
• Maintaining their performance tasks, in the face of pressure from states concerned about cost and time. As we reported earlier, SBAC has already had to grapple with this pressure from some of its members.
• Making automated scoring possible for constructed-response items and performance tasks. Without it, current $20-per-student projected costs for the summative tests could soar.
• Ensuring the comparability of the with-accommodations and without-accommodations versions of the tests.
• Managing the “shock to the public and to teachers’ instructional practice” that the tests’ increased intellectual rigor will demand.

(Minnesota Standards “Divide” - Continued from page 7)
Former Education Commissioner Alice Seagren, who is not involved in the current dispute, said a reasonable balance can be struck that recognizes the greatness of the American system and its people and the many unresolved problems, which should not be ignored. “I’m very proud of our country. I think our country is a miracle,” said the former Republican legislator who was appointed commissioner by a Republican governor. “I don’t think our kids know enough about that, and the miracle of how this country was created.” But, she said, “there are also things that have happened in our country that we shouldn’t be proud of, that we also should know about so that we can can learn from our mistakes.”
“Schools and teachers don’t get to choose whether they teach values. Schools and teachers are always affecting values by, for example, what they decide to praise and punish, how fairly they balance different students’ needs, how they define students’ obligations to each other. The question isn’t whether schools teach values, it’s whether they choose to be deliberate about it.” —Richard Weissbourd, Harvard Graduate School of Education and Kennedy School of Government

Children grow up in families, and also in schools. Their experiences in schools help shape the adults they will become and the world they will build. As a nation, what can be more important to us than schools that support the healthy development of our young people? Why then, do so many of our schools still look and feel impersonal, industrial, and disconnected?

In the name of their secular and economic tradition, our schools have a hands-off orientation to values. Morals, beliefs, and rites of passage happen at home. Proofs, pronouns, and bubble sheets happen at school. Therein lies the problem: We seem to believe that it is possible to teach young people without imparting values. We pretend that we can ask young people to check their identities at the school door to be “students” in their classrooms. But we cannot. And while many teachers yearn to nurture their students’ emerging values, our education system discourages it.

As a society, do we really believe that our schools exist solely to develop students’ intellect and increase their future earnings? Surely we must know that this isn’t all that schools can do. Schools can help develop young people’s emerging humanity: their values, their purpose, and their place in the world. Do we teach only the students, or do we also teach the developing people? How we answer this question informs what we do inside schools, what we deem worth learning, and what we measure.

Many of our schools today end up ignoring values, attempting to teach values but ending up teaching only “good behavior,” or nurturing values only by working against a system that makes it hard to do so. We would like to advocate for a new way: that we be as deliberate about how young people develop values-based identities as we are about the academic standards they meet.

If you read this and worry, “What will happen if we trust schools to shape values?,” then consider what happens when we don’t. In trying to stay hands-off, schools narrow what they teach, focus on the test, and seldom ask students to engage in their communities or connect their learning to their worlds. By purposefully detaching values from learning, schools send implicit but clear messages to students: Value individual success and achievement gain. Earn status. Do not take responsibility for improving our world, as least as a byproduct of your schooling.

Ethics for All Students

It is unfair to say that this is true of all schools. Certainly, there are schools across the country that embrace their role in developing the ethical and civic identities of the young people they serve. But educators in these schools are often doing this in spite of, not because of, the educational system we have established in this country. And, what’s more, many of them are in private or elite public schools. As a society, it’s as if we’ve decided that the only children who are worthy or capable of learning to be ethical citizens and conscientious stewards are those who can pay for it, or who are lucky enough to have teachers and administrators who work around the system.

As educators, citizens, and parents, we are troubled by this. So, what can we do?

• **Leverage the Common Core State Standards.** Across the nation, teachers, administrators, and families are deciding how to teach to new national standards. While the common core should not prescribe values, communities can come together to imagine how their young people can meet standards by engaging in their communities and studying global issues.

• **Evaluate school climate.** When students feel safe and supported in school, they are more successful on many fronts, including academics. It is not enough to measure achievement; we should also evaluate safety, support, and positive values in our schools.

• **Make “Community Capstones” part of every state’s graduation requirements.** Community Capstones are culminating projects based in both academic and community service-based learning. Several states (Connecticut and Rhode Island, for example) already require students to complete academic capstone projects. States might adopt and adapt this model, requiring young people to complete community-based capstones to graduate.

There is no learning without values. There is no teaching without values. Our attempt to avoid school-based values is misguided because, as educators, every decision that we make sends young people a message about who they can be and what role they can play in the world. Thus, what we do not teach becomes as important as what we do, and we leave young people confused and unsupported as they try to figure out what they care about, and who they are. As educators and as a society, we must embrace the potential in all of our students—not just as learners, but also as young people with voices, visions, and values.
Validate your scholars’ achievements in a new way…

Start a Rho Kappa Chapter Today!

RHO KAPPA National Social Studies Honor Society is the only national organization for high school juniors and seniors that recognizes excellence in the field of social studies. Membership in RHO KAPPA is an honor bestowed upon students by a local chapter for accomplishments in social studies and overall academic achievement. Any accredited high school can apply to start a chapter, through which students will be inducted into the RHO KAPPA Social Studies Honor Society.

For more information visit rhokappa.socialstudies.org or call 301-588-1800 x 107 or e-mail at rhokappa@ncss.org.

Special Opportunity
NCSS is looking for members to serve on our awards selection committees. These committees review and select recipients of NCSS Awards. Individuals can find more information and apply at the link below: http://www.socialstudies.org/awards/committees

Sincerely,
Jordan Grote
Program Manager, External Relations & Council Communications

Preparing Students for College, Career, and Civic Life

Link social studies standards with the Common Core Standards

“Teaching Reading with the Social Studies Standards: Elementary Units that Integrate Great Books, Social Studies, and the Common Core Standards,” the latest bulletin from NCSS Publications is now available. This new publication includes class activities that help teachers to achieve learning expectations of the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies as well as specific objectives outlined in the Common Core Standards for Reading Literature.

Go to Socialstudies.org

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

CONNECTICUT COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES 2013 AWARDS

We all work with amazing colleagues whose passion and professionalism make a difference in the lives of their students. We also know of individuals who may not be in a classroom now, but who work tirelessly to advance the cause of Social Studies in the state. GIVE THESE PEOPLE THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVE; nominate them for a CCSS Award. Awardees will receive awards at the CCSS Annual Spring Dinner on May 16, 2013.

Deadline: April 1, 2013

Go to http://www.ctsocialstudies.org/awards.htm for award descriptions and nominating forms.

Excellence in Social Studies Education (Two Awards: Grades K-8 & Grades 9-12)

Bruce Fraser Friend of Social Studies Award
CCSS Service Award
John Stedman Award
Summer Institutes

2013 PIER Institutes July 8-12

Global Youth in the Digital Age The 2013 summer institute “Global Youth in the Digital Age” will highlight the way in which technology is transforming educational practice and opportunity the world over. More than ever, young people are actively engaged in civil society. Using technology that was once unimaginable, students around the world are becoming change agents and advocates for their generation. These tools are also enabling cross cultural exchanges that are opening the world to what is perhaps the first generation of truly global citizens. The summer institute will explore the promise and potential pitfalls of these trends, as well as offer practical tools for teachers who want to globalize their own classrooms through intercultural exchanges and international communication.

Echoes of Egypt: Conjuring the Land of the Pharaohs The summer institute “Echoes of Egypt: Conjuring the Land of the Pharaohs” will examine the content of the ground-breaking new exhibit opening at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History. The exhibition, opening on April 13, 2013, will explore over two millennia of fascination with ancient Egypt in both the Western world and the Middle East. From a recreation of a mummy unwrapping event in 1850 to the mystery of Egyptian hieroglyphs to fascination with Egyptian wisdom and magic, “Echoes of Egypt” will examine the ancient Egyptian concepts that have underpinned and even fueled cycles of Egyptian revivals through the ages and around the world. This year’s summer institute will expand upon these concepts and provide educators practical tools to teach their students about ancient Egypt and its influence in world history.

Indigenous Cultures of the Americas and their Response to European Contact Across Time The summer institute “Indigenous Cultures of the Americas and their Response to European Contact Across Time” will focus on a number of indigenous American cultures in the context of the extensive exchange of goods and ideas that took place with the European settlers. We’ll also explore the contemporary lives of indigenous peoples in the Americas, and consider the relationship of indigenous Americans today to those of the past. Our institute will feature first-hand explorations of Yale Peabody Museum collections, participation in seminars led by world-class scholars, and in-depth exchanges on select indigenous ethnic and tribal peoples, while offering practical tools to assist teachers in developing innovative approaches and resources for effective classroom teaching.

Submit On-line Application http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/pier/SI_Application.htm
THE CHOICES PROGRAM
The 1960s: Upheaval at Home and Abroad

2013 Summer Leadership Institute  July 8-12, 2013

Applications are available at www.choices.edu/pd  Application deadline is Friday, March 15, 2013.

Civil rights, Vietnam, upheaval and protest. The 1960s were a time of intensive social change and uncertainty in the United States. While the civil rights movement challenged the system of racial segregation and discrimination at home, the Vietnam War challenged Americans’ perceptions about the role of the United States in world affairs. Participants will consider how the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War influenced this tumultuous period of U.S. history, changing our nation forever.

Institute participants will:
• Hear lectures from top historians and social scientists
• Engage in curricular sessions on how Choices meets common core standards and fosters historical thinking skills
• Refine outreach strategies for sharing their knowledge with other educators

Open to all secondary social studies teachers. Language arts teachers, media specialists, and community college professors may also apply. Housing, meals and materials are provided. Participants pay only their travel to/from Providence, RI.

Mimi Stephens  |  Director of Professional Development
The Choices Program
Watson Institute for International Studies Brown University, Box 1948 I Providence, RI 02912
Phone: 401.863.3155  |  Fax: 401.863.1247 www.choices.edu  http://blogs.brown.edu/choices/

NCSS Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

Essential Tools for Online Technology Integration - An Introductory Course
March 26, 2013

Engaging Social Studies Strategies for Achieving Excellence in the Common Core
April 30, 2013

Education for Democracy and the Arab World
June 25, 2013 – July 1, 2013  Fez, Morocco

The Catherine B. Reynolds Civil War Washington Teacher Fellows Program

Teaching With Documents and Works of Art: An Integrated Approach

Powerful and Authentic Social Studies (PASS): Teacher Training Institute
July 22-26, 2013 - Brandman University , Monterey, CA, USA

Strengthening Social Studies Learning and Excellence in the Common Core
July 31-August 2, 2013 – University of Wisconsin, School of Continuing Education Conference Center, Milwaukee, WI

Conducting Socratic Seminars: Focus on Primary Source Documents from US History
August 5-7, 2013 - American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC

registration information http://members.socialstudies.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=Find_Events

Join CCSS - See Membership Form - page 14
International Exchange and Research Opportunities for U.S. Classroom Teachers

The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs offers Fulbright grants for U.S. primary and secondary classroom teachers, guidance counselors, curriculum specialists, curriculum heads, Talented and Gifted coordinators, Special Education coordinators and media specialists/librarians to participate in professional development opportunities abroad through the Fulbright Classroom Teacher Exchange (CTE) Program.

Teachers may apply to the CTE Program in one of six countries: the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, India, Mexico and the United Kingdom. Teachers may apply to the DA Program in one of eight countries: Argentina, Finland, India, Mexico, Morocco, Singapore, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

For more information about eligibility requirements, benefits and impact of these programs, please visit the program website, www.fulbrightteacherexchange.org. Teachers interested in applying to the CTE Program can find more information here: http://www.fulbrightteacherexchange.org/application-te2.

The application deadline for the CTE Program is October 15, 2013.

Professional Opportunities

International Social Studies Conference-Fez, Morocco

Education for Democracy and the Arab World
An NCSS International Conference in the Kingdom of Morocco
June 25 – July 1, 2013

Understanding the Near East and the dramatic events of the Arab Spring are important content for today’s social studies classrooms. Whether it is the democratic revolutions in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia or the push for reforms in Morocco, the people of these North African countries have taken a stand for freedom and democracy. This is just the latest chapter in the centuries-old history of human occupation of these lands that stretch back before the Roman Empire.

Join NCSS, in partnership with Maryville University of St. Louis and the Moroccan Center for Civic Education, in Fez, Morocco next summer for Education for Democracy and the Arab World to get a first-hand understanding of the issues and region. http://www.socialstudies.org/morocco2013

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CONNECTICUT COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES
MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership in CCSS entitles you to:

- Reduced Registration for the CCSS Fall Conference
- Reduced Registration for the Northeast Regional Conference for the Social Studies (NERC)
- Convenient access to the Yankee Post, the CCSS online newsletter
- Opportunity to apply for “mini-grants’ of up to $500 for innovative curriculum in social studies and other special projects
- Opportunity to meet colleagues and develop a network of professional friends and associates
- Ability to keep up-to-date with developments in the social studies.

If you have always wanted to become a member of NCSS, now is the time to act. New membership subscriptions to NCSS will also give you membership benefits from Connecticut Council for the Social Studies for one year—a $20 savings. This offer applies to only new NCSS Regular or new Comprehensive members only who send in their form to CCSS. Joint member benefits include:

- All CCSS benefits
- Regular and Comprehensive membership in NCSS includes a subscription to Social Education or Social Studies and the Young Learner
- NCSS Comprehensive membership also includes all bulletins published during the membership year.

Please complete membership form. Make checks payable to CCSS and mail this form to CCSS, P.O. Box 5031, Milford, CT 06460.

Name_________________________________email______________________________
Home Address___________________________City_________State_______Zip______
School Name_____________________________________________________________
School Address________________________City________State_______Zip______
Home Phone___________________________Work Phone________________________
Position____________________Level of Instruction_____________________________
Areas of Special Interest_____________________________________________________

CCSS Membership (July 1- June 30) NEW NCSS Membership
_____Regular $20       _____Regular* $62
_____Student $10       _____Comprehensive* $73
_____Retiree $10

*Choose one:
___Social Education
___Social Studies and the Young Learner