On behalf of the Connecticut Council for the Social Studies, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who made our recent Annual Fall Conference such a resounding success. From the wide range of unique and compelling workshops to our keynote speakers and special guests to our sponsors and vendors, the social studies community throughout Connecticut came together to network, celebrate, learn, share, and grow. In line with our organizational mission, we are proud to provide such an enjoyable and worthwhile professional learning and engagement opportunity to social studies professionals in our state and beyond. Thank you again, and we look forward to working with you again in the future.

In the spirit of recognizing and celebrating excellence in the social studies, please consider nominating a colleague for our various CCSS awards. In addition to our traditional annual awards, there are two new awards we are offering: an educational leadership in the social studies award and a special projects award. More information, including criteria and nomination forms, can be found on our website. Similarly, please consider joining us for our annual awards ceremony, with a tentative date in mid-May. This evening is always memorable and inspirational as we honor our awardees and the amazing work they do.

In addition to professional development activities and recognition of excellence in, and contributions, to social studies education, CCSS remains engaged in our advocacy work. While we are disappointed

We continuing to see daily reasons why social studies remains central to a student experience. How we define and organize that experience has become an increasingly complicated issue. On one level the current Connecticut graduation requirements have become less prescriptive. American history and world history, for example, are not specifically identified as “subjects” in social studies; only civics is mandated. At another level, the curriculum includes several state mandates, or strongly suggested topics: the Holocaust, the Irish Famine to name two. Add to that the focus on specific skills and experiences prescribed in the state common core and one can understand how coordinating all this can become an organizational struggle. Yet one more layer to consider: the responsibility often given to the social studies department to address the issues of diversity and social interaction that are played out on a daily basis at each of our schools. All this confirms what we already know: Teaching Social Studies is Not for the Faint of Heart.

We have several articles in this issue that touch on these issues. From Austin, Texas, comes word of a struggle on what to include or eliminate in the social studies curriculum – and the debate gets to very specific issues, often with a political overlay. (We find it particularly interesting that the level of specificity gets down to how the causes of the American Civil War will be interpreted.) See page 6, and then give thanks that you don’t teach in Texas.

President David Bosso has noted the success of the fall conference. Note the theme – Finding Our Voices – and then turn to page 7 where the Hechinger Report describes some of the issues active in social studies classrooms. In that context, see page 9 for a discussion on how “minority matters” fit into curriculum decision-making. And for a real test of historical understanding

(continued on page 2)
President’s Message - continued

the gubernatorial candidates did not respond to our questionnaire during the campaign season, we look forward to working with our governor-elect, as well as sitting and newly elected members of the General Assembly. As always, you are welcome to reach out to get involved in our public affairs and advocacy efforts to ensure that social studies remains a central pillar of our students’ educational experience.

What we have been able to do as an organization is only possible due to the vision, dedication, energy, and insights of the many committed individuals on our Board of Directors and among our membership. It remains a privilege to work alongside such passionate, exemplary educators in pursuit of a better world. Wishing you and yours an enjoyable holiday season and a happy, healthy, and memorable new year.

Join CCSS . . .
And be eligible for reduced rates for conferences
See Membership Form on page 16

Editor’s Note - continued

see page 11 for a discussion of how to understand and interpret that first Thanksgiving.

We note with great sadness the apparent ending of the National Geographic Society’s support of state Geographic Alliances. Bill DeGrazia has been a long time “warrior” on behalf of geographic learning in Connecticut. The NGS decision is deeply regrettable if they plan to step away from people like Bill.

Finally, we must note the sad loss of one of our own – Pamela Bellmore Gardner. We have known Pam since her undergraduate days. A natural leader even then, she has been a star wherever she landed: in CCSS as president, as a district teacher of the year, as a Milken award winner and as an administrator. Her passing is a loss to her family, to her friends and colleagues and to students everywhere. RIP Pam; taken much too soon.

Our best wishes to all of you for a safe and restful holiday season and for an exciting and rewarding 2019

Tim  thomas.weinland@uconn.edu
Dan  danielscoughlin@charter.net
I came away from the National Council for the Social Studies conference with tremendous enthusiasm. There were over 4,200 educators present; a number that I spoke to were at their very first national conference. The House of Delegates was fascinating this year. There were several resolutions that were presented to the body that were political in nature; a lively debate took place on whether the organization should take a political stand or not. It was fascinating to hear many of the same debates about politics in the classroom expressed here on a larger scale. It was also with great pride that I went up to get the certificate stating that Connecticut Council for the Social Studies is a Gold Star Council this year. This is very first year since I have been going to NCSS conferences that Connecticut has been recognized as a Gold Star Council. Congratulations to the NCSS board of directors and to the organization.

Steve Armstrong

Attending the annual conference for the National Council for the Social Studies has always been extremely rewarding. The time spent networking, gathering resources and participating during workshops is of great value to all. The motivational presentations geared towards effectively increasing student success is what I appreciated the most. Experiencing the passion of a fellow social studies educator is exhilarating.

This year was as powerful as expected and the energy was extraordinary. What really stood out for me was the heightened movement towards civic education and its implications for the 21st century student. Empowered with both invigorating and practical information, and with greater insight, I see the potential for growth in our field. Reaching the learner in meaningful ways that promote citizenship and genuine respect for all was the overall message. The conference was quite beneficial and as always an honor to represent CCSS.

Sandra Clark, Board Member - CCSS

Chicago as a place is one of the greatest cities I have had the opportunity to visit. Everywhere one looks is drenched in history. From the Chicago Tribune to the Chicago Theater and Willis Tower, the 1900s loom large as Chicago settles into the 21st century. Also looming large in Chicago this year was the National Council for the Social Studies 98th Annual Conference. Over 4,000 social studies educators descended on the city to engage in tried and true practices.

The President’s Breakfast Friday morning began with a rousing speech detailing the importance of social studies education and its vital role in preparing for our youth for careers that don’t yet exist and to address the political complexities of our time. As for sessions, it was interesting to see how some teachers have used logical thinking to teach about Gerrymandering. We used bingo-esque manipulative materials created by their school’s STEM club using a laser cutter. This was an innovative approach to such a fundamentally important topic to the social studies, illustrating the importance for the social studies to ensure we are remaining relevant while staying true to our discipline and craft—a true roadmap for the future of our craft.

In addition to promoting great social studies practices in an abundant number of sessions offered at the conference, the House of Delegates debated policy and position statements on critical issues facing the social studies and the world today. The body debated immigration, the Second Amendment, veneration of leaders within the field. On display was a meeting of great minds respectfully expressing critical thought. At points, as often happens, the debate was contentious. For anyone who enjoys debate club or Model United Nations, this was an exhilarating experience. In the end, the group passed several resolutions to produce policy statements and revisions to guide the social studies into the next 100 years.

Tony Roy, CCSS Board Member
Speakers:
Top: Larry Paska, Executive Director of NCSS
Dennise Merrill, CT Secretary of the State
Right: Dianna Wentzel, Commissioner of Education
(with Chris Todd)

Professional Interaction
Exhibits
Conference Support Program
Sessions
State Department Activities

There is much good activity going on at the State Department of Education to report on. The CSDE is working with Connecticut Council for the Social Studies to produce a number of quality webinars. Topics will include civics, teaching controversial issues, using music in the social studies classroom, and several others. A comprehensive list of these webinars will be available after the first of the year.
The department along with the Old State House are helping to create a series of regional student conversations for this spring. We are planning that students from host schools and schools from surrounding areas would get together to discuss critical political, social, and economic issues that the students think are important. If you would like to be a host school, or if you would like your students to participate, please contact me at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

The CSDE and CSSS are planning a two-day social studies institute this summer. This institute would invite three educators from each school district to learn the latest about inquiry, civic education, and other critical topics. Specifics dates and location will be available after the first of the year. Also, the CSDE is working with the Old State House and other historical organizations to create a Social Studies Challenge program for this summer. There are presently math and reading challenges: it is time we create a similar program for social studies. If you have ideas on what this program might be contact me at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

Red, White and Blue Program: The Red, White and Blue program is cosponsored by the State Department of Education, and the Secretary of State’s Office. The program is designed to recognize schools that do an extraordinary job of teaching civics. This year’s theme is “Teaching Local Perspectives”, and will honor schools that do an exceptional job of teaching local history and the background of their town or city. We welcome elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools to participate in this program. Ways to study local history and explore resources are:

- Explore the state or local town’s history
- Contact your local Historical Societies
- Visit the town hall or museums if available
- What role your town has played in the state’s history
- Who are important individuals in your town’s history
- Engagement with Junior Achievement or Connecticut History Day

For more information please contact Kayleigh Vocca or Yesenia Karas the Social Studies Interns at the Connecticut State Department of Education at SocStudiesIntern2.CSDE@ct.gov.
Responding to concerns that Texas public school students would no longer learn about Hillary Clinton, Eleanor Roosevelt, Helen Keller and defenders of the Alamo, the State Board of Education took a final vote Friday to reject recommendations from board-created working groups to remove the figures from social studies curriculum.

The board on Friday unanimously approved the curriculum, cementing dozens of changes the panel made earlier this week. The new learning requirements will go into effect for middle and high school in the 2019-20 school year and the following year for elementary schools.

Making any changes to the social studies curriculum has deeply divided the board in the past, but board Chairwoman Donna Bahorich, R-Houston, said her fellow members were more willing to compromise this time around.

“There’s a great deal of trust that has been built among ourselves and ... it’s not about scoring political points. We are trying to make those decisions as best we can. ... As a body, the board of education does our work in a very deliberative, thoughtful manner,” Bahorich told the American-Statesman.

The board was charged with cutting down the voluminous amount of social studies material students must learn in a school year for state standardized tests. The board tasked multiple working groups of mostly educational professionals to make recommendations.

Among the recommendations they made that received the most criticism from interest groups were the removal of Keller, a disability rights advocate; Roosevelt, known for her fight for humanitarian causes especially as first lady; Clinton, the first female presidential nominee of a major U.S. party; Women Airforce Service Pilots, who flew planes in noncombat roles in World War II; and the defenders of the Alamo and a famous letter from William B. Travis pleading for more help at the Alamo.

Amid thousands of people expressing concerns about the recommendations submitted online and in person, the board in September voted to keep the Alamo defenders and the Travis letter and, this week, the female historical figures.

“I think obviously in a subject area that there are tremendous amounts of opinions like social studies, what should matter is, is there an opportunity for the public to participate in the process?” Bahorich said.

The board on Friday toned down the language of one of the more controversial elements of the social studies curriculum, which lists slavery third among causes of the Civil War. Despite Democrats pushing and failing earlier this week to remove states’ rights as a contributing factor of the war, Democrats and Republicans compromised.

Students will learn about the “central role of the expansion of slavery in causing sectionalism, disagreement over states’ rights, and the Civil War.”

Other changes the board made included removing the link between Islamic fundamentalism to terrorism, a characterization that critics have said is biased against the Muslim community. Instead, students will learn about the development of radical Islamic terrorism as well as the geopolitical influences of the development of radical Islamic terrorism.

The Republican-majority board, however, didn’t budge on Democratic efforts to remove biblical prophet Moses from the curriculum and including Arab nations’ rejection of the state of Israel as a cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

“This was just an extended exercise in politicians masquerading as historians,” said Kathy Miller, president of Texas Freedom Network. “If the facts didn’t conform to their personal beliefs about the past, board members just ignored what teachers and historians were telling them. If this were a classroom, they would get a failing grade and certainly have failed millions of Texas kids across the state.”

Conservative group Texas Values applauded the board’s work. “In Texas, you don’t mess with our Alamo defenders and you don’t mess with respect for our Christian heritage. We thank the State Board of Education for listening to their constituents and protecting the heroic defenders of the Alamo, Moses, and our Judeo-Christian heritage,” said Jonathan Saenz, president of Texas Values.
Pipe bombs. People murdered because of their skin color or religion. The possible end of federal protections for transgender people.

These recent horrific events may have occurred outside school walls, but the associated trauma and fear are spilling into our classrooms.

Teachers are struggling to find ways to support their students and to create meaningful curricula for children who may or may not understand the effects of these events in their lives.

In 2017, UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access surveyed 1,535 teachers from over three hundred geographically and demographically diverse public high schools, asking them to reflect on their experiences from January to May of that year.

Through both this survey and subsequent teacher interviews, the institute found that 51.4 percent of teachers reported that more students were experiencing “high levels of stress and anxiety” than in previous years; teachers pointed to heightened student concerns about immigration status, healthcare and LGBT rights.

Meanwhile, 27 percent of teachers reported increases in derogatory remarks made by students during class discussions, and 72.3 percent of teachers agreed that they needed more guidance from school leadership and more opportunities for professional development around the promotion of civil exchange.

We understand that everyone might not agree on the particulars of these issues, and that some individuals might feel that discussing these topics is too political for schools or educators. But remaining silent is a political act. Moreover, silence does nothing to address the real and significant challenges that our schools face today.

In a 1963 talk to teachers, James Baldwin said: “The paradox of education is precisely this — that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. … The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it — at no matter what risk.”

For educators committed to the civic and political education that Baldwin described over 50 years ago, this fight requires the support of others. It requires courageous leaders — like those affiliated with Bend the Arc — who are willing to organize and mobilize their communities in acts of civil disobedience and democratic dissent.

“As teacher-educators ourselves, we know that we can all afford to work in isolation no longer; the future of our democracy is at stake.”

It requires networks of individuals willing to demonstrate their anger and outrage at incidents that target the Jewish community and other minority groups. It requires brave educators willing to help students reflect on the pressing concerns in our nation brought on by the rise in hateful rhetoric and deeds like the ones that have occurred over the past two weeks.

And we contend that it requires substantive opportunities for these parties to come together — for leaders, activists, educators and youth to share their experiences, their ideas and their evolving questions. Intent on creating this kind of forum, we have organized a network called “Teaching in Trying Times,” which includes educators, youth, families, activists and academics who meet regularly and come together in the spring for an annual conference hosted at Teachers College, Columbia University.

This group discusses both theoretical and practical approaches to civic and political education, asking: How do
we respond to unfolding political events in our classrooms? How might we, as Baldwin urges, encourage our students “to examine society and try to change it and to fight it — at no matter what risk”?

As teacher-educators ourselves, we know that we can all afford to work in isolation no longer; the future of our democracy is at stake. Through movements like Black Lives Matter (#BLM), Never Again (#NeverAgain) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (#Dreamers), our students are already fighting. They are depending on us to act alongside them. We invite you to join the conversation.

This story on social and emotional learning was produced by The Hechinger Report, a nonprofit, independent news organization focused on inequality and innovation in education. Sign up for our newsletter.

Erika M. Kitzmiller and Adele Bruni Ashley are lecturers in the Department of Arts and Humanities at Teachers College, Columbia University, and co-founders of Teaching in Trying Times.

When Was the Constitution Written? Most Americans Don’t Know
By Stephen Sawchuk on October 3, 2018 9:45 AM

It’s starting to be something of a monthly ritual here at Curriculum Matters: reporting that the state of Americans’ civic knowledge is pretty ghastly.

A new national poll finds that most Americans don’t know that the Constitution was written in 1787 (nearly two-thirds of Americans named 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was signed), just 20 percent knew how many amendments to the U.S. Constitution exist, fewer than half knew that there are nine justices sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court.

On a few matters, more Americans did know their stuff, though there was room for improvement: 63 percent knew that communism was the main concern of the United States during the Cold War (although 2 percent named climate change—eek!) and 64 percent knew that the country made the Louisiana Purchase from France.

In general, though, Americans’ weak knowledge reflects a number of other polls and reports over the last few years.

The wrinkle to this poll, conducted for the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, which works to improve teacher training, is that some of its questions are similar to those asked as part of the exam that those applying for naturalization have to pass.

And why does that matter? Well, because more than a dozen states now require all of their high school students to take, and pass, that exam to graduate.

It’s a reform that’s been lauded in some corners and criticized by others as far too narrow and multiple-choice-based. The results show that, easy or not, adults lack even basic knowledge about their country’s origins. Overall, 64 percent of adults polled would have gotten an F grade (59 percent of questions answered correctly) on the test.

With these results, the phrase “hoisted with his own petard” comes to mind a teeny bit, though to be fair, this isn’t a poll of students in the states that have adopted the U.S. citizenship exam, and there’s no way to tell what effects, if any, it’s had.

Whatever the case, it’s clear that high school history and civics matter: 60 percent of respondents last reported taking history in high school. And age mattered, too: Older respondents over the age of 65 did better on the test than did those below that age.

Tantalizingly, the fellowship foundation said it’s cooking up a new program, to be announced in 2019, in response to these issues. The poll of 1,000 adults has a sampling error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.
Across the state of Connecticut, there have been some schools that have created diverse courses for students to participate in. Though not all schools are culturally diverse, there have been organizations that took action to create an equal and manifold education for students.

For instance, a report was released on April 2014 from the Connecticut Voices for Children that emphasized the importance of equal education. The report highlights the “impact of Connecticut’s inter-district school choice program’s goals of providing an equal educational opportunity to every child.” Children also have the advantage of “attending a well-resourced school with an integrated learning environment” which provides benefits by connecting them to a “democratic society and access to higher employment or higher education.”

The reason behind this idea is to avoid making children feel segregated in a social atmosphere where they feel isolated. Unfortunately, there are charter, technical, and magnet schools in the state that lack significant minority populations as well as students with disabilities. Moreover, the Connecticut Voices for Children also indicates that a “majority of charter schools are hyper-segregated by race and ethnicity” meaning that they recruit “less than 10% of minority students.”

Stephen Armstrong, the Social Studies Consultant to the Board of Education notes efforts to spread diversity within charter and magnet schools in Connecticut. He explains the improvement the state has made in combining students from multiple districts. “What the state has done is create magnet schools for suburban and urban kids, combining Hartford and East Hartford kids for example,’ Armstrong says, . ‘They do this to have less separation in magnet schools.”

Similarly, not all schools in Connecticut have diversity in the area that they live in. For instance, if someone’s child were to attend Simsbury High School, the diversity rate would be extremely low. As stated in U.S News, the percentage rate of black students is at 4% and Hispanic students at 6%; whereas the white students percentage is eighty-five.

By contrast, Brien McMahon High School - located in Norwalk - has a mix of students with various ethnic backgrounds. Their demographics range from black students at 22% and Hispanic students at 43%. The percentage of white students at this school is only 28%.

Scott Hurwitz - the principal of Brien McMahon High School - admires the quantity of diverse students that represent different racial backgrounds. As a result, Brien McMahon High School decided to “have a diverse curriculum” that would be beneficial for children to learn about varied cultures.

Hurwitz notes that students who associate with a diverse population helps prevent them from “making a clique culture.” in the school. When a school lacks diversification, everyone appears the same and therefore there are repercussions that make certain students feel unwelcome. “When everyone is the same, they create differences,” Hurwitz commented.

Brien McMahon is a school that encourages people to interact with one another; hence, most of the students gain plentiful of information about diversity academically and socially. “People from different backgrounds tend to respect each other more,” Hurwitz mentioned. “Students hear voices that are different from their own.”

Besides this concept, there are a variety of clubs and courses in different high schools that work to spread the importance of other people’s cultures. From Staples High School having a Building Bridges Club - a program specifically geared towards educating students about the Muslim community - to Greenwich High School’s Diversity Awareness club - which involves promoting diversity and to help create events to honor the GHS diversity pledge.

Although encouraged by the diverse academic choices that have been offered or required for students, Armstrong has concerns about the lack of minority representation in teaching profession. “Most schools would like to hire more minority teachers,” Armstrong says. “We need a more diverse teaching population, but we have to convince minorities to be in the teaching field because nowadays, teaching is seen as less of a profession. Wouldn’t students want to be taught by a person who is like them?”

Connecticut’s largest high school, Danbury High School, has an upcoming course in progress known as Race and Ethnic Studies addressing the history of African Americans and Latinos. Julian Shafer, a social studies teacher at Danbury High School worked side by side with the social studies curriculum administrator to create an ethnic course that showcases discovering racial identity with the input of student voices from the members of the Black Lives Matter club, started by DHS alumna Tyra Hodge.
“For this unit I want to create a ‘generations project’ where students explore their family’s history (or another family if needed) and write about the experiences and customs of their ancestors, tied in with stories from their family’s history, explaining how their family’s experience has shaped who they are,” Shafer explained. “I haven’t nailed down the details for this project, but [this] is the general idea I’m thinking about. This aspect of the course also relies on students carrying on discussions about ‘slavery, colonialism and imperialism, before moving into more modern times with their histories.”

Beyond this approach, Armstrong states that people need teachers who are capable of digging in deeper into history while educating students. “The problem with history is that teachers just teach about the leaders and instead should teach kids about people who made change,” Armstrong says. “If you look at change makers, much more diverse people would be included and more students would likely be interested.”

When Hodge began considering ideas to develop the Black Lives Matter club, she asked for her friends’ and Shafer’s assistance to make it happen. Hodge was determined to build an organization that would bring everyone together.

“I shared my ideas with my friends who, thankfully, were like-minded. We came together and decided this is definitely what we wanted to do and we started the process to becoming an official club in the school,” Hodge commented. “I asked my former Civics teacher who had a very advanced mindset and was passionate about teaching.”

Additionally, their efforts incorporated school events that the Black Lives Matter club was involved in such as holding “interactive assemblies educating the student body about social issues and raising funds by selling club shirts.”

Despite the inevitable lack of diversified areas in many parts of the state, Armstrong hopes to spread diversity efforts even though “nobody has found a solution” to the societal predicament. Some states across America have different perspectives on creating an environment that makes the awareness of diversity more complicated than ever.

“We need to have a national effort to have equal education,” Armstrong says. “Educational decisions are made by local towns and something that the state of Connecticut may agree with doesn’t mean that other states may agree with it.”

Another critical feature of diversity Armstrong considers is not just educators informing students, but having knowledge about their students’ backgrounds. If teachers are aware of the diverse cultures in their classes, that knowledge can enhance the students’ learning environment. “Before teachers actually start teaching, they need to learn more about minorities,” Armstrong noted.

Moreover, Hurwitz added that people need to have “a strong foundation” in order to communicate appropriately with other ethnic backgrounds. It’s paramount for diverse students to receive the education they deserve outside of the curriculum. “It’s not just the curriculum that makes the school diverse, but it’s the experience.” Hurwitz added.

Overall, some minority students may not want to pursue education as their career; although, Armstrong argues that educational success requires a system that needs teachers and leaders who have aspirations of doing the foremost for their students regardless of their culture. “The best teachers are the ones that don’t just care about the subject; they care about the kids too.”

Article submitted by Annie Tucci, EdD       Department Head, Danbury High School

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Special Notice on Membership Dues and NERC Registration

Membership in CCSS runs from July 1 to June 30th each year. Members who are current on their dues for the 2017-2018 year will be sent a discount code for registration for NERC. To be eligible for reduced rates for the NERC conference, please be sure to renew your membership as soon as possible. Dues may be sent to CCSS, PO Box 5031, Milford, CT 06460.
November 20, 2018  School children in the U.S. often celebrate Thanksgiving by dressing up as pilgrims and “Indians.” But these traditions tend to perpetuate myths that are offensive to Native American communities. Education correspondent Kavitha Cardoza takes a look at a new movement aiming to reinvent the way schools teach Thanksgiving.

**Judy Woodruff:**
Thanksgiving is usually thought, of course, as a feel-good, quintessential U.S. holiday. But many argue the traditional narrative perpetuates myths, as well as being disrespectful to Native Americans, because it often leaves out the context of relations between them and the early immigrants, how the settlers brought diseases, for example, that decimated Native tribes, or information about the massacres of Natives that followed. Now there’s a growing movement to help history teachers unlearn what they themselves were taught. But not everyone agrees about what should be taught to students today.

**Man:**
The textbook, but there’s a lot of bias and a lot of slant.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
There are about 50 social studies teachers at the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. They’re learning how to teach the first Thanksgiving in a way that is true to actual events and respectful of Native cultures. For example, Pilgrims weren’t the first settlers in the U.S. Native Americans had celebrated fall harvest feasts for years already, and they had a sophisticated society.

**Diane Wright:**
It was very much with a white focus and white presentation and European colonialism.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
Renee Gokey is a member of the Shawnee Tribe and runs the workshop.

**Renee Gokey:**
And we know that the stories are either inaccurate, they’re incomplete, and they almost never tell a Native perspective.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
At the museum, teachers learn about the Thanksgiving story in context.

**Renee Gokey:**
All of these federal policies, assimilation, the Dawes Act, American Indian removal under Jacksonian policy, these affected my people, you know, my community personally.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
And they see how the consequences are still being felt today. Educator D’adre Blake says textbooks often refer to American Indians in the past.

**D’adre Blake:**
When you tell them that Native people are still here in America, they’re like, oh, we didn’t know that.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
Here, teachers listen to first-person stories, analyze historical photos, and learn about traditional Native foods. Karen Brown is an arts educator. She says making Thanksgiving crafts like dream catchers or headbands with feathers is outdated and inappropriate.

**Karen Brown:**
My colleague is Shawnee, and she taught me that feathers are very sacred. She was given one feather by her elder, and she keeps it and brings it out for special ceremonies. It completely changed the way I relate to feathers. They’re not a craft item from the crafts store any longer.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
So she comes up with alternatives that are rooted in history, like making catalogues to understand how Native people traded seeds.

**Woman:**
It’s not a monolith.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
Gokey says teachers may have to unlearn what they were taught, because simplifying the past is damaging not just to Native people.

**Renee Gokey:**
They do a disservice to us as a nation and forming our identity. I think that there’s much more opportunity when we speak frankly and truthfully about the past. And I think, from then, we can start to heal.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
But how to teach the past is very controversial. What students learn in different school districts varies a lot across the country, influenced by social and political values, as well as a community’s demographic makeup. Some see bias in the opposite direction. Roy White says America’s rich culture is in danger of being lost to revisionist history. He’s the founder of Truth In Textbooks, an organization that trains volunteers to review history textbooks for what they see as bias. They have successfully lobbied for change.

**Roy White:**
We’re trying to remove the political correctness that we found in a lot of the textbooks and begin to put back into the textbooks things that have been omitted purposefully over the years.

**Kavitha Cardoza:**
He gives examples.

**Roy White:**
Those who were founding our country were terrible towards all Indians. And that’s really not a fair, accurate characterization. When you talk about World War II and what you emphasize is Japanese internment camps or the moral dilemmas of dropping the atomic bomb. When you talk about the falling of the Berlin Wall and all you talk about is Gorbachev, and you never talk about Reagan. So, there was a constant berating of America. And suddenly now you, as a student, says, well, I’m not proud of America anymore. I mean, why would I want to be proud of those kinds of things?

*continued on page 12*
Kavitha Cardoza:
White believes history textbooks should emphasize American exceptionalism and the country’s roots as a Christian nation. Eric Shed teaches history teachers at Harvard University. He says understanding the past is all about narratives or stories that help us make sense of the present.

Eric Shed:
Narratives are fundamentally important to us as a society in terms of, they’re what binds us together.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Shed believes including the difficult parts of history teaches children empathy and citizenship.

Eric Shed:
All civic issues are rooted in history, right? We just didn’t have sort of issues today around immigration, economic policy, women’s rights. Those aren’t — those very important issues today are fundamentally rooted in the past.

Kavitha Cardoza:
In Colorado Springs, at Fremont Elementary School, Rebecca Daugherty’s third-graders have started a week-long unit on Thanksgiving.

Rebecca Daugherty:
So, are you guys ready to have your mind blown?

Student:
Yes.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Students analyze how Thanksgiving has changed over time.

Student:
I can see like, back then, there’s no, like, phones.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Oh, and this picture has a phone.

Student:
Yes, there’s tons of phones I see.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Joan Jahelka oversees social studies for almost 30,000 students in this district.

Joan Jahelka:
The way we taught social studies was very much about, how do we win on the game of “Jeopardy”?

Kavitha Cardoza:
So a lot of dates, a lot of names?

Joan Jahelka:
Yes, very much a stereotypical history class.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Now she says they have moved away from history textbooks to teaching students to become historians.

Joan Jahelka:
When students rely fully on a textbook, somebody else has done the thinking for them, whereas, when students interact with primary sources, they’re really learning about those sources and how they are significant in understanding our story as America.

Kavitha Cardoza:
She says it helps students learn to ask questions, research information, and analyze material, life skills.

Rebecca Daugherty:
And I want you to talk about what from this picture puzzles you or confuses you or you don’t get.

Kavitha Cardoza:
Eric Shed, the Harvard professor, says when students learn about our country’s problematic past, it makes the stories of our achievements more powerful.

Eric Shed:
It’s really that conversation between our ideals and our reality, that striving to meet these wonderful goals that we are founded on is really, I think, what makes America truly an amazing place. So, I do think that there’s a tendency to be overly critical or blindly patriotic. And I really think we would move ourselves tremendously forward if we could do both together side by side.

Kavitha Cardoza:
For the “PBS NewsHour” and Education Week, I’m Kavitha Cardoza in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Special correspondent Kavitha Cardoza, with our partner Education Week, has this report. It’s for our weekly education segment, Making the Grade.
Winter is often the time of year when Connecticans retreat indoors...but don't despair, there is a lot to do at Connecticut's Old State House!

**BOOK A SCHOOL FIELD TRIP!**

Are you getting cabin fever in the cold weather? Then bring your students to Connecticut's Old State House for an educational and fun fieldtrip! We offer a number of curriculum-based, interactive programs that bring together civics and history. Our signature programs include Connecticut's 3 Branches of Government and How They Work; Freedom Once Taken: The Amistad Story; Discover the Old State House; and The Place Where You Live (a multi-site visit with Wadsworth Atheneum). To learn more about our field trip programs, visit [www.ctoldstatehouse.org](http://www.ctoldstatehouse.org) and click on “School Programs” or email Jacob.Orcutt@cga.ct.gov. Our spring schedule is filling up fast – book your field trip today!

**WATCH THE KID GOVERNOR INAUGURATION**

On Friday, January 18, 2019, the Old State House will host the official Inauguration ceremony for Connecticut Kid Governor-elect, Ella Briggs. Students from the schools who had a Final Candidate will attend the invitation-only event; however, you and your students can watch the ceremony live starting at 10:00am at [facebook.com/CTKidGovernor](https://www.facebook.com/CTKidGovernor) or [youtube.com/ConnecticutsKidGovernor](https://www.youtube.com/ConnecticutsKidGovernor). At the ceremony, 2018 Kid Governor Megan Kasperowski’s service and Stronger Than Cancer platform will be celebrated and Ella Briggs will be sworn-in for her one-year term. This past November, Connecticut 5th graders elected Ella Briggs of CREC Ana Grace Academy of the Arts Elementary Magnet School to serve as the 2019 Connecticut’s Kid Governor. Ella’s platform is focused on LGBTQ Youth Safety. Learn more at [CT.KidGovernor.org](http://CT.KidGovernor.org).

**BE A CONNECTICUT HISTORY DAY JUDGE!**

Do you want to encourage students in their passion for history? Sign up to judge at one of six Connecticut History Day (CHD) Regional Contests! Through one of the oldest National History Day (NHD) programs in the world, over 5,000 Connecticut middle and high school students choose a topic that relates to the NHD theme, conduct research, and create a project each year. Participants present their project (a paper, website, documentary, performance, or exhibit) to teams of volunteer judges and compete at the Regional Contests. Students who win a Regional Contest are invited to the State Contest, held on May 4, 2019 at Central Connecticut State University. The success of CHD depends on volunteers who offer their time and talents as Contest Judges Please register to Judge at [www.historydayct.org/judges](http://www.historydayct.org/judges).

Educational and community programming at Connecticut's Old State House, Kid Governor® and Connecticut History Day are programs of the Connecticut Democracy Center. The Democracy Center’s mission is to provide people with lifetime pathways to active citizenship by sharing the skills and knowledge that students and adults need to take civic action in their own communities.

We want to hear from you as we build the new Connecticut Democracy Center! Drop us a line at buildctdc@ctpublicaffairsnetwork.org to learn about our programs, share your ideas, and subscribe to our updates.
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History offers rigorous Teacher Seminars for K–12 educators. Held at colleges and historic sites across the US and abroad, the weeklong workshops include daily programs with leading American historians, visits to local historic sites, and hands-on work with primary sources. These highly competitive seminars are open exclusively to participants in the Institute’s free Affiliate School Program. Check here to see if your school is in the Affiliate School Program. If it is not, register now to ensure that you will be eligible to apply for the Teacher Seminars. We welcome applications from previous Teacher Seminar attendees as well as new participants.

2019 TEACHER SEMINARS
Review the list of 2019 Teacher Seminars here.
The 2019 Teacher Seminars application is now open; we are accepting applications through February 18, 2019.

The Affiliate School Program, free to all K–12 schools, is a unique gateway to education resources, events, and tools designed to bring American history to life in the classroom. Registration is easy and there are no hidden fees.

US Affiliate Schools by State International Affiliate Schools by Country
Our network of more than 16,000 schools connects teachers and students to valuable resources, including
• UNLIMITED access to primary sources and other classroom resources through our website
• EXCLUSIVE eligibility for our highly competitive Teacher Seminars
• FREE books, posters, and other materials that are distributed monthly
• CASH PRIZES for Student Essay Contests
• A FREE traveling panel exhibition
• 25% off at the Gilder Lehrman History Shop and other discounts

Initially created with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Gilder Lehrman Affiliate School Program provides free resources and support for teaching and studying American history.
Opportunities For Social Studies Teachers

1. **HERO Center Field Trips and Museum Curriculum:** The Holocaust Education Resource and Outreach (HERO) Center, a joint initiative between Voices of Hope and the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Hartford, is excited to invite you to book your FREE field trip to the Museum of Jewish Civilization, housed on the University of Hartford campus. Our tour program includes a tour of the museum, discussions on identity, the refugee crisis: then and now, and why it is so important to remember the events which took place during this dark time in history. Through this unique program students learn about the dangers of intolerance and indifference and have the opportunity to meet a Holocaust survivor. With the implementation of the new Holocaust and genocide education legislation, our program will help you meet the state requirements while simultaneously offering your students an exceptional outside-the-classroom experience. Please find the attached curriculum that accompanies our tour program, which was developed by master educators in our community. With this curriculum, students will not only be asked about the facts but also about how we view ourselves, what makes us proud as individuals, and how we treat people in need. Do not pass up this incredible and unforgettable learning opportunity! We hope that you and your students will join us this fall. We have already begun scheduling tours, so make sure you get in touch with us while we still have openings! To schedule your trip, please contact Kimberly Ballaro, HERO Center Director, at herocenter@ctvoicesofhope.org or 860-768-5729.

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.

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CONNECTICUT COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES
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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)
- Free subscription to the Yankee Post, the CCSS 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:
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