

NCSS Board Election Results



Steve Goldberg

Steve Goldberg, teacher and social studies department chairman at New Rochelle High School, New Rochelle, New York was elected vice-president of NCSS and is in line to assume the NCSS presidency in July 2010. Steve has been active in leadership positions in NCSS and state and local councils for more than two decades. Among his many leader-

ship positions, he served in the NCSS House of Delegates, including a term as steering committee chair in 2003. He also served on several committees (Awards, Curriculum, and Governance Transition Implementation) and is past president of the New York Council for the Social Studies, as well as the New York State Social Studies Supervisors Association. He is currently president of the Westchester-Lower Hudson Council for the Social Studies, and is completing a three-year term on the NCSS Board of Directors.

Also elected to three-year terms on the NCSS Board of Directors: Karen Muir, Annapolis, MD (middle level teacher representative);

Cynthia Tyson, Columbus, OH (college/university representative); Mert Martens, Centennial, CO (K-12 classroom teacher at-large); and Beth Ratway, Madison, WI (at-large). Voters also elected Joseph Gotchy of Auburn, WA, to the board of the Fund for the Advancement of Social Studies Education (FASSE).

The newly elected leaders were chosen by NCSS members through a mail ballot, and will begin their terms July 1, 2008. Michael Yell and Syd Golston will begin their respective terms as president and president-elect on the same date.

The NCSS Nominations and Elections Committee is currently accepting applications for NCSS vice president and board of directors positions. For more information and application instructions, please send an e-mail to nominations@ncss.org.

Advocacy Update

Recent actions by members of NCSS that advocate for the social studies profession

Letter to Key Congressional Subcommittee

On March 6, 2008, NCSS sent a letter to key members of Congress, urging them "to invest adequately in programs important to social studies educators."¹ The letter noted that the Center for Education Policy's 2008 report documented a grave consequence of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB): 72% of districts surveyed are increasing time for language arts or math in elementary schools at the expense of social studies and other subjects. Specifically, 53% of those districts cut instructional time for social studies by at least 75 minutes per week. Inadequate or nonexistent social studies programming at the elementary level compounds the challenges facing our nation's secondary schools.²

NCSS is encouraged by the Bush Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 "request for additional funding for administering the National Assessment of Education Progress" in hopes that this will result "in increased testing, with larger samples, in

history, civics, geography, and economics," to produce data that better inform instructional practice.

The Administration, however, would cut the Teaching American History (TAH) grant program by almost \$70 million from its FY 2008 level. It has requested no money for the National History Day Program. NCSS asks that Congress fund TAH grants and National History Day at adequate levels.

The Administration's FY 2009 budget request also proposes to eliminate these programs: Academies for American History and Civics; Arts in Education; Civic Education; Close Up Fellowships; Excellence in Economic Education; National Writing Project; and HEA, Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants.

NCSS thanked the members of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations for rejecting such cuts in previous budget requests and asked that

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New Resources

Books by NCSS Authors

Ron H. Pahl, *Creative Ways to Teach the Mysteries of History, Volume 2*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2008. 224 pages. \$29.95 paper.

This second volume of *Mysteries* suggests innovative methods to help students grapple with the major problems and issues that humanity has faced throughout history. The author invites teachers and students to investigate historical (and a few current) controversies and to make connections between events that happened at different times and in different locations.

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Sandra Mathison and E. Wayne Ross, eds. *Battleground Schools*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008. 737 pages. \$175. The two-volume hardback set is intended for library purchase.

How our children are taught is a contentious subject in the United States. We debate charter schools, the first amendment rights of students, and the efficacy of the No Child Left Behind Act. *Battleground Schools* is an encyclopedia of 100 controversies that aims to provide a balanced overview of each topic. The book enables teachers, students, and parents to better understand the foundations and background of each issue.

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E. Wayne Ross and Richard Gibson, eds. *Neoliberalism and Education Reform*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2007. 320 pages. \$29.50 hardcover.

This book has two primary goals: to (1) critique educational reforms that result from the rise of neoliberalism (an economic system based on free enterprise and free trade) and (2) to provide alternatives to neoliberal conceptions of education problems and solutions. Each contributor offers critical examinations of the pragmatics of pedagogy and organizing for social transformation. It is the editors' hope that the analysis will "serve the broad interests of the public" and counter "capitalist educational practices."

New Teaching Resources

Climate Change: Connections and Solutions consists of two-week curriculum units, one for middle and one for high school, that encourage students to think critically about this global problem and collaborate on devising solutions. Students learn about climate change within a systems framework, examining interconnections among environmental, social, and economic issues. The non-profit Facing the Future publishes these units, which include nine hands-on activities, five student readings, homework assignments, reproducible handouts, and assessments.

Thanks to funding from Hewlett-Packard, this curriculum is available free at www.facingthefuture.org. Facing the Future staff can come to your school or district to provide a workshop on this resource or other global sustainability curriculum. Contact Kim Rakow Bernier at kim@facingthefuture.org or 206-264-1503.

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The second issue of the online *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* has the theme "Social Studies Teaching & Learning: Preparing Citizens for a Global Society." Guest editor Tina L. Heafner (University of North Carolina at Charlotte) invited Merry M. Merryfield (The Ohio State University's program in Social Studies and Global Education) to write the invited article "Worldmindedness: Taking Off the Blinders," which can be read at www.joci.ecu.edu. Diane Kester (East Carolina University) is executive editor.

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The National Student/Parent Mock Election is the nation's oldest and largest voter education project, named #1 in voter outreach efforts by the National Association of Secretaries of State: "By voting on both candidates and contemporary issues, the project initiates an important discussion on the responsibility and power we all have as citizens."

In 2004, over 4 million Americans, both in the U.S. and abroad, voted in the Mock Election. To learn about participating, visit www.nationalmockelection.org.

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Plan now for your students to participate in National History Day (NHD). The theme for 2008–2009 is "The Individual in History." How does NHD work? In the fall, students pick a topic and decide which category to enter. Many students start research by late October or early November, finishing their projects in time for the district contests (usually in February or March), state contest (usually held in April or May), and the national contest (held at the beginning of June at the University of Maryland).

Students may participate in the junior (grades 6–8) or senior division (9–12), as individuals or in groups of 2–5 students.

Entry categories are Documentary, Exhibit, Paper, and Performance. The paper category is for individual students only.

Teachers who have challenged their students to participate in a NHD project know that the program "provides a framework for hands-on, student-centered learning that guides classroom teaching as well as continuous professional development" for teachers. To learn more about how NHD operates in your region, go online to www.nhd.org/Coordinators.htm.

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At the website www.2008electionprocon.org, students can learn about the 2008 U.S. Presidential candidates and their views (pro and con) on today's important issues, ranging from abortion to global warming to the war in Iraq. This is a clear, nonpartisan, well-documented presentation of candidate statements that can be searched by speaker or by issue.

The procon.org home page links to lesson plans, resources, and statements by elected official about numerous controversial issues.

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