



# MCSS NEWSLETTER

## MCSS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT NATCHEZ

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To begin making your plans **now** to attend this year's conference...

- Mail your pre-registration **now** and save \$10!
- Send in a proposal for the conference!
- Let us know you are coming on Facebook!
- Invite your colleagues **now** to come along!
- For more information, see page 5 of this newsletter for the pre-registration form.

The Mississippi Council for the Social Studies will hold its 2013 Conference at the Natchez Convention Center in Natchez, Mississippi October 17-18, 2013. The theme for the conference is "Putting the Common Good into the Common Core." The goal of the conference will be to focus on how social studies teachers can use Common Core State Standards to help refocus the goals of education and schools to promoting the common good through building citizenship and civic competence.

Natchez is an excellent choice for the MCSS Fall Conference. It is the original capital of the state, was important in the founding of the state and the writing of the Mississippi Constitution, and has a long history dating back to the colonial period.

The theme of this year's conference is ***Putting the Common Good into the Common Core***. In keeping with the overarching conference theme, concurrent and break-out sessions will be offered to conference participants that focus on how social studies teachers can be resources to language arts and other teachers as

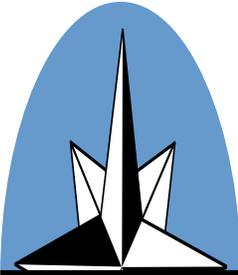
they implement CCSS, how social studies teachers can support the implementation of CCSS using the content and tools from the social studies disciplines, and bringing back a citizenship and civic competence focus to schooling.

In addition to some 20 concurrent sessions, the conference will include plenary sessions, field trips, a keynote luncheon, exhibits by vendors, and the highlighting of a Mississippi author.

Classroom teachers interested in obtaining Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for their participation in the conference may do so for a fee of \$20. Information concerning CEU'S will be disseminated at the Conference Registration desk on Thursday evening and again on Friday morning. Those interested in securing CEU's must be in attendance at both the Opening Session on Friday morning and the Closing Session on Friday afternoon. No partial credit will be awarded.

For more information about this year's conference, contact MCSS Executive Chairman Dr. Kenneth V. Anthony at [kva3@msstate.edu](mailto:kva3@msstate.edu).

## *Chairman's Remarks...*



**“Geography  
has made us  
neighbors.  
History has  
made us  
friends.  
Economics has  
made us  
partners, and  
necessity has  
made us allies.  
Those whom  
God has so  
joined  
together, let no  
man put  
asunder.”**

President John  
F. Kennedy

As the new Chair of the Mississippi Council for the Social Studies, I have been thinking about how we can recover the ground that social studies has lost over the past ten years in our schools and in the classrooms. There has been a documented reduction in the number of hours of social studies instruction in the elementary classroom and I have heard about many middle schools in which 7th and 8th grade history teachers are told that they must focus on test preparation one day of the week resulting in a 20% reduction in instruction for social studies.

I am both excited and concerned about the opportunity that the adoption and implementation of Common Core Standards present the social studies community. I am concerned because the focus or aim of the CCSS is on college and career and this might discourage social studies instruction. I do have some hope though, because the nature of the Common Core State Standards requires instruction and subject matter that social studies can provide. The standards call for using informational texts. The social studies disciplines provide rich informational texts that social studies teachers can help language arts teachers find and use in their classrooms. Our goal as social studies teachers will be to keep the focus from being a narrow literacy focus. It will be our job to provide the context for the documents as well as broaden the focus to developing civic competence as well as literacy skills.

One goal of mine and the board of directors is to increase membership in the organization. This will help do two things: 1. It will show those who might discount the social studies as a valuable part of the school curriculum that social studies teachers are concerned about the status of the discipline and 2. It will help build a cadre of social studies professionals that MCSS can draw on to advocate for social studies and provide professional development supporting quality social studies instruction as we implement CCSS. To build membership, we ask you to join now. Don't wait until the conference. Also, refer others to MCSS and encourage them to join. MCSS is the social studies teachers' organization. To be relevant, we must be strong and strength is measured by membership numbers.

Another goal is to provide more professional development opportunities outside of the Fall Conference. February 23, 2013 MCSS held its first Winter Professional Development Conference on the campus of Mississippi State University. We had over 60 inservice and preservice teachers participate in the conference and earn .7 CEUs. We want to provide more of these opportunities in the future.

Please join MCSS as we continue to grow and become an influential organization in education in Mississippi. Our goal is to revitalize social studies instruction where it has been reduced and improve instruction by being a resource for social studies teachers in the state.

## National Council for the Social Studies to Hold Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri

The NCSS Annual Conference is November 22-24 in St. Louis, MO. The theme of the conference is Gateway to the Core of Learning. There will be over 400 sessions focusing on how social studies can help with implementation of Common Core State Standards. Information about the conference hotel, travel arrangements, conference registration, and con-



**Creating Effective Citizens**

firmed speakers visit the NCSS website. You can make an early deposit on your registration fee as well as find ways to help make the cost of the conference less through opportunities NCSS offers teachers. Please plan to attend both the MCSS Fall Conference and the NCSS Annual Conference. More information at [www.socialstudies.org/](http://www.socialstudies.org/)



**“History will be kind to me for I intend to write it.”**

Winston Churchill

## Get involved: MCSS wants and needs your help!

MCSS is your organization! We want all members of the organization to be involved. How can you get involved? Here are a few ways:

1. Renew your membership and ask others to join.
2. Share your newsletter with others.
3. Like MCSS on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MsCouncilForTheSocialStudies>. On the MCSS Facebook page you will find information about MCSS and social studies in Mississippi. You will also see pictures from other social studies activities in the state you might want to be involved in.
4. Post what you are doing in your social studies class on the MCSS Facebook page. Share your ideas with your social studies colleagues.
5. Register for the MCSS Fall Conference early and share the registration form with others.
6. Write a proposal for the MCSS Fall Conference. We want you to share your new and exciting ideas with other teachers.
7. Get involved in the leadership. In the future including at the conference we will be asking for members to volunteer to run for offices in the organization, to serve on committees and to help with other tasks that are necessary to make the organization function.



**“If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree.”**

Michael Crichton, novelist

**MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES  
FALL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP FORM**  
Conference Theme: *Putting the Common Good into the Common Core*  
Natchez Convention Center, Natchez, Mississippi  
October 17-18, 2013

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Day Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Check One:  Elementary School Teacher     Middle School Teacher     Secondary School Teacher  
 College Instructor     University Professor     Pre-Service Teacher  
 School Administrator     Vendor     Other

Circle the Congressional District in which you vote:    CD 1    CD 2    CD 3    CD 4

**SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:**

**I. Conference Pre-Registration (October 1 postmark deadline):** \_\_\_\_\_

To pre-register for the conference, enter \$70.00 on this line.

(Note: Lifetime MCSS Members enter \$45.)

**II. Conference Registration (after October 1):** \_\_\_\_\_

To register by mail after October 1 or to register on site, enter \$80 on this line.

(Note: Lifetime MCSS members enter \$55.)

**III. Payment of Membership Dues ONLY:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you will not be able to attend the conference but would like to renew your membership or would like to become a new member, enter \$25 on this line.

(Note: Students and retirees enter \$15.)

\*\*\* **Please note:** Conference registration includes the welcome reception on Thursday evening, all conference sessions, the luncheon and business meeting on Friday, and membership dues for the 2014 calendar year.

Mail this form along with a check, money order, or pre-approved purchase order to:

MARLO HENDRIX, MCSS TREASURER  
159 HIGH FOREST LANE  
TUPELO, MS 38801

\*\*\* Checks, money orders, and purchase orders must be made payable to MCSS. \*\*\*

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS:**

- ❖ To pay by purchase order, a pre-approved purchase order must accompany your registration form when it is submitted to the Treasurer. There are no exceptions to this policy.
- ❖ Requests for cancellation of registration and refund of monies paid must be made in writing to the MCSS Treasurer two weeks prior to the conference.

**Mississippi Council for the Social Studies****Call for Proposals**

What: MCSS Fall Conference

Where: The Grand Hotel, Natchez, Mississippi

When: October 17-18, 2013

**\* Proposals are due no later than June 1, 2013 \***

Presentations available for all grade levels covering:

- History
- Economics
- Geography
- Civics
- Social Sciences
- Global Connections

**Sub-Themes:**

Correlations with the Common Core  
Using Primary Source Documents  
Geography across the Curriculum  
Economics/Financial Literacy

Submit proposals at: <http://goo.gl/B3hpU>

## National History Day program helps students “do” history

By Renee McClendon, Co-Director of National History Day- Mississippi

“Mississippi Students and History Belong Together” is the banner caption on the National History Day in Mississippi Facebook page. (<https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/National-History-Day-in-Mississippi/152550508090869>) Wouldn't all Mississippi social studies teachers agree?

National History Day is an annual history “fair” for students in grades 6-12. (<http://www.nhd.org>) The National History Day Program is a co-curricular educational opportunity, in which 600,000 students across all 50 states and 6 additional affiliates (American Samoa, Guam, District of Columbia, and International Schools in China, Korea, and South Asia) participate each year. In addition to being the first organization to receive a National Humanities Medal (2011), presented by President Obama at the White House, NHD is also endorsed by American Association for State and Local History, American Historical Association, Federation of State Humanities Councils, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Center for History in the Schools, National Council for History Education, National Council on Public History, National Council for the Social Studies, Organization of American Historians and Society of American Archivists.

An independent national study by Rockman et al, in 2010, concluded that students who participate in the NHD program outperform their peers on state standardized tests in multiple subjects, including reading, science, math and social studies (<http://www.nhd.org/nhdworkspressrelease.htm>). Students who participate in NHD are better writers and critical thinkers. In addition, the study also found that Black and Hispanic NHD students posted higher performance assessment scores than their peers by a margin of two to one. Simply put, NHD works.

Mississippi's National History Day Program is housed at the University of Southern Mississippi, in Hattiesburg, co-coordinated by History Department Chair Dr. Phyllis Jestice and Volunteer Renee McClendon (<http://www.usm.edu/history/national-history-day-mississippi>). In the past 5 years, NHD in MS State Contest has grown from 5 participating schools to its current level of 20 participating schools. Its outreach program is also working with professors and teacher licensure program students from Mississippi State University, who will also serve as state contest adjudicators and mentors for the middle and high school student competitors.

In the past few years, Mississippi NHD students have achieved great success on the national stage. Despite the fact that fewer than half of the states/affiliates have projects that achieve 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the nation (since there are a total of 54 place-winners and a few exceptional states win several each), Mississippi had a 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner in 2010 and a 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner in 2011. In 2010, Beth Young, a homeschooled student from the Coast, achieved 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the nation with her Sr. Individual Documentary on the “Louisiana Purchase”. In 2012, Bradley Curtis, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader from Armstrong Middle School in Starkville, won 3<sup>rd</sup> place for his historical paper about William Wilberforce and the slave trade.

Students in grades 6-12 and their teachers, from any educational entity in Mississippi, are invited and encouraged to participate. The research and presentation process includes students choosing their own topic (based on the annual theme - 2013's is “Turning Points in History”), researching by consulting primary and secondary sources in a variety of media, sharing what they have learned in one of five project categories (historical paper, exhibit, web site, performance, documentary), and composing a process paper and annotated bibliography. Local events (so far, non-elimination) are usually held in late January, so students can receive feedback and improve their projects for the state contest, this year to be held on Saturday, February 23, 2013. Students whose projects rank in the top two of each category win the opportunity to represent Mississippi at the National History Day Competition, held each June at the University of Maryland, College Park, near Washington, D.C.

To support teachers and students in their NHD participation, a complete curriculum guide and other resources are available for download on the NHD and Mississippi History Day web sites. In addition, Renee McClendon (NHD Facilitator since 1994 and The History Channel's 2010 “National History Day Volunteer of the Year”) travels to any Mississippi school that requests her assistance. She helps teachers set up a syllabus, instructs the students and gives parent presentations, provides teaching materials, gives progress feedback, and in short, whatever else teachers, their students and families need.

As the country moves toward “Common Core Standards” and high-quality instruction in social studies classrooms, experienced National History Day proponents rejoice - - because the NHD tenets, which have brought so much successful learning and achievement for students since 1974 - - are exactly the skills and processes educational experts now contend are imperative for students (<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/historyday/pdf/EDU-NHD-Common-Core.pdf>).

National History Day makes history come alive for America's youth by engaging them in the discovery of the historic, cultural and social experiences of the past. Through hands-on experiences and presentations, today's youth are better able to inform the present and shape the future. NHD inspires children through exciting competitions and transforms teaching through project-based curriculum and instruction. Mississippi students deserve this amazing opportunity! For more information, please contact NHD in MS Co-Coordinator, Director of Outreach and Mentorship: Renee McClendon at [rjmccleendon@cableone.net](mailto:rjmccleendon@cableone.net) 228-3363-0940 or Dr. Phyllis Jestice at [Phyllis.Jestic@usm.edu](mailto:Phyllis.Jestic@usm.edu).

## Windows to the Past: Using Primary Sources to inject the Common Good into the Common Core

Dr. Kenneth V. Anthony and Dr. Nicole Miller, Mississippi State University

**Common Core State Standards** focus on college and career ready. In the informational reading standards and reading standards for Literacy in history/ social studies 6-12 the focus is on literacy skills: “The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school. The K-5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects including but not limited to ELA. The grades 6-12 standards are divided into two sections, one for ELA and the other for history/ social studies, science, and technical subjects. This division reflects the unique, time-honored place of ELA teachers in developing students’ literacy skills while at the same time recognizing that teachers in other areas must have a role in this development as well.” (CCSS, 2010, p. 4)

**Social Studies aims:** College and career ready is a very important goal and all teachers should be included in reaching these goals, but as social studies teachers we need to focus on and protect our primary mission: citizenship education. Both the Mississippi Social Studies Framework (2011) and the National Council for the Social Studies define the aim of social studies to develop and promote citizenship (NCSS, 2010). The threat is that social studies aims can be lost or subordinated to literacy goals during implementation of CCSS. Our task as social studies teachers is to promote civic competence, while supporting overall literacy goals with quality social studies instruction.

### Historical thinking

Our goals as social studies teachers and the CCSS standards have the potential to improve instruction that develops historical thinking making social studies instruction more rigorous, more student focused, and more authentic. Using primary sources to reach literacy goals of CCSS and the civic education goal of social studies is an excellent way to successfully wed the two aims. An example from the CCSS: Reading standards for informational text 5<sup>th</sup> grade Craft and Structure 4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. This is obviously a literacy goal, but as social studies teachers we can achieve the literacy goal or aim but focus on social studies goals. Our students can read primary sources related to a topic of study (perhaps excerpts from the Mayflower Compact or Magna Carta as called for in the MS SS Framework). They will encounter words and phrases that are unfamiliar and will have to research the meanings of to successfully understand the document. For the Mayflower Compact ([http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th\\_century/mayflower.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/mayflower.asp)) students will have to tackle with a variety of difficult vocabulary and concepts including:

Geographic locations: Great Britain, France, and Ireland; Virginia; Cape Cod

People: Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c.

Domain specific vocabulary: voyage, colony, Consitution, Ordinance

Domain specific concepts: Body Politick

Time: 1620 (what else is going on in the world?), Anno Domini (what does this mean?)

Other CCSS standards that could be addressed using the Mayflower Compact include:

Key ideas and details 2: Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

Key ideas and details 3: Explain the relationships, or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Integration of knowledge and ideas 9: Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

All of these standards are gateways to not only improving students’ abilities to deal with complex texts, but also gateways to a deeper understanding of the development of our democracy, the actual events surrounding the founding of the colony at Plymouth Rock and subsequent events, and their ability to conduct further research using the initial document as a spring board for further study.

Though we can support the CCSS using this document from Social Studies we must focus on our social studies goals. Our social studies goal might be to teach to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Competency: Civil Rights/Human Rights 3. Understand how political, religious, and economic ideas and interests influenced the founding of the United States. Objectives A and D. As social studies teachers we must focus on the social studies goals, while supporting literacy goals. These two goals can coincide, but the danger is that the social studies goal will be lost in the narrow focus of college and career.

The point is that we use the standards from CCSS to meet a social studies goal and not let the social studies goal be lost in the effort to improve literacy.

**You can read the entire article on the MCSS Website: <http://mcss.org.msstate.edu/>.**

**MCSS Newsletter Editor**

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<https://www.facebook.com/MsCouncilForTheSocialStudies>

The MCSS WINTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE was held February 23, 2013. Over 60 preservice and inservice teachers learned about how to use primary sources to support implementation of Common Core State Standards, how to use GPS hand held systems to teach geography, how to improve US History test scores, and how to teach economics concepts in the elementary classroom.

James Reed, MCSS board member and teacher at Caledonia High School discusses how to improve US history test scores.



**Visit us on the web at:**  
***[mcss.org.msstate.edu](http://mcss.org.msstate.edu)***

**SOME SOCIAL STUDIES RESOURCES:**

**Mississippi Council for the Social Studies**

<http://mcss.org.msstate.edu/> and <https://www.facebook.com/MsCouncilForTheSocialStudies>

**The National Council for the Social Studies**

<http://www.socialstudies.org/>

**National History Day**

<http://nationalhistoryday.org/>

**National History Day Mississippi**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/National-History-Day-in-Mississippi/>

**Mississippi Council on Economic Education**

<http://mscee.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mississippi-Council-on-Economic-Education>

**Mississippi Geographic Alliance**

<http://www.mga.olemiss.edu/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/124528744084/>

**Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources**

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>