

The POINT!

E-Letter for Western Pennsylvania Social Studies Educators



PCSS VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE THURSDAY EVENINGS - OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 22

The Pennsylvania Council of the Social Studies is well is announcing that the annual conference in October will be a multi-day virtual affair through Zoom. The PCSS conference committee, including President Rachel Finley-Bowman, President-Elect and Conference Chair Jason Raia, Exhibits Chair Kevin Wagner, Executive Secretary David Trevaskis and Recording Secretary Gabriele Miller-Wagner, has established the draft framework for what the annual conference will look like in 2020 while also engaging with potential presenters for the virtual conference. Thanks to all those who joined Zoom calls, gave feedback, and helped to make this pivot possible.

Check out the conference updates on the webpage at <https://pcssonline.org/> As per Board discussions this spring, we will not charge participants or presenters but instead ask for donations for the conference. We will charge exhibitors a reduced rate of \$100 for the virtual exhibit hall on the last day and we will seek sponsors for the entire event. Between the kickoff panel on Thursday, October 1, 2020 and the closing day (exhibits, keynote, awards ceremony and Board meeting) on Saturday, October 24, 2020, we will have 15 sessions spread over the three Thursday evenings bracketed by our kickoff and close (October 8, 15 and 22). We will be using Zoom with breakout rooms for three sessions each of the Thursdays from 7 to 8 p.m. and then two more sessions each night from 8:15 to 9:15 p.m.

Among the potential presenters who have expressed interest are:

1. *Army Heritage Education Center (Teacher Toolbox) – Karl Warner*
2. *Committee of Seventy—Draw the Lines*
3. *Duke University's Islamic Studies Center*
4. *Echoes & Reflections*
5. *Edgar Cahn Collaborative – Youth Court and Social Justice Presentation*
6. *Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) – Bonnie Snyder*
7. *Fort Ticonderoga (Teacher Education Program) – Rich Strum*
8. *Jessie Haight – Clarion University of Pennsylvania—People Count: Understanding Demography in the Year of the Census*
9. *Kevin Wagner – Carlisle School District – using historical obituaries*
10. *Mark Previte—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown – Future of Social Studies*
11. *Mount Vernon Education Group*
12. *National History Day – Jeff Hawks, PA State Coordinator*
13. *PCSS Board Members – Interviewing for a Social Studies Position*

(Continued on page 8)



Soldiers & Sailors Hall!

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum houses a vast collection of primary and secondary documents and military artifacts. It is their mission to promote the use of these educational items and create an understanding for all groups who visit the museum. They provide a rich learning experience for all people by exploring the deeds and sacrifices of ordinary citizens during extraordinary circumstances.

S&S, like all places where people congregate, is not open to the public at this time. Please visit on line: soldiersandsailorshall.org



Carnegie Museum of Art

Beat the heat by visiting the museum! [Purchase a timed ticket](#), learn more about our [health and safety protocols](#), and check out this video about visiting the museum featuring [our very own Art Cat!](#)

Otherwise, enjoy CMOA From Home this week by celebrating



Heinz History Center Now Open

In accordance with new guidelines set by state and local officials, the Senator John Heinz History Center and its family of museums – including the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, Fort Pitt Museum, and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village – are now open to the public as of Wednesday, July 1. <https://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/visit>
1212 Smallman St. 412-454-6000



The US Institute of Peace,

The US Institute of Peace, founded by Congress to strengthen America's ability to reduce costly armed conflicts abroad, is making its online courses FREE through the end of 2020. You can also get a certificate for completing a program. For the Global Campus offerings, go to: <https://www.usip.org/academy/catalog-global-campus-courses>.



Pitt Films

Updated registration link: The University of Pittsburgh has one more free online film screening left as part of their summer series "Hot Nights + Cold War." There will also be a discussant after the film. On Wednesday, August 12, there will be a Vietnamese film "Journey from the Fall." It also begins at 4:00 pm Eastern Time. For more information and a link to the registration form, go to: https://pitt.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3L6aazkRWCoXyKJxwcQUg



The Point

For
Western Pennsylvania
Social Studies Educators
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The Point is the
e-newsletter
of the former WPCSS
issued monthly via e-mail.
WPCSS was a non-profit 501c
organization dedicated to promoting
the teaching and learning of social
studies in Western Pennsylvania

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Why US history classes need to change

Good Morning America

When historian Carter G. Woodson was calling for the first Negro History Week in the 1920s -- which would go on to become what we now celebrate as Black History Month -- he said of his efforts, "This crusade is much more important than the anti-lynching movement, because there would be no lynching if it did not start in the schoolroom."

Pa. students examine protest writing in workshop

Some high-school students in Philadelphia are studying protest writing in a summer workshop sponsored by the nonprofit Mighty Writers. The students are studying work by W.E.B. DuBois, Billie Holiday, rapper J. Cole, Ta-Nehisi Coates and others as they develop and write a protest of their own as a final assignment. **Full Story:** CNN (7/14)

FREEDOM SUMMER GAME

Freedom Summer is a game-based learning module in which players explore the relationship between the Civil Rights Movement and the contentious civil rights debate in Congress. Players are presented with a series of 20 historic events and are required to predict the consequences of each event. Players discover how events of the Civil Rights Movement and concurrent events in Congress impacted each other and the role that both Congress and individuals play in representative democracy.

For more resources from the Center on Representative Government, go [here](#).

Tips to help conduct remote, small-group lessons

Small-group instruction -- even conducted remotely -- can help differentiate and improve learning for students, writes Andrew Miller, director of personalized learning at Singapore American School. In this blog post, Miller shares strategies to boosting small-group instruction, such as by observing students as they work and offering them options for learning. **Full Story:** Edutopia (7/13)

Virtual-school leader shares tips for success

As teaching a historical figure who fought for reform is a favorite project of Sarah Cooper, a history teacher in California. In this blog post, Cooper writes about the project and how it engages her eighth-grade students in individual and group work, culminating in a creative campaign product that can be anything -- past submissions include a Minecraft border wall, a cake recipe and a comic book. **Full Story:** MiddleWeb (7/13)

Our Children Are Taught in School to Be Active, Engaged Citizens. A Current Events Response by the National Council for the Social Studies

In response to President Donald J. Trump's remarks at South Dakota's 2020 Mount Rushmore Fireworks Celebration on Friday, July 3, 2020, that "our children are taught in school to hate their own country," we take issue with an attack on American educators for political gain. [Continue Reading](#)



"Reformers" project celebrates activism, creativity

Researching a historical figure who fought for reform is a favorite project of Sarah Cooper, a history teacher in California. In this blog post, Cooper writes about the project and how it engages her eighth-grade students in individual and group work, culminating in a creative campaign product that can be anything -- past submissions include a Minecraft border wall, a cake recipe and a comic book. **Full Story:** [MiddleWeb](#) (7/13)



Teachers: How to handle the trauma in lessons on US history

MiddleWeb (7/22)

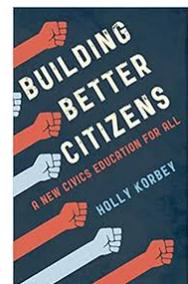
When I co-taught Angie Thomas' *The Hate U Give* with my partner [English teacher](#), for instance, we realized quickly that giving days of historical background on lynchings and police brutality felt more like a march than an exploration. One week in, we both started to dread coming to class because it felt like we were mired in tragedy with our students.



Project helps teachers boost civics education

EdSurge (7/22)

Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it. And perform worse on tests. The latest results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress found that scores for eight-grade students on civics, history and geography exams [all dipped](#) from 2014 to 2018.



Clues to earlier human presence in N. America found

Stone tools and other artifacts found in a cave in Mexico suggest the presence of humans in North America about 30,000 years ago, much earlier than previously believed, according to a study in *Nature*. Another paper published in *Nature* that examined data from 42 sites asserts humans were in the Americas between 26,500 and 19,000 years ago. **Full Story:** [Gizmodo](#) (7/22)



Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't.

Pete Seeger, singer-songwriter

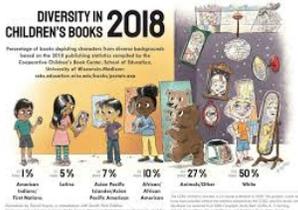
Survey identifies challenges to remote learning

As schools consider plans for remote instruction to continue into the fall, a survey highlights the obstacles students may face. The BrightBytes survey found students have inconsistent access to technology and devices and are less likely than teachers to report having a quiet place to complete their work. **Full Story:** EdSurge (7/22)



Teacher: Literature supports lessons on race

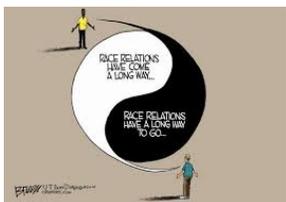
Literature can help nurture conversations about race, asserts high-school English teacher Andrew Simmons. In this blog post, Simmons shares how his own students research the effects of race on different facets of life after reading "Beloved" and engage in conversations about race while critiquing "To Kill a Mockingbird." **Full Story:** Edutopia (7/21)



Supporting meaningful, productive conversations on race

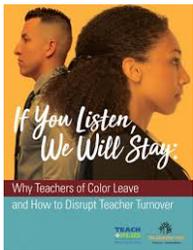
EdSurge (7/22)

In response to the murder of George Floyd, my nonprofit, [Teaching Matters](#), organized three [webinars](#) for educators to discuss how to talk about racism in the classroom. As an Afro-Cuban education consultant, I wanted to address the varied concerns both white and non-white teachers held. In leading the webinars, I was joined by fellow education consultants at Teaching Matters.



Why Teachers of Color Leave and What You Can Do About It

Word quickly spreads within teaching communities about which schools invest in sustaining a diverse teaching force and which are apathetic, according to the Learning Policy Institute. Here's how to start co-creating more welcoming environments for teachers of color.



Bill Nye uses science to address racism on TikTok

Bill Nye has gone viral with a TikTok video that tackles racism by explaining why people have different skin colors due to regional differences in ultraviolet light. "[W]e're all one species. But we're not treating each other fairly. ... it's time to change things," he says. **Full Story:** ET Canada (7/19)



Students, alums of private schools post stories of racism

Students and graduates of some private schools in the US have launched social media accounts to post examples of racism that they have experienced in school. Many of the accounts were created since the killing of George Floyd and include examples of racial slurs and incidents involving peers, faculty and staff at the schools. **Full Story:** EdSurge (7/20)



Administrators prioritize safety in plans for new school year

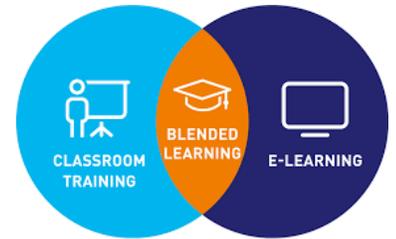
National Public Radio (7/21)

Ann Levett's worst day as superintendent of Savannah-Chatham County Public School System wasn't March 26, the day Georgia's governor first closed schools, keeping Levett's more than 37,000 students home in response to the coronavirus pandemic.



Blended learning offers many styles, options

Engaging classes that typically aren't offered for students or that fall outside core subjects -- such as sound production or AP psychology -- are ideal candidates for online lessons in a hybrid model, Thomas Arnett of the Clayton Christensen Institute writes. Alternatively, the enriched virtual model of flipped classrooms would have students tackling core subjects and textbook material online, then heading to the brick-and-mortar building for teachers' help with the most challenging problems, he explains. **Full Story:** EdSurge (7/20)



Educator on his way to Congress weighs in on schools' reopening

EdSurge (7/21)

He started his career as an elementary school teacher. Then he became a high school guidance counselor and dean of students. After that, he founded his own public middle school.



Strategies to support students in "new normal"

Educators should put practices in place to help support students as they adjust to the "new normal" of teaching and learning, writes Joseph Carter, superintendent of schools for Camelot Education. In this blog post, Carter shares several strategies his schools have adopted, including having intentional conversations with students and watching for "red flags" in students' virtual behavior. **Full Story:** SmartBrief/Education (7/21)



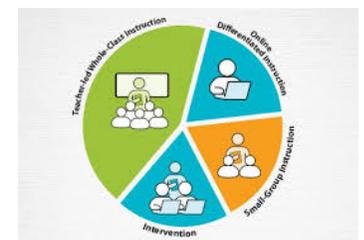
How UDL can support remote instruction

The Universal Design for Learning framework can support all students -- not only those with special needs -- during remote instruction, asserts Kavita Rao, a professor in the special education department at the University of Hawaii. "The guidelines focus on ways to intentionally and proactively design learning environments and instruction, building in flexibility, supports and scaffolding that can help all learners succeed," Rao says. **Full Story:** KQED-TV/FM (San Francisco) (7/21)



Survey finds most schools plan for blended learning

Eighty-seven percent of K-12 schools expect to use more technology in instruction, and 61% anticipate they will at least start the school year with some form of blended learning, according to a survey by Microsoft. Anthony Salcito, vice president of Microsoft Education, says feedback indicates that "blended hybrid learning will become the new normal for schools." **Full Story:** The 74 (7/6)



What's done to children, they will do to society.

-Karl A. Menninger, psychiatrist (22 Jul 1893-1990)

2020 Virtual Conference Proposal Form

The 67th Annual Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference



October 1-24, 2020

Via Zoom

Conference Theme

“Expanding Citizen Voices”

In 2020, we commemorate the expansion of voting rights in our nation’s history – the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment (prohibiting disenfranchisement based on race, creed, or previous servitude), the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment (women’s suffrage), and the 49th anniversary of the 26th Amendment (votes for 18 year olds). Each is more than a moment in history, but a chain of events to investigate and understand – protest movements, court cases, legislation, and more – that inform issues today. Preparing young citizens to learn how to exercise their voices in our democracy is a cornerstone of social studies education, whether that preparation takes place online during a pandemic or in a more traditional classroom setting.

The full schedule is linked at <https://pcssonline.org/>

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r All attendees must register, including PCSS officers, board members, and conference presenters. There is no cost to attend or present (donations are welcome) but you must register. You can register and make a donation online or email or mail this form in with your check. Mailing address: PCSS, P.O. BOX 294, ABINGTON, PA 19001

Presenter Information

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email address: _____

Alternate Email address: _____

Add Additional Names and information for co-presenters. Provide above information for all.

Proposal Abstract: Write a 100 word description of your session as you wish it to appear in the printed program. Describe both the content and the virtual format of the session.

Primary Audience: ___ Early Childhood ___ Middle Level ___ Secondary ___ College/university

Other? Please describe: _____

Outline the objectives, expanded content and presentation techniques for the session. Be specific in describing your proposal; particularly address usefulness and importance to the audience. Please connect to theme.



Virtual PCSS Conference

Continued from Page 1

1. *Pennsylvania Bar Association – Mock Trial Program*
2. *Pennsylvania Alliance for Geographic Education (PAGE) – Nicole Eshelman*
3. *Rendell Center-Elementary Mock Trials*
4. *White House Historical Association (Education Department) – Whitney Hayne*
5. *9/11 Memorial & Museum*
6. *Social Studies School Service – Lori Swiger*

