

The POINT!



E-Letter of the Western Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies
Vol. 11 No. 11
November 2018

Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference

Theme: Where it all comes together!

The 65th Annual PCSS at the Harrisburg Red Lion Inn lived up to its theme as it all came together. Social studies is the unifying area of the curriculum that uses the skills and knowledge of all the other subjects and puts them into practice. Documents and other materials must be read, questions arise, and answers are often written; maps and graphs must use math; in current events, scientific information is often cited; and music and art are part of history. Social studies does it all. But in recent years, the emphasis on testing has curtailed time for social studies. This meeting focused on the importance of social studies in the curriculum.

This was the best meeting in recent years. Sessions were well attended as well as varied in content. Exhibit time was extended and there was a full complement of exhibitors. The Thursday Pre-session on CHOICES was successful and the Awards program in the evening was well attended. The Saturday Board meeting renewed efforts to champion the teaching of civics and increase the time devoted to social studies



The Future of WPCSS

WPCSS was formed shortly after the founding of the National Council for the Social Studies in 1920 was an early advocate for the teaching of history and social studies. Over the years, membership dipped when veteran teachers retired but always recovered as new faces took their place. The council became a 501-c Non-Profit in the late 20th century and membership soared. As the century turned, Albert Goldsmith, a long time member passed away and left a sum of money for use of the council in the furtherance of its mission. About the same time, the testing craze began that de-emphasized the place of social studies in the classroom. In addition, a large number of members became retirees and turned to other interests. Membership has slumped over the last few years and it is no longer feasible to operate a 501c organization. WPCSS can continue to operate as a voluntary organization but it will no longer be recognized by the IRS. Current officers will retire and all funds will be given to the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies with the stipulation that the Albert Goldsmith Memorial Awards each year be continued to be presented for the outstanding exhibits in junior and senior competition in the Western Pennsylvania History Fair at the Heinz History Center. This will be effective as of December 31, 2018

Plans to continue the POINT are under consideration.



IN PROMOTING OUR MISSION TO FOCUS ON LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY, WPCSS ANNUALLY PRESENTS TWO \$100 SAVINGS BONDS FOR THE BEST LOCAL OR FAMILY HISTORY EXHIBIT IN BOTH JUNIOR AND SENIOR ENTRIES OF THE LOCAL NATIONAL HISTORY DAY COMPETITION AT THE HEINZ HISTORY CENTER

Dear Classrooms Without Borders' (CWB) Educators and Friends:

We ache for the families and friends of:

Joyce Feinberg, Rich Gotfried, Rose Malinger, Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal, David Rosenthal, Bernice Simon, Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein, Melvin Wax, and Irving Youngner.

Eleven people gunned down in a house of worship simply because of their faith.

We ache for the wounded, the people who witnessed this massacre and all of those present (and not) whose lives have been changed in an instant because of this senseless act of hate.

Almost immediately after the shooting our extended CWB family began reaching out to show their support, offer help, and simply send their love. We heard from hundreds of educators, students, scholars, supporters and colleagues from all over the United States, Poland, Spain, Greece, Germany and Israel. Their messages were all similar, echoing our heartache and the feeling that we have all been attacked. Our sense of security and hope for the future has been rattled or dimmed.

When our teachers asked what they can do to help our answer was simple. They should continue to teach students to fight bigotry and hate. They should continue to pave a pathway for peace.

At CWB we know that educators are our hope for a better future. As teachers and educators we have a responsibility to ensure that our students and our peers learn from the tragedies we have endured. We teach that the Holocaust is not only Jewish history it is Human History. We teach that bigotry and discrimination against any minority is bigotry and hate against all minorities. We connect people to cultures and history, so they may not only learn but also become personally invested in respecting and protecting humanity.

Educators: As part of the classroom discussions and lessons that will occur tomorrow, please encourage your students to write to Tree of Life and reach out to the Jewish community to express their condolences and solidarity. This exercise can be part of the educational experience - to teach our students that they have the responsibility not to remain as bystanders, and they have the ability to make a difference.

Through the darkness that has spread over us in the past twenty-four hours some rays of light have emerged. People of all walks of life in Pittsburgh are gathering in solidarity with the victims, their families and the Jewish community. Yesterday, Mayor Peduto voiced our sentiments when he said, "Pittsburgh is a small city where people know each other and each other's families. When someone is hurt here, everyone is hurt." Now, the day after the tragedy we realize that many communities, even beyond Pittsburgh, are standing with us in solidarity. We hope they will use the lessons of our tragedy to prevent future hate crimes and senseless loss of life. In the words of Mayor Peduto this morning: "Let this horrific episode be another mark in the march of humanity towards recognizing that we are all one."

In the memory of the eleven community members we lost yesterday, and the countless victims of hate, we will continue empowering our educators and students to fight bigotry and discrimination. We will continue paving the pathway to peace.

With g10/27/18Zur

Zioora Gur and the Classrooms Without Borders' leadership and staff

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.

The Education Dept. 412.621.4253 Tim Neff x 219
<http://www.soldiersandsailorshall.org/education.html>

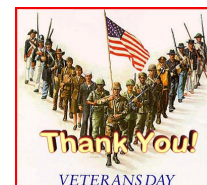
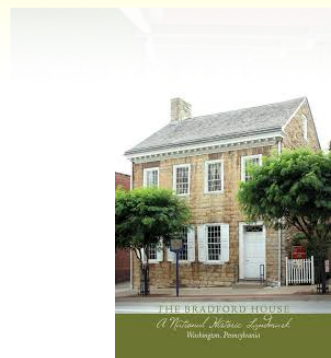


Veterans Day



The [Bradford House Museum](#) Washington, PA will offer free tours to veterans on Saturday, November 10 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The museum will close at 2:00 p.m. so that all may attend the Veterans Day Parade.

[thank-you-veterans_1244.jpg](#)

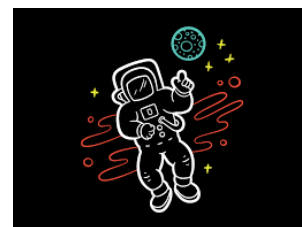


Destination Moon Programs

The History Center is now taking bookings for school groups wishing to visit the *Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission* exhibition, open now and on view through Feb. 18, 2019!

Students can see *Destination Moon* as part of a guided or self-guided tour or they can participate in a hands-on program that includes a visit to the exhibit as well as interactive activities designed and led by museum educators.

More information about these programs for early learners, middle school students, and high school students can be found on the **Students** section of our website.



School Programs at the Fort Pitt Museum

Start planning for your fall and spring field trips to learn about pivotal moments in United States history and the diplomatic role played by Fort Pitt in the 18th century as a gateway to the west.

School Programs Cost: Students: \$4 Teachers/Chaperones: \$4
 1 Free Teacher/Chaperone per 10 Students

Programs are available September through December and February through June.

Please contact Kathleen Lugarich, Education Manager, at 412-454-6418 or kmlugarich@heinzhistorycenter.org for more information or to book your experience.



The Point

Western Pennsylvania Council for the

Social Studies

Richard Williams

President

Leo R. West

Secretary / Treasurer

The Point is the

e-newsletter

of WPCSS

issued monthly via e-mail.

WPCSS is a non-profit 501c organization

dedicated to promoting the teaching and learning of social studies in Western

Pennsylvania

Western Pennsylvania Council for the

Social Studies

c/o Leo West

11533 Clematis Blvd.

Pittsburgh, PA 15235-3105

wlrw@yahoo.com

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Betsy DeVos: Lack of Civics Education Draws Students to Ideas Like Socialism

The U.S. secretary of education said on a conservative think tank's podcast that young voters are ill-equipped by the K-12 system to understand and debate competing ideas. [Read more.](#)

(Ed. Note: Correction: It actually brought us Donald Trump!)

iCivics online games teach students about politics

The Daily Yonder (10/11)

An online game shows players the promise and pitfalls of holding office in a county government. The game's developers, iCivics and the National Association of Counties, hope some friendly competition will teach Americans about the challenges of sustaining successful local governments.

Teachers' Unions Hit With New Round of Lawsuits

In the wake of the *Janus* Supreme Court case, teachers' unions are facing more than a dozen legal challenges backed by right-leaning groups that could further dampen their membership numbers and finances. [Read more.](#)

3 strategies to keep good teachers

Top teachers in a Delaware school district are offered clear pathways for advancement and leadership opportunities, asserts Peter Leida, an assistant superintendent at Colonial School District. In this commentary, he describes how the district keeps good teachers by creating instructional coach positions, involving them in an aspiring leader program and equipping teachers to lead professional development. [eSchool News](#) (10/9)

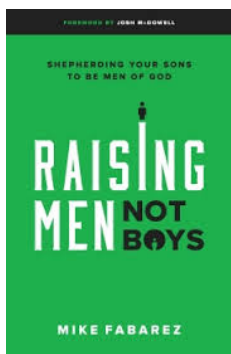
U.S Department of State Offers Travel Scholarships

The U.S. Department of State provides over 1,000 merit-based scholarships each year for U.S. high school students to study abroad for a summer or an academic year in over 25 countries. The application period is open now until December 11, 2018. Scholarships include international airfare, tuition, program costs, as well as meals and housing often with a host family. For more info and outreach materials ([click here](#)). To receive printed materials about the programs, please email:

youthprograms@state.gov.

Will people ever be wise enough to refuse to follow bad leaders or to take away the freedom of other people? -Eleanor Roosevelt, diplomat, author, and lecturer

(11 Oct 1884-1962)



[How to Teach Boys to Be Better Men](#)

Violence and disrespect toward women is learned behavior, writes Justin Minkel, and teachers can show boys a better way. [Read more.](#)

[Strategies to teach students about consent](#)

Edutopia online (10/25)

As a consultant and researcher on sexuality and misconduct, I know that preventing sexual misconduct starts with education that shifts the paradigms and norms we have about sex, relationships, and bodily autonomy.

Adulthood is not the best time to start these conversations—by then, our culture and media have already sent millions of messages in the wrong direction. And making sex and sexuality the enemy is the least effective approach.

[How One Teacher Explains Consent to Her 3rd Grade Students](#)

As the sexual assault allegations against now-confirmed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh made headlines over the past few weeks, some teachers were grappling with how to address the hearings in the classroom.

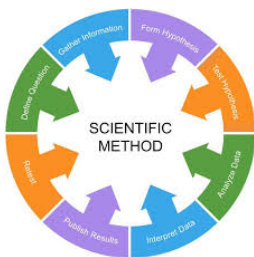
One teacher responded by starting conversations about consent early. Elizabeth Kleinrock, a 3rd grade teacher in Los Angeles, created a simple chart to teach her students about the concept. As her students are in elementary school, the conversation doesn't center on sexual behavior.

"Instead, we talk about safe physical interactions that occur daily in the classroom and outside at recess, and how to communicate your personal boundaries with those around you," Kleinrock wrote in a [blog post discussing the activity](#) on the website for [Teaching Tolerance](#), an organization that provides social justice and anti-bias resources for educators.



[6 tips for teaching students how to research](#)

Students should be taught to conduct research at an early age, asserts Angie Jameson, a library media specialist and former English teacher in Ohio. In this commentary, she shares six strategies she has used to help teach research, including allowing students to work in small groups and integrating research across the curriculum. [eSchool News](#) (10/3)



[How To Make A Civics Education Stick](#)

In the age of fake news, civics learning involves a lot more than reading the Constitution. One teacher says she encourages her students to "question everything."

[4 Tensions in Civics Education](#)

Guest blogger Brendan Bell provides four key tensions that school leaders and practitioners will have to weigh when considering how to expand civics education. (August 27, 2018)



Discussion is an exchange of knowledge; argument is an exchange of ignorance. Robert Quillen, journalist and humorist

[Why Public School Students Need to Study Religion](#)

Religion should be taught in school, just not in the ways you might think, argues the Religious Literacy Project's Diane L. Moore. [Read more.](#)

[Virtual field trips hold many lessons](#)

Students in one California elementary-school class have gone on 32 virtual field trips this year, visiting landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty. The interactive assignments are cross-curricular and include lessons such as calculating the heights of giant sequoia trees and Big Ben. [The Sun \(San Bernardino, Calif.\) \(10/17\)](#)

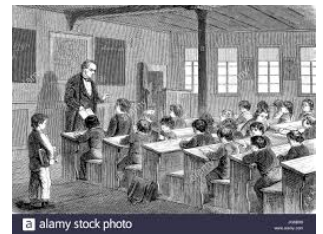


[Students experience learning in 19th-century classroom](#)

Johnson City Press (Tenn.) (10/20)

Joseph Cornell, 11, said it was interesting to see how a classroom operated more than a century ago, but joked that he would probably prefer to live in an age with modern technology and video game consoles.

“It’s interesting because I’m not really used to this stuff. It’s cool to see how people used to learn and how they used to do things back in the 1800s. It’s really different from what we do,” Cornell said.



[Student mural project depicts history of Pa. town](#)

A group of Pennsylvania high-school students are painting history-themed murals on the walls of the local library. The paintings depict scenes from the area's coal-mining industry as well as images of books written by local authors and people reading. [Tribune-Review \(Pittsburgh\) \(10/18\)](#)



[Study examines effective teaching practices](#)

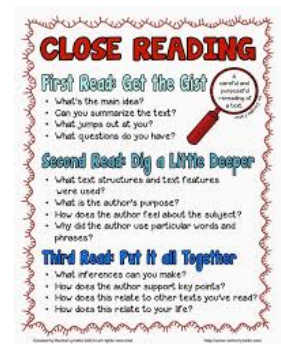
Some long-held teaching practices have not been effective, such as customizing instruction to learner styles, according to a report from the National Research Council's Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning. The report examines the science behind learning and makes several recommendations for schools, including understanding students' prior knowledge and experiences and supporting students in directing their own learning.



Take a closer look at close reading with reading expert Dr. Tim Shanahan.

Most educators acknowledge that close reading is an essential skill, and the writers of high-stakes exams agree. Yet even the most savvy teachers often remain confused as to what close reading is (and isn't), why it's important, and how to teach it.

Watch this exclusive on-demand webinar with literacy expert Tim Shanahan as he breaks down misconceptions about close reading and dives into the research on why it's a skill worth mastering. [Watch now](#)





[Report examines special-ed spending in Pa.](#)

School district special-education costs in Pennsylvania are far outpacing state aid, according to a report by the Education Law Center and PA Schools Work that found a \$1.54 billion increase in local funding for special education between 2008 and 2016 -- compared with a \$71 million increase in state funding. Pennsylvania's education funding system also is the subject of a lawsuit that asserts education is not adequately funded. [The Philadelphia Inquirer/Daily News \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (10/10)

[Tips to identify, support students with dyslexia](#)

About 20% of all students have a learning disability, and dyslexia is the most common condition, according to reading and dyslexia specialist Donell Pons. In this blog post, Pons provides several ways to help identify students who may have dyslexia and offers suggestions about how to support them. [SmartBrief/Education](#) (10/3)

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Just Released!

On-Demand Webinars from Holocaust education experts at ADL, USC Shoah Foundation, and Yad Vashem to help you explore and access classroom-ready content from Echoes & Reflections. Each 15-minute video is designed to help educators gain new skills and approaches to Holocaust education. [Watch a video here.](#)



Safely In, Safely Out: Where to Begin Your Holocaust Lessons

Classroom teacher Jen Goss highlights key foundational approaches to ensure a meaningful and safe Holocaust education experience for your middle and high school students.



The Power of Personal Narratives

Experienced English/Language Arts teacher Sherry Bard highlights poetry, diary entries, and visual history testimonies available from Echoes & Reflections, and discusses best practices to help your students connect to these emotional and profound sources.

[Educators to learn to use art to teach about the Holocaust](#)

Natasha Goldman, an adjunct lecturer in art history at Bowdoin College in Maine, has been awarded a National Endowment of the Humanities grant to teach up to 16 middle- and high-school teachers how to use art to teach about the Holocaust. Goldman and Page Herrlinger, an associate professor of history, will lead a workshop to guide attendees in using and examining art and cultural items, such as posters and flags to teach about the Holocaust. [The Forecaster \(Falmouth, Maine\)](#) (8/23)



I think everybody who has a brain should get involved in politics. Working within. Not criticizing it from the outside. Become an active participant, no matter how feeble you think the effort is. -Cass Elliot, singer (19 Sep 1941-1974)

POSTER CONTEST

The Bradford House Historical Association annually sponsors two Poster Contests, open to all middle and high school students (public, parochial, cyber and home-schooled) on a topic of Western Pennsylvania history, 1750 – 1850. The contest has been expanded this year to include students who reside in Washington, Greene, Allegheny, Fayette and Westmoreland Counties.

Students are required to construct a presentation on a standard size trifold display board, register online during January and February, and deliver the project to the Bradford House, 175 South Main Street, Washington PA in early March. For complete rules, hints for developing a project, and a list of possible topics, go to www.bradfordhouse.org and look under the education tab.

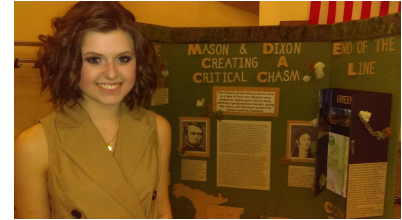
Winning projects will be displayed at the Symposium on 18th Century Life and Customs in Western Pennsylvania, *An Evening with Alexander Hamilton*, on March 29, 2019, at Washington & Jefferson College.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the top 5 entries in each division: Middle School (grades 5-8) and High School (grades 9-12).

An outreach program to introduce teachers and students to the contest requirements is available. Email bradfordhouseshop@hotmail.com for more information.

* Emily Richard, a recent Fort Cherry graduate, won the high school division poster contest for 4 consecutive years.

*

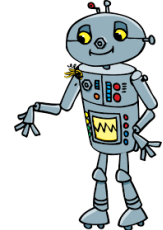


* Emily Richard, a recent Fort Cherry graduate, won the high school division poster contest for 4 consecutive years.

Students build robot for farm chores

EdSurge (10/8)

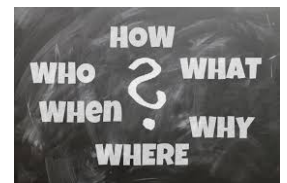
A few years ago, toward the beginning of my journey into robotics, I mentored a team for a local competition. We were on our way to building a Tetrax Prime robot from a kit, when the unimaginable happened—our team’s laptops went missing—and with them, all of our code and design work. While we were no longer able to compete in the local competition, this blow to our team was but a temporary setback.



Should Schools Teach Professional Writing in High School English Class?

The limited amount of academic writing that students learn in school may not be what they need for the workplace, argue some experts and employers. [Read more.](#)

• Full Report: Literacy for the Workplace



Opinion: Civics education benefits from civic engagement

The Hechinger Report (8/27)

‘Students have a lot more on their minds than memorizing the three branches of the U.S. government’

School systems are failing their students with outdated and inconsequential civics education that is only focused on facts and memorization.

The [simple multiple-choice questions](#) found on most civics tests require memorization of unconnected facts in order to pass. Samples include:



ConSource and the Harlan Institute Announce their Sixth Annual Virtual Supreme Court Competition

[The Harlan Institute](#) and [The Constitutional Sources Project](#) (ConSource) announce their Sixth Annual Virtual Supreme Court competition. This competition offers teams of two high school students the opportunity to research cutting-edge constitutional law, write persuasive appellate briefs, argue against other students through video chats, and try to persuade a panel of esteemed attorneys during oral argument that their side is correct. This year the competition focuses on [Timbs v. State of Indiana](#), exploring whether the Eighth Amendment's Excessive Fines Clause should be incorporated through the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment or the Privileges or Immunities Clause of the 14th Amendment.

Preliminary Oral Arguments

In addition to the brief, each team must submit a YouTube video of their oral arguments. We will provide Coaches with questions to ask, who can supplement the moot with their own questions. Each argument must be at least ten minutes in length. A link to the videos must be uploaded to the Institute of Competition Sciences by **Friday, February 22, 2019**.

Oral Arguments Semifinals

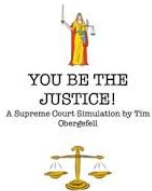
The top sixteen teams will advance to the oral argument semifinals, which will be held virtually over Google Hangout on **March 23, 2019**. Oral arguments will be judged based on our [scoring rubric](#). More information will be provided about the semifinals after the briefs are submitted.

Oral Arguments Championship Round

The final round of the Virtual Supreme Court Competition will be held in Washington, D.C. (Last year, the event was hosted at the [Georgetown University Law Center Supreme Court Institute](#)). The Harlan Institute and ConSource will sponsor the top two teams, and their teachers, for a trip to Washington, D.C. in April 2019 to debate in front of a panel of expert judges, including lawyers, university level debate champions, and legal scholars.

The members of the grand-prize winning team will receive a free trip, including airfare and one night of hotel accommodations, to attend ConSource's Constitution Day celebration in September 2019. Members of the runner-up team will each receive an iPad Mini. Members of the third and fourth place teams will each receive a \$100 Amazon.com Gift card

ConSource Executive Director Julie Silverbrook believes "the Virtual Supreme Court Competition is an excellent opportunity for high school students to develop core civic and constitutional literacy skills. Students are required to read the text of the Constitution, explore the history behind a contemporary constitutional dispute, and construct persuasive arguments. We know that experiences like the Virtual Supreme Court Competition leave a lifelong impression on participating students and encourages them to stay informed and engaged throughout their lives."



Act 48 Teacher Workshop Opportunities
Intersections of History and Pop Culture

Location: Heinz History Center

Date: Saturday, Nov. 10

Time: 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Act 48 Hours: 4 hours

Cost: \$15 for History Center members and \$20 for non-members. Additional \$3 fee applies to receive Act 48 hours.

Audience: Suitable for all educators

Popular culture and entertainment help define identity and the American experience, providing an engaging hook for students that illuminates history. Teacher Programs Coordinator Amanda McAllen at 412-454-6314 or aemcallen@heinzhistorycenter.org.

Educational Opportunities at Meadowcroft

____ Discover why prehistoric foragers camped at Meadowcroft Rockshelter and learn about their hunter-gatherer lifestyle when staying at this site more than 16,000 years ago.

Hands-on educational programs at Meadowcroft allow students to explore the history of life on the land in the upper Ohio Valley. We offer a variety of tours and educational experiences for children and adults of all ages.

Please contact Andrew Donovan, Education & Program Manager, at 724-587-3412 or ardonovan@heinzhistorycenter.org for more information or to book your experience.Z

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Western Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

e-mail address _____

School or Institution _____

Position and Grade level _____

Dues: \$10.00 Amt. enclosed _____

Check made out to WPCSS

*** NOTE: Most communication will be handled by e-mail. Please include e-mail address in order to be informed of coming events. Also, check with your school tech director to see if the fire wall will allow you to receive *The Point*, usually about is size 10 mb. Some firewalls reject attachments over 2 mb.**

Send application and dues to:

Leo R. West Treasurer • 11533 Clematis Blvd. • Pittsburgh, PA 15235