

# Social Studies PLC eBlast

October 2023

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Hello Everyone!

## ***Act 35 Update***

The 2022-23 Act 35 reporting opened in the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCPP) on July 3, 2023, with a deadline of October 2, 2023. Act 35 requirements began in the 2020-21 school year and requires each district, charter school, and comprehensive CTC to administer a locally developed assessment of United States history, government, and civics. The assessment must be administered at least once to students in grades 7-12 and must include the nature, purpose, principles, and structure of United States constitutional democracy, the principles, operations and documents of United States government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The data to be collected in the FRCPP system includes:

- Type of the assessment administered
- Total number of students who took the assessment
- Total number of students who attained a passing grade on the assessment
- Grade level or levels in which the assessment was administered
- Course or course in which the assessment was administered
- Number of students scoring 100% on the assessment

You can find more information on Act 35, including guidelines for accessing and submitting your data in the [Act 35 Civics Toolkit](#). Scroll to the bottom of the page and open the “Act 35 Reporting Guidelines” document. You may also find the “Frequently Asked Questions” document useful as well.

Note that if your charter school does not encompass grades 7-12, you are exempt from this submission. However, if your school includes at least one grade level 7-12, this legislation applies to your LEA. Submission is also required for IUs that provide civics instruction on behalf of their LEAs, as well as comprehensive CTC schools.

If you are experiencing issues where you are unable to submit after entering your data, please check that you have the proper “submit” role in the ADMIN area of FRCPP. If the Act 35 Civic Knowledge survey doesn’t appear when you log in, you are not a registered user and you must be added by your local admin user. The [FRCPP information page](#) may assist you when encountering submission issues.

## **From the America250PA Commission**

*During the American Revolutionary War, the Sons of Liberty often convened under the nation's original Liberty Tree in Boston, to discuss their opposition to British rule in the colonies. This historic tree became a beacon of hope to colonists and a symbol of American freedom. In an attempt to stymie these colonists, the British destroyed Boston's Liberty Tree. Suddenly, patriots throughout the 13 colonies began to designate new Liberty Trees. The last known original Liberty Tree sat on the campus of Saint John's University in Maryland, until it was destroyed by Hurricane Floyd in 1999. Thanks to local landscaper Mark Mehnert, who rescued and revived parts of this original tree, direct descendants of this Liberty Tree are thriving and making their way across the nation.*

*Generously sponsored by and in partnership with the Pennsylvania Freemasons, America250PA's Liberty Tree Project includes a certified Liberty Tree planted in each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties beginning in the Fall of 2021, through 2026.*

### **America250PA Liberty Tree Planting: Fayette County**

**Sunday, October 01, 2023 - 2:00pm**

Fort Necessity National Battlefield

One Washinton Parkway

Farmington, Pa 15437

### **America250PA Liberty Tree Planting: Westmoreland County**

**Sunday, October 01, 2023 - 4:30pm**

Historic Hanna's Town

809 Forbes Trail Road

Greensburg, PA 15601

### **America250PA Liberty Tree Planting: Franklin County**

**Tuesday, October 17, 2023 - 4:00pm**

Chambers Fort Park

Spring Street

Chambersburg, PA 17201

### **America250PA Liberty Tree Planting: Luzerne County**

**Saturday, October 21, 2023 - 10:00am**

Wyoming Monument

250 E. Pettebone Street

Wyoming, PA 18644

[Learn more here!](#)

## ***From the Committee of Seventy (C70)***

The [Committee of Seventy](#), Pennsylvania's oldest good-government nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, is committed to supporting teachers across the Commonwealth who aim to do the vital work of teaching civics, or incorporating civics into their practice. They offer a collection of free and expertly vetted materials and programs that are easily adaptable to any classroom.

Here is just some of what they have to offer:

- The [Elections & Voting curriculum](#) is applicable to both new and future voters. It reviews the history of voting rights in the U.S., builds skills in media literacy and puncturing their own filter bubbles, and how to research candidates.
- Students can also participate in a [Mock Election](#). In early October, C70 will send teachers who sign up a toolkit that contains customized printable or digital ballots, instructions on reporting votes, and other tools. They ask all votes to be reported by Oct. 31. Teachers can sign up and run their elections any time before Oct.31<sup>st</sup>.
- Teachers can also [request an interview](#) for their class with a candidate. C70 will work to connect them with candidates from both major parties. This allows students to hear directly from their representatives on issues that they care about.
- C70 is piloting [Can We Talk?](#) at the high school level. Can We Talk? is an experiential learning program that introduces students (and adults) to skills and habits that promote productive dialogue across differences. Connect with PPCE co-director Chris Satullo at [csatullo@gmail.com](mailto:csatullo@gmail.com) if you are interested in participating.
- The C70 team is available to help in any way teachers and prospective teachers need. They are also [an accredited Act 48 provider](#) – and would be happy to do small group or one-on-one zooms with anyone interested to train on these programs.
- C70 launched a [Teacher Advisory Council](#), where educators can connect with others, support C70's civic education goals, and receive a \$1,000 stipend as part of a limited time commitment.

## ***Professional Development opportunities from the Foundation for Economic Education***

The first opportunity is for on-demand professional development. FEE is incentivizing completion of on-demand PD modules with a \$50 Amazon gift card. The incentive is available for the first 100 on-demand modules completed. Teachers may complete more than one on-demand module and receive multiple \$50 Amazon gift cards. They have 20 modules available, one for each of the national standards in Economics. Each module takes about an hour to complete. The incentive is only available for Pennsylvania teachers residing or teaching in the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Somerset, Washington, or Westmoreland. Educators who do not teach Economics but are interested in participating are welcome to do so.

The second opportunity is more traditional. FEE is offering an evening in-person professional development on October 19 at PNC Park from 5-8pm. The topic is Embracing AI In Your Classroom and would be useful for secondary teachers of any subject. They only have 30 spots available and teachers who attend will be provided dinner and will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card. See the attached flyers included in this Eblast for more information.

## ***The American Historical Association***

[The American Historical Association](#) promotes historical work and the importance of historical thinking in public life. Incorporated by Congress in 1889, its mission to enhance the work of historians also encompasses professional standards and ethics, innovative scholarship and teaching, academic freedom, and international collaboration. As the largest membership association of professional historians in the world (over 11,000 members), the AHA serves historians in a wide variety of professions and represents every historical era and geographical area.

## ***Facing History and Ourselves Current Events Toolkit***

When news events become a topic of discussion in the classroom, it's useful to have a go-to set of adaptable strategies that allow you to easily integrate these discussions into your teaching routine. Facing History's [Current Events Toolkit](#) is full of flexible activities that foster respectful conversation so that you and your students have an opportunity to process the news that matters to your classroom community.

## ***National Humanities Center***

The National Humanities Center has announced its *Humanities in Class* webinar schedule for 2023-24. Each webinar is a live, interactive professional conversation led by a scholarly expert addressing a compelling topic through the lens of the humanities. Appropriate for educators at all levels, from K-12 to collegiate classrooms, each session features research, source documents, and readings to support the discussion.

Participants receive a certificate of completion to document five hours of professional development to meet continuing education requirements.

All webinars are free. [Register today!](#)

### **2023–24 webinar topics include:**

- The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together
- Media History and Freedom of Speech
- Hip Hop and Youth Culture as Pedagogy
- Indigenous Center, European Other: Teaching Indigenous Histories of the Americas
- Civic Engagement 101: Connecting Your Classroom to the Community
- How Will Students Learn to Write Now That We Have ChatGPT?
- Teaching Chaucer
- Exploring Women and Girls of African-Descent in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Speculative Fiction
- F.B. Eyes on Langston Hughes and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- What The Fact?!: Finding the Truth in All the Noise

[View the full webinar schedule.](#)

## ***The Constitutional Rights Foundation***

Constitutional Rights Foundation (soon to be Teach Democracy) is excited to launch new Civic Action Project (CAP) curriculum, featuring:

- New lessons that include multimedia elements.
- New Project Planners that promote critical thinking and informed action.
- Civic Action Toolkit with dozens of examples of how students can impact a problem or concern in their community.

Visit the [CAP website](#) to learn more, and inspire your students to be active and engaged members of our democracy!

## ***Bill of Rights Institute My Impact Challenge***

The 2024 [MyImpact Challenge](#) is now open for submissions! The Bill of Rights Institute launched their national civic engagement contest on September 11, the National Day of Service, to continue the legacy of 9/11/2001.

The MyImpact Challenge website contains the contest guidelines and a [six-lesson curriculum](#) that helps students design a locally targeted service project.

Students ages 13-19 can submit Community Service Projects for a chance to win up to \$10,000. A complete submission contains a project report, a principles essay, and photo or video documentation.

**The contest submission deadline is May 20, 2024.**

## ***Teaching American History***

[Teaching American History](#) is a free resource that brings together primary documents, continuing education, and community for American history teachers.

## ***Fall Webinars from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis***

To learn about the many Fall webinars the Bank has to offer visit [Economic Education Events](#). While the webinars are tailored for specific grade levels, please know you are welcome to attend any webinar you feel will enhance your knowledge and expose you to valuable resources.

## ***From NCSS – The 1787 Prize is Back!***

For the second year, NCSS is proud to announce *The 1787 Prize* - our annual essay contest for high school students in grades 11-12, as our special recognition around the observance of Constitution Day.

The 1787 Prize brings those citizen voices back to center stage. It recognizes the best annual student essay on the subject of the U.S. Constitution's past, present and future relevance by exploring how our written principles align with this vision of citizen engagement.

### **Eligibility**

The 1787 Prize is open to all high school students in grades 11-12. An essay may be submitted with up to three (3) student co-authors. There is a maximum of one (1) submission per high school.

### **Essay requirements are:**

Between 1,000 - 2,500 words  
Includes a footnote and bibliography  
Incorporates a mix of primary and secondary sources

### **Award**

One award will be announced in the amount of \$2,500. The \$2,500 prize amount will be split among any co-authors.

### **Timeline**

September 17, 2023: The 1787 Prize launch is announced.  
March 31, 2024: Essays are due to NCSS by 11:59 PM Hawaii Standard Time.  
April-May 2024: The 1787 Prize Selection Committee reviews all essays.  
June 1, 2024: The 1787 Prize winner is announced.

[Learn more and submit an essay!](#)

Thank you for subscribing to the SAS Social Studies PLC and for all you do every day for the students in Pennsylvania!

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