



118th Congress Legislative Priorities and Agenda

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) is committed to uplifting the voices of social studies educators, administrators, and professionals by positioning social studies education in the forefront of the 118th Congress. This past year has seen increased marginalization of social studies education. Now we are challenged with the threat of restricting social studies instruction by partisan legislation. With years of reduced spending for social studies instruction, we must work to increase federal spending for our profession, develop new sources of funding, and support existing programs that elevate social studies priorities. NCSS will work to embrace these priorities and expand the agenda throughout the year to ensure our students are prepared for college, career, and civic life.

1 Secure increased federal spending for social studies education.

Federal funding is crucial to the success and longevity of social studies education in our nation. These dollars help to ensure our students have access to daily social studies instruction in their communities. The following legislative bills will help provide social studies with needed resources and tools to prepare students for college, career, and civic life.

Pass the [Civics Secures Democracy Act \(H.R. 1814 / S.879\)](#) – This bill represents a proposed \$1 Billion investment in history and civics education by creating grants for states and districts. The bill:

- Protects the health of our constitutional democracy by prioritizing American history and civics in our nation’s schools
- Reverses chronic underinvestment by providing funding to states and school districts to support quality history and civic education that informs and empowers students to participate in our constitutional democracy
- Encourages more frequent and robust administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in history and civics, providing rich data on student outcomes for teachers, school districts and states
- Supports the Prince Hall Fellowship Program to strengthen our history and civics teaching corps and diversify the educator pipeline

It was introduced in the U.S. House by Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), and Rep. Earl Blumenauer [D-OR], and in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) and Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX). Our partners at the [CivXNow Coalition](#) (of which NCSS is a member) [summarized this bill’s provisions and has provided fact sheets](#). NCSS joins [multiple social studies allies](#) in supporting this legislation.

Support the [Student Support and Academic Enrichment Support \(SSAE\) Grant Program](#) - Through a flexible block grant program authorized under Title IV, Part A (funded at \$1.38 Billion in FY23 – a \$100 Million increase), the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows funding for a well-rounded education to include the social studies; supporting safe and healthy schools; and supporting the effective use of technology through sustained professional development, learning technology programs, and access to technology devices. NCSS joins [multiple social studies allies](#) in continuing to elevate the awareness, importance, and full funding of this program to include social studies as part of a well-rounded education for our students.

2 Develop new sources of funding and support for social studies education.

Developing new funding for social studies programs is important to sustain social studies priorities. Priorities are used to build support for future funding.

Support the creation of a [Service-Learning Fund](#) – NCSS has joined the [Coalition for Service-Learning](#) in its call to support \$250 million in annual grants (administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service) to state and local education agencies, state service commissions, higher education institutions, and nonprofits to carry out service-learning programs for K-12 and postsecondary students, with at least half of funds supporting projects in economically disadvantaged communities.

Support the creation of Promoting Programming, Research, Education and Preservation in (PREP) Civics and Government Act – NCSS, along with 13 other organizations, supports proposed legislation to be introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Dan Kildee (D-MI) and Rep. Steve Stivers (R-OH) that would “explicitly make the study of civics and government a responsibility of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This would formalize NEH’s role in advancing civic education and highlight the need for the agency to continue its work in programming, research, education and preservation in civics and government.”

3 Support current social studies education priorities and funding.

Supporting existing funding for social studies programs is important to sustain social studies priorities. Priorities are used to build support for future funding.

Support the [American History and Civics Academies](#) – These programs are currently funded by the U.S. Department of Education and offer teachers (through President Academies) and students (through Congressional Academies) the chance to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of American history, civics, and government. Funding in FY23 was increased to \$23 Million, up from \$7.75 Million in FY22.

NCSS Coalitions

NCSS is a member of and supports the legislative priorities of the following coalitions:

1. [CivXNow Coalition](#) (iCivics)
2. [Coalition for Service-Learning](#) (National Youth Leadership Council)
3. [Educating All Learners Alliance](#) (National Center for Learning Disabilities)
4. [50x2026 Coalition](#) (Generation Citizen)
5. “Homework Gap” Coalition ([National Education Association](#))
6. [National Coalition Against Censorship](#)
7. [National Coalition for History](#)
8. National Media Literacy Education Alliance ([National Association for Media Literacy Education](#))
9. [Teaching for Democracy Alliance](#) (CIRCLE, Tufts University)



The mission of National Council for the Social Studies is to advocate and build capacity for high-quality social studies by providing leadership, services, and support to educators.