Candidate Statements for the 2018–2019 NCSS Elections

The NCSS Board of Directors has approved the following slate of candidates for the 2018-2019 Board of Directors and Officer elections. The election ballot will open December 10, 2018 and close January 22, 2019. NCSS members in good standing as of October 15, 2018 are eligible to vote, and will receive instructions and credentials by email for accessing the online ballots starting on December 10, 2018.

The slate of nominees presented here was drawn by the Nominations & Elections Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

President-Elect Tina Heafner (North Carolina) assumes the office of President on July 1, 2019. Traditionally, the Vice-President of NCSS is elevated to the office of President-Elect; therefore, the Nominations & Elections Committee is not presenting another candidate for the office. Stefanie Wager (Iowa) assumes the office of President-Elect on July 1, 2019. President India Meissel (Virginia) will become a member of the Board of Directors for a one-year term as immediate Past-President on July 1, 2019.

In keeping with the constitutional provision for nominating candidates for the Board of Directors, the Nominations & Elections Committee named candidates for four Board categories to serve three-year terms. The committee named two candidates for Vice-President. This slate was then approved by the Board of Directors. Each nominee was asked to submit a photograph, a 200-word biographical sketch, and a 200-word position statement. These items are presented here and the text is unedited, except for changes to conform to a standard format.
The following members of the Board of Directors have unexpired terms and will continue to serve in their offices:

**Board members with terms continuing in 2019-20:**
- Joe Feinberg (Georgia) 2021
- Jesse Haight (Pennsylvania) 2020
- Wesley Hedgepeth (Virginia) 2021
- Joseph Karb (New York) 2020
- Tracy Middleton (California) 2021
- Shannon Pugh (Maryland) 2020
- Chanda Robinson (South Carolina) 2021
- Anthony Roy (Connecticut) 2020

**Officers as of July 1, 2019:**
- Tina Heafner (President)
- Stefanie Wager (President-Elect)
- India Meissel (Past-President)

**Board members with terms expiring June 30, 2019:**
- Terry Cherry (Texas)
- Kimberly Heckart (Iowa)
- Marjorie Hunter (Arkansas)
- Andy Mink (North Carolina)
- Rhonda Watton (Wisconsin)
President Elect

Stefanie Wager

Stefanie is currently the Social Studies Consultant for the Iowa Department of Education. In this role, she provides leadership and guidance at the state level for social studies education. Prior to this, she taught high school social studies for Des Moines Public Schools and Dallas Center-Grimes Schools and worked at Instituto Thomas Jefferson in Naucalpan, Mexico. In addition, she formerly served as the coordinator of a Teaching American History Grant. She received both a Bachelors and Masters degree from Drake University in Des Moines, IA. Stefanie has been involved in the Iowa Council for the Social Studies since 2010, first serving as co-chair for the Annual Conference, then Vice-President, and now President. She is also currently serving on the National Council for the Social Studies Board of Directors. In that capacity Stefanie has worked on the Strategic Plan Committee, Executive Director Search Committee and the Associated Group Ad-Hoc Committee, among others. She is also a member of CS4. In 2011, Stefanie was named an Emerging Leader in Education by ASCD. Stefanie lives in Grimes, IA with her husband Jake, who is also a social studies teacher, and their two children, Lincoln and Grace.

Position Statement

Social studies matters. It matters a lot—not only for college and career readiness, but for preparing students to participate actively in civic life. The marginalization of social studies remains the most significant issue confronting us today. In order to solve this we must ACT. First, as an organization we must foster Advocacy. We must continue to empower our members to advocate for social studies at the local, state, and national levels and we must continue to build relationships with external stakeholders who help promote the importance of social studies. Second, we must embrace the C3 Framework and the best practices it promotes. In addition, we must find ways to better Communicate to members- with those who are in state councils or associated groups, and with external stakeholders, about why social studies matters. Finally, we must promote 21st century practices by continuing to build an organization that embraces technology and different ways of doing business.

I believe in the power of us, and that only if we ACT will we see transformational changes in social studies education and the recognition that social studies matters.
Marjorie Hunter

Marjorie Hunter has eighteen years of experience teaching AP World History, U.S. history, and Economics. Marjorie has attended the AP World History reading since 2006, as a reader and later as Table Leader. When asked what inspired her love of history, she claims her experiences traipsing through cathedrals in Europe after living a year in Iran. Marjorie earned a B.A. in History from California State University and moved to Arkansas to pursue teaching at the Academies of West Memphis. Marjorie later earned both a Master’s and PhD in Heritage Studies from Arkansas State University where she also instructs U.S. History as an adjunct professor. Marjorie previously served as President for the Arkansas Council for the Social Studies and worked on state social studies curriculum in 2006 and 2013. She currently works to further the goals of the social studies community by serving on the Board of Directors for NCSS and facilitates summer institutes for AP World History. Born with a serious case of wanderlust, Marjorie, her husband, Les, and dog, Lulu, embraced the RV lifestyle and enjoy touring the U.S. When not in the classroom or traveling, you can find Marjorie happily quilting or sewing custom clothing for her grandchildren.

Position Statement

High stakes testing has taken a serious toll on our education system. Testing and data-driven decisions pervade our classrooms daily. Assessments focus on literacy, math, and science and rarely social studies. Social studies remains under constant attack by the public and legislators, alike. Some legislative attempts have taken a first step to marginally improve the situation as some states recently instituted a civics test. Unfortunately, too many states rely on the federal Immigration test readily available online. While the test helps increase civics knowledge, it fails to instill real understanding and civic participation in our students. Ultimately, reliance on this test promotes rote memorization of facts and results in a woeful lack of real civic engagement. This is unacceptable. We must do better for our students. One way to change civics curriculum is to encourage states to create an assessment that more accurately measures student achievement. I believe NCSS can be that vehicle of change.

Recent strikes in multiple states including Arizona, Oklahoma, and Kentucky show that many K-12 teachers are under major stress for multiple reasons. Let us not include one more test for the sake of testing. Make the civics test relevant and purposeful for teachers and students.
Vice President

Anton Schulzki

Professionalism, equality and solidarity. These attributes describe Anton Schulzki’s career as a social studies teacher in Colorado Springs. During his 35 years of experience, he has served as department chair, and on numerous committees at the district, state and the national levels. Anton has been active in NCSS since 2001, as a conference presenter, a member to the House of Delegates from the Canada Community and serving on the steering committee for NCSS House of Delegates, including as chair for 2010 conference in Denver. Anton served on the committee that drafted the constitution for the Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society and is extremely gratified of all that Rho Kappa has done for students across the country. He was elected to the NCSS board in 2013 helping to shape policy as NCSS moved through changing times. Anton recently completed his term as president of the Colorado Council for the Social Studies, leading CCSS through reorganization and conference changes that have met with widespread approval. He continues to be an ally for students, having been honored for his work with LGBTIQ students. Anton’s advocacy experiences will allow him to lead NCSS as it moves forward in the next decade.

Position Statement

Within NCSS, professionalism, equality and solidarity are the hallmarks of who we are and how we should conduct ourselves. I believe that the most challenging issue confronting social studies educators today is creating and expanding relationships in all we do. We need to expand conversations across disciplines, across levels, with parents, the public and politicians. There are tremendous opportunities for social studies educators to work with each other within schools and within social studies disciplines. However, there are just as many opportunities to work with English/Language Arts, Science, Math, World Language and other teachers. In addition, we should work together with our colleagues in higher education to train the next generation of social studies teachers. Now more than ever, social studies professionals need to be at the forefront of conversations with the public and with politicians about how social studies education is critical for our students and nation. Honest and productive conversations can do so much more to solve our issues than simply closing our classroom doors. Making NCSS a responsive organization for the next 100 years will require working in solidarity with social studies professionals from across the country to build those vital relationships.
At-Large

David Kendrick

I’m David Kendrick, and I am running to serve as an “At Large” member of the NCSS Board of Directors. For sixteen years, I have been a eighth grade Georgia Studies teacher, and it is the passion for students that inspires me to stay in the classroom. Additionally, I have fought alongside the Civil War Trust to preserve historic battlefields and have been recognized as their National Teacher of the Year. My state has benefitted from my leadership, as I have been the President of the Georgia Council for the Social Studies and served on its Board of Trustees. During this time, I helped create a partnership with the other content areas of math, science, and language arts to collaborate and return relevance to social studies. One of my greatest accomplishments was the revamping of the NCSS Awards Committee, spending three extra years as chair, to make it a viable and productive committee again. During my tenure, I was afforded the opportunity to suggest amendments of the duties and responsibilities of committee in the NCSS Constitution. It would be my honor and privilege to continue my leadership on the national level as a member of the NCSS Board of Directors.

Position Statement

The need for dynamic and rigorous social studies classrooms has never been so critical. My goal is to create a national partnership and collaboration with math, science, and language arts to fully develop critical thinking skills and a global mindset in tomorrow’s leaders. As President of GCSS, I have heard social studies referred to as an “extra-curricular subject” or “taught on the way to the bus.” We can no longer find it acceptable for social studies to be taught by passing out worksheets, copying from textbooks, or getting to it if there is time left over in another class. This issue has become personal, as my own daughter was taught in this manner, causing her to dismiss the subject as busywork. Educators must continue to advocate and push for an equal footing with other content areas, striving to create better citizens of our students. Global and national challenges require more attention to the social studies. As a member of the NCSS Board of Directors, I will continue to be the sounding point, not just in my home state of Georgia, but also on the national level. We guide the future and must be the voice of challenge and change.
At-Large

Montra Rogers

Dr. Montra L. Rogers, a native of Houston, Texas, is the Director of Curriculum and Development—Secondary Social Studies (Grades 6-12) for the Houston Independent School District. In addition to curriculum and development work, her work involves exploring and fostering community and university partnerships.

Dr. Rogers is currently President of the Texas Social Studies Supervisors Association. Previously, she served as President-Elect, Treasurer and Member At-Large. Dr. Rogers is a Life Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc; and she currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Ethel Hedgeman Lyle Foundation.

Her doctoral research focused on the notion of improving middle school social studies teachers’ perceptions of the use of reflective practice as a means of assisting the transfer of strategies learned in professional development trainings into practice. In addition, Dr. Rogers has co-edited and authored social studies instructional materials and she has presented at and participated in numerous conferences, workshops, and summer institutes.

The Texas Southern University National Alumni Association awarded Dr. Rogers the Excellence in Achievement Award in recognition of her contributions to public education. The Texas Social Studies Supervisors Association awarded her the Dr. Rosemary Marrow Social Studies Supervisor of the Year Award in recognition of her leadership in social studies education.

Position Statement

As a novice social studies educator, I was driven by a desire to ignite a passion for social studies in the student in which I served. Over the years, I’ve become cognizant of the fact that students struggle to access social studies content. How can students become passionate about social studies if they are unable to access the information before them? As such, the most significant issue currently confronting social studies education is literacy. This is significant because sound readers and writers play a crucial role in enriching our economic, social, and political lives. Literacy should underpin social studies instruction. Given this, social studies leaders might focus on the creation of content specific literacy plans. The literacy plan might highlight processes and protocols to support analytical reading. In addition, the proposal might also include strategies that support the intentional teaching of the writing process through the lens of social studies content. Finally, a sound proposal will include routines that support opportunities for academic discourse. Content is not sacrificed; instead, skills are used to teach topics and concepts. Social studies literacy is imperative as the economic, social, and political development of our society is dependent upon a literate citizenry.
Joe Schmidt

Joe Schmidt is currently the Social Studies Specialist at the Maine Department of Education following nine years as a high school social studies teacher in rural Wisconsin schools and three years as the K-12 Social Studies Teacher Leader in Curriculum & Instruction for Madison Metropolitan School District in Madison, Wisconsin.

Joe has served the past four years as a member of both the iCivics National Educator Network and the Teaching Tolerance Advisory Board. He currently serves on the Government and Public Relations Committee and previously chaired the select subcommittee for Social Studies for NCSS. Other distinguished recognition and positions include:

- Vice-President and Business Manager for the Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies
- Social Studies Advisory Council for the Wisconsin Department of Instruction
- Item and Content Reviewer for the Wisconsin Forward Exam
- Fellow at the Center for the Study of the American Constitution
- Teacher Study Abroad Program for the European Union Center for Excellence
- 2017 Snavely/Michalko Memorial Award for outstanding service to social studies community in Wisconsin
- 2014 NCSS Summer Leadership Institute
- Joe is currently leading the review of Maine’s social studies standards and provide support and professional development throughout Maine while also presenting at numerous state and national conferences.

Position Statement

Social Studies is the curriculum for how we live our lives and can be the cure to what ails us. Not only does it prepare students for tackling larger and deeper issues as they grow older, but it also sets the stage for well-rounded students who are not afraid to ask questions and explore their own curiosity about our world while also raising literacy rates and test scores. We believe deeply in social studies, but need more support. There is so much potential, but we realize there are barriers to successful implementation. As a former classroom teacher, who became a district level curriculum leader, and now as a state specialist, I have the background experience to address these barriers.

We must encourage all educators, including elementary teachers, to provide meaningful Social Studies education for all students. For example, demonstrating how literacy learning is stronger when history content is included and how mathematics in the context of even basic economics deepens those mathematic practices. We know there is more work to do in our social studies classes and curriculum, but the leaders we will rely on in the future, need to be shaped in the elementary classrooms of today.
Barry Thomas

Barry Thomas is the supervisor of Social Studies for Omaha Public Schools in Nebraska. He was a teacher at both Omaha North High School and McMillan Magnet Center. Barry obtained his social science education degree from Wayne State College and two master’s degrees in Educational Leadership and Curriculum and Instruction from Doane College.

He serves as immediate-past president for the Nebraska State Council for Social Studies, a member of the Nebraska Advisory Council for National Geographic Society, and board member of the National Social Studies Supervisor Association. Mr. Thomas has presented at the National Council for Economic Education Conference and the NCSS Conference. Recently he was awarded the Distinguished Support for Geography Education award by the National Council for Geographic Education.

Barry served on the Great Plains Black History Museum board and Omaha African-American Male Achievement Collaboration. Mr. Thomas was president and Social Action Chair of the Omaha chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Recently he was awarded the Superior Service award by his state and district of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for his work in multiple mentoring organizations, blood drive efforts with the American Red Cross, and his efforts to increase voter registration, education, and mobilization in poor and underrepresented communities.

Position Statement
The most important issue facing Social Studies education right now is our lack of a vision for advocacy. NCSS should create and deliver a clear threefold message:

Career Focus—There needs to be a greater emphasis on Social Studies content to increase student literacy at every grade level, but especially in K-5 education. Professional development should be specific to encourage teachers in understanding “Social Studies is what they need to make the literacy more engaging and enriching.” We also should be making connections from skill development to career integration for our secondary schools.

Advocacy and Activism—Educators are assembling to express their concerns on educational equity, pay increases, and changes in College Board courses. No one should be more active and engaged than those who groom our future for activism and engagement. Our message should be clear. Our moment is at hand.

Regional Collaboration—We need to examine ways that we can do more work on a regional level with state affiliates. There are untapped regional resources (experts, conferences, workshops, etc.) States may have similar obstacles that we can problem-solve together. We should explore how current affiliates network with each other now and how that can be replicated and expanded.
Scott Waring earned his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia in Social Studies Education and, currently, is a Professor of Social Science Education at the University of Central Florida. He is the Chair for the Teacher Education and Professional Development Committee (NCSS) and Chair of the Florida College and University Faculty Assembly. Scott serves as the Editor for Social Studies and the Young Learner (NCSS), Editor for the Teaching with Primary Sources Journal, Editor for Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education – Social Studies, and the Interdisciplinary Feature Editor for Social Studies Research and Practice. He has served as a member of the NCSS House of Delegates, the Executive Board for CUFA, as a Fulbright Specialist (Bulgaria), and as the Chair for SITE’s Social Studies SIG. He has over 100 conference and workshop presentations and has written or co-written grants totaling over $4 million, including a Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources grant, a Fulbright-Hays grant (Czech Republic), and three Teaching American History grants. Scott has published a book (two more under contract), multiple journal articles, and book chapters focusing on the teaching and learning of history and the utilization of technology and primary sources in teaching.

Position Statement
Unfortunately, there are multiple issues impacting the field of social studies education. One of the biggest problems affecting social studies education, and society in general, is the inability for individuals to respect differing perspectives, various beliefs, ways of thinking, and diversity. There is a need for continued advocacy for the social studies, dedicated instructional time for social studies content in the elementary grades, and professional development opportunities for rural, urban, and suburban educators throughout the nation. There should be a greater focus on the C3 Framework and the NCSS Standards in school districts and schools and efforts to work together to foster critical thinking and genuine appreciation for diverse ways of thinking and living our lives. We can progress towards this goal by working to disseminate effective and engaging methods, ideas, and approaches through outlets, such as Social Education, Middle Level Learning, and Social Studies and the Young Learner, and presenting at NCSS, as well as associated and local affiliate councils. As social studies professional development is rare, NCSS members and board members need to work together to garner federal funding to provide free professional development opportunities for educators in all areas of social studies and geographic locations.
Annie Whitlock

I am an Associate Professor of Elementary Education at the University of Michigan-Flint. In addition to teaching courses in elementary social studies methods and integrated curriculum, I also coordinate our Elementary Education teacher preparation program. I research teaching elementary social studies through civic engagement, place-based inquiry, and curriculum integration. My scholarship has been published in Social Studies and the Young Learner, Journal of Social Studies Research, and The Social Studies, among others. I started my education career teaching middle school social studies and working as a social studies curriculum specialist before earning my doctorate specializing in social studies curriculum and teacher education. I joined my state council (the Michigan Council for the Social Studies) as first year teacher and have been active in that organization ever since, mostly recently completing a term as President of MCSS. I have been an active NCSS and CUFA member for ten years and I served on the NCSS Notable Trade Books Selection Committee. Most importantly, I am a mother of two social justice warriors (ages 3 and 1), and I enjoy reading, traveling, and a good cup of coffee. Preferably all at once.

Position Statement

What is the most significant issue currently confronting social studies education and how would you address this issue? Social studies education is at the cusp of greatness at this time. While we are seeing the result of years of neglect of social studies education with the current climate of discrimination, nationalism, and xenophobia, we are also seeing the result of educators who are inspiring youth to become civically engaged and active during this divisive time in history. NCSS has the opportunity to take action to keep the momentum of social change happening in classrooms and through research. The issue facing social studies education is inaction. One of the NCSS strategic planning initiatives is to “lead[s] by example and seek[s] to...strengthen civic life” which describes action. I have always “lead by example” in my career, and will continue to do so as a board member. I will challenge NCSS to find ways to make the resources we offer more accessible and affordable for teachers and to continue to empower educators to advocate for issues that are important to their students. It is important that I work as a collaborator with social studies teachers, specialists, researchers, and teacher educators to support evidence-based teaching happening in classrooms. This will strengthen civic life within our organization as well as outside of it.
Georgette Hackman is a 7th grade social studies teacher and middle level social studies department chair at Cocalico Middle School in Denver, Pennsylvania. She is a graduate of Millersville University of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania State University. As the recipient of the distinguished James Madison Fellowship in 2015, she is currently pursuing a second master’s degree in American History & Government from Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio. Georgette works as a Master Teacher for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and has been a Ford’s Theatre National Oratory Fellow since 2012. In 2016, Georgette received the BP Lincoln Teacher Leadership award from Ford’s Theatre for work with oratory education in her school. She has authored multiple lesson plans and units of study for a variety of educational institutions nationwide. In addition to her many professional development pursuits, Georgette has served as a board member of both the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies and the Middle States Council for the Social Studies and is active in the National Council for the Social Studies. Finally, Georgette was a 2018 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year finalist and was named 2017 Gilder Lehrman History Teacher of the Year in Pennsylvania and was one of the 10 finalists for the national award.

Position Statement
The biggest issue in social studies today is that society is now reaping the consequences of the last decade’s education trends that de-emphasized the importance of the teaching of social studies in our nation’s schools. Lack of civic knowledge and civic engagement has reached epidemic proportions. We live in a world where truth and logic are shunned in favor of bombast and rhetoric. Sound bites have replaced critical analysis and civil discourse has lost all civility. What is the cure for this malady? A solid K-12 education that includes social studies as a core subject that is allotted as much time and importance as science, technology and math. NCSS has the ability to educate and advocate for our content, empower our nation’s teachers and create future leaders who appreciate and understand the unfinished work that freedom and liberty demands. We need to teach as though our democracy depends upon it, because it does. Our students and our nation deserve nothing less.
Secondary Classroom Teacher

David Huebner

David Huebner is an award-winning social studies teacher in Columbia, Tennessee. As President of the Tennessee Council for the Social Studies 2016-2018, he led the successful effort to secure the National Conference for the Social Studies in 2023 in Nashville, Tennessee.

As a fierce advocate for expanding the influence of social studies in schools, an active member of the Tennessee Geographic Alliance, contributor to Education About Asia, and president of his county’s teacher union, David demonstrates leadership and effective citizenship. Huebner introduced African American History, launched AP Human Geography, and brought pacing guides and improved curriculum to his work.

David establishes high expectations for students and links learning with creativity. He is highly regarded as a key resource and problem solver by colleagues and administrators.

As past adjunct at three universities, Huebner provides leadership to the Collegiate Academy at his school. With past experience in the music industry and leadership conferences, Huebner’s education practices link strongly with a B.A. in Geography, Master of Arts in Religious Education and Masters of Arts in Teaching.

David Huebner brings a breadth of effective experience and extensive leadership to the Board of the National Council of the Social Studies.

Position Statement

The loss of critical positioning and emphasis of social studies is an increasingly disturbing trend. In many elementary schools, social studies are no longer of major concern. In middle schools, confusing and ever-changing standards have placed social studies on the back burner. In high school, there continues to be erosion in geographic emphasis and a lack of concern and effective teaching on citizenship. Finally, there is little effort to link social studies with STEM programs.

How do we solve these growing issues in social studies? First, implement a program among all state councils to work closely with legislatures to return geography and civics to their rightful place.

Secondly, meet with STEM leaders to bring aspects of citizenship education to STEM programs. STEM will build our nation and world in responsible and significant ways if powerful and widespread citizenship education is brought.

Finally, as standardized testing experiences new challenges and questions, social studies will increase in content in such testing if its proper role at K-12 levels of education is reestablished by efforts of the NCSS and state councils.
Bruce Mize

Bruce Mize is an eighteen-year classroom veteran and devoted family man. Currently he is serving in the capacity of lead teacher at West Point High School in West Point, Mississippi. There he has brought innovation and creativity to his classroom, his school, his district, and to his state. He has redefined what the classroom is and has implemented new and innovative technologies to make his classroom stand apart from others. Not only does he innovate with technology, but he also brings back creativity to the classroom with his lesson trunks developed with actual artifacts from eras such as World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. Mize is a lifetime member of the Mississippi Council for the Social Studies where he has served as District 1 Representative, Vice-President, President, and is currently the Treasurer of the organization. In addition to his devotion to the organization, Mize has been named Mississippi’s Social Studies Teacher of the Year by the Mississippi Council for the Social Studies in 2017 and by the Gilder Lehrman Institute in 2016. Because of his dedication and commitment, Mize was also inducted into the Mississippi Council for the Social Studies Teacher Hall of Fame.

Position Statement

The most pressing issue today in the field of social studies is the ability to grasp and maintain the attention of our students who are totally immersed in their personal technology and to make our curriculum relevant in the modern age of the internet. It is up to us, as educators, to bring relevance to our curriculum so that students in the modern world can see how they can use historical facts, and the skills that come with it, to solve future problems. Critical thinking has become a “super power” in today’s society and it is a power that must be passed on to the next generation. We must be innovative and think outside the box so to allow our students to be successful in a world that expects them to be critical thinkers and team players. We stand at the frontlines between our students and the world outside our classroom. It is our duty to ensure that they are equipped and armed with the skills and knowledge they deserve to overcome any obstacle that may get into their way as they move toward their goals in life. We are the makers and molders of the future. Let’s not fail them now.
Secondary Classroom Teacher

Ron Reichle

For the past 26 years I have been a history teacher at a large public high school in southeastern Wisconsin. I have taught six different social studies subjects. I have taught freshmen through seniors. I have taught advanced placement classes, at level classes, and special education classes. I also created new courses in an effort to help students have a broader world view. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in 1990 and have earned two Masters Degrees since. The second Masters was in Educational Leadership from Cardinal Stritch University. I also have taken numerous Masters level classes in US History from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. For the past seven years I have served on the Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies board. After four years as a regional delegate I was asked to run for president which I am currently serving my second year of that two year term. Being a part of the NCSS board is the next step for me in terms of social studies education leadership. It is important to me to gain experience before moving up the ladder and influencing more people and I believe that I am now prepared for that next step.

Position Statement

The biggest issue I see facing social studies education is the lack of understanding on the public’s part on the impact social studies education can have and does have on society. As president-elect of the Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies I was given the responsibility of organizing our annual conference. My focus beyond the traditional speakers and topics we bring to the clinic was to bring in non-traditional speakers to present on ways and methods to include social studies related topics in non-social studies classes. We all understand the importance of citizenship and respect and understanding of the past and we all know that social studies education is where this happens. Social studies topics and issues should and can also be used in literature (English) classes, music, art and even science and math classes. I want to integrate social studies education in other subject matters not to downplay the importance of social studies education, but to demonstrate to others the far reaching impact these areas have on everyday society. I think social studies education in these subject areas will enhance these fields of study as well as aide us in our efforts to create better citizens.
Secondary Classroom Teacher

Jessica Wilkerson

Jessica Wilkerson is in her 11th year of teaching Honors U.S. History, AP U.S. History, and AP Psychology at King George High School in King George, Virginia. She received her B.A. in History and M.Ed in Diverse Student Populations from the University of Mary Washington and holds a Virginia teaching license in grades 6-12 Social Studies and Gifted Education. She is currently working toward an M.A. in American History and National Board certification.

Jessica has significant experience working with committees at the state and local levels. She has served as a committee member for Item and Test Review for state end-of-course exams and as a member of the U.S. History Textbook Review Committee for the Virginia Department of Education. She serves as teacher representative for the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation in developing curriculum and instruction to align with the 2019 Commemoration. Within her county, she serves as a member of the Technology Committee and the Gifted Advisory Committee and as the adviser for National Honor Society. For the last three years, she has also been an AP Reader for U.S. History. Jessica is excited for the opportunity to serve NCSS.

Position Statement
The most serious issue facing social studies education is the rapid development of technology that requires continuous efforts to maintain the relevance and importance of the social studies via access to digital content and curriculum. Teachers at all levels have witnessed the increase in technological abilities and expertise held by their students. Students at the elementary level often enter school with an understanding of electronic devices and software that far surpasses the knowledge held by previous generations. In this context, it is essential that we remain diligent in increasing access to digital resources to ensure the preservation of social studies education. Jessica would actively work to increase the availability of digital social studies resources that are both accessible and affordable for students and teachers in all areas.
K-12 Classroom Teacher At-Large

Leslie Barstow

I have spent the last 17 years in education, teaching, curriculum writing and leading my team. I have earned over 800 continuous education hours as well as my master’s degree in American History. I have also completed 72 hours of doctorate work in the field of General Teaching of Psychology. I also am a member of the National Council for the Social Studies and the middle school teacher- at-large for the Texas Council for the Social Studies, part of the curriculum committee, and the treasurer for our local council, Hill Country Council of Social Studies. I have been researching the curriculum developed by the NCSS, Civic learning and the C3 Framework and find it comprehensive, informative and should be implemented throughout the United States. I continually create lesson plans for my students. This year again, the Language Arts department and our Social Studies department will continue in collaborating on lessons, giving the students some cohesion between classes by using skills taught in both classes. This summer I have continued working on the curriculum writing committee to create lessons for the entire district for Social Studies which includes lessons using primary sources, document-based questions, and problem-based learning.

Position Statement
The purpose of Social Studies is to educate students on becoming informed citizens through a variety of informational processes and critical thinking skills that will prepare them for a productive and engaging life. Students need to understand and perform skills that will project them into the future. With these skills and the ability to problem solve while working with colleagues, they can have the life they vision. Students need to perform skills such as communication, problem solving, interpersonal, and self-directional. The use of primary sources is a large part of developing these skills in students. Developing programs for states on the use of primary sources, critical thinking and problem solving skills would benefit students by preparing them with skills needed for their future.

Every year within our school district, we have continuous improvement training. I present lessons to my colleagues within this conference. I have and continue to present lessons at the TXCSS conference and the NCSS conference. I believe with my knowledge of the Social Studies curriculum and my ability to write and formulate curriculum for the effectiveness for students, I will be an asset to the NCSS board as the K-12 Classroom at-large.
Zachariah Lowe

Zachariah Lowe is a middle school social studies teacher at R.E. Davis College Preparatory Academy in Sumter, SC. Originally from Northeast Ohio, Lowe began his career as a teacher four years ago. He is the 2017-18 Sumter School District Teacher of the Year and was a top-five finalist for 2018-19 State Teacher of the Year. Lowe holds a Bachelor’s Degree (2014) from The University of Akron and a Master’s (2017) from The University of South Carolina. His students have been recognized at various levels for awards such as the National WWII Museum’s Billy Michal Student Leadership Award and the NASC/Ruth Hollander Award for outstanding contributions to participation in democracy. Personally, Mr. Lowe has attended the Ford’s Theatre Summer Teachers’ program and the US Supreme Court Teacher Institute in Washington, D.C., as well as the Colonial Williamsburg Summer Teacher Institute. He authored a chapter on global-minded inquiry for a National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) publication, has served as a team leader on the South Carolina Standards Revision Committee, and has presented at numerous national, regional, and local workshops and conferences. Locally, he serves as department chair, grade level leader, curriculum coordinator, and as chairman of the district’s Teacher Forum.

Position Statement

“A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.” These words from mid-1800s preacher, Charles Spurgeon, still yield a wise lesson for us today. While there are definitely millions of people in our country who can take a deep issue, dissect it, and find the truth in an objective manner...we must acknowledge that scores of people often spread incorrect information without a second thought. We should not blame them, nor should we blame our society; instead, we must collectively work together to best educate children and adults alike to become critical thinkers and doers. We must place clear emphasis on historical and critical thinking skills, working alongside our governmental leaders and stakeholders to develop policy that empowers social studies educators to promote civic competence in all classrooms across the United States. We do not need a populous that is taught what to think; we need future leaders who know how to develop their own knowledge and understanding. And who better to lead this mission than us? Through this demonstration of the power of the social studies, we will be able to rejuvenate public support of all that we do on a daily basis.
June Morris

June is currently in her 18th year of teaching social studies and language arts at West Albany High School in Oregon. Her teaching assignments and activities demonstrate her enthusiasm for integrating across the curriculum. She currently teaches AP European History and AP Human Geography; she has taught World Geography, Advanced World Literature, and Journalism. She advises Model United Nations and Key Club, coaches Cross Country, and serves on the school equity committee. June also teaches history as adjunct at Linn Benton Community College. Her MS in Education is from Western Oregon State University; she has mentored several student teachers from the same excellent program. June is a member of OCSS.

For the last 15 years, June has held leadership roles in the Center for Geography Education in Oregon, and teacher advisory positions with the Portland Art Museum and Oregon World Affairs Council. These highly collaborative roles have led to the development of unique, strongly supported, highly educational and gratifying professional development for Oregon teachers, which in turn, has helped create rigorous, authentic, and creative lessons and learning experiences for K-12 students.

Position Statement

How can we motivate our students to be active, engaged, and — most importantly — thinking citizens? We all know we must encourage critical thinking, no matter what subject we are teaching. And we do that! But, in our polarized nation, even education cannot escape a tendency to categorize students — they are “science” or “humanities” kids. We already know that the sciences and social sciences are complementary, yet we do not do enough cross-curricular collaboration once we reach high school. As a frequent collaborator with science and literature teachers, I see the potential for the social studies to become the most relevant subject in K-12 schooling. To inspire a love of history, of geography, of government and to instill an understanding that these are the subjects we will need life long, no matter one’s chosen profession, we must start with effective local programs that take students out of the textbook, into the community, to study real-life applications of the key ideas defining these subjects. As a director at large, I will be eager to help facilitate collaborative, cross-curricular programs with a strong local component that move our students toward becoming thoughtful global citizens.
Rhonda Watton

Rhonda currently teaches 8th grade U. S. History at Templeton Middle School in Sussex, Wisconsin. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Carthage College and her National Board Certification in Social Studies—History/Early Adolescence in 2005 and renewed in 2015. As a James Madison Fellow (2015), she is currently completing her second Master’s degree in American History and Government. Rhonda has served as department chair at her school, facilitating grades 6-12 vertical team initiatives, and has been a member of the school and district site plan committees. As a member of the Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies for the past decade, she has served in roles of president, president-elect/conference chair, and awards chair. Rhonda was a member of the writing team for the new state Social Studies standards, a steering committee member for the Wisconsin Geographic Alliance, co-coordinator for the state level National Geographic Bee and is a Colonial Williamsburg Master Teacher. She has presented sessions at the state and NCSS conferences. As a current member of the NCSS Board, Rhonda is a liaison for the Awards Committee, a member of the House of Delegates, a C3 Frameworks Facilitator, and participated in the NCSS Summer Leadership Institute.

Position Statement
Social Studies education develops young minds to become informed, competent, civic-minded individuals. It needs to be an integral part of all K-12 curricula; therefore, we need to continue to ensure Social Studies is regularly taught with fidelity at the elementary level. The skills and content learned continue to build at the middle and high school levels. Through inquiry and use of the C3 Framework, our young people have opportunities to view issues from various perspectives, to think critically and problem solve, developing their own conclusions, and making real world relevance.

In order to foster civic engagement within our children and help them become active citizens in our local and state communities, we need to create opportunities for them to take informed action. By doing so, our hope is that they will develop into well rounded individuals and be able to demonstrate civic, geographic, historic and economic literacy in our communities. We must continue to advocate for a challenging, skill and content-based Social Studies experience that is going to prepare our country’s children to be civic-minded, tolerant and understanding of others and competitive in our global society.
K-12 Classroom Teacher At-Large

Frederick Whaples

No other candidate by training, preparation, and life experiences, except Fred Whaples, can claim to be the perfect K-12 voice for us. Dedicated Husband of 24 years. Loving home to 38 foster kids. Dad to 6 adopted kids. Fred’s family experiences create a powerful student empathy lens and an understanding of modern family challenges. Fred’s life experience guarantees a true K-12 voice for all. Earning a Masters of Ministry and a Master’s in Education with a minor in Conflict Resolution culminates for us in a K-12 candidate who has clarity on history that appreciates both science and faith communities. Accomplished author of various periodicals along with contributing author to “Emergency Response Handbook: Youth Edition,” Fred is absolutely the perfect K-12 At Large voice, vote, and representative! He currently serves on several advisory boards in North Carolina—the Superintendents Teacher Advisory Council, the Classroom Teacher Association of North Carolina board of directors, The Education Lobby meeting regularly with state and national leaders. Fred also serves at the local level as a Paul Harris Fellow Rotarian, Speech and Debate Coach, member of his School Leadership Team, and AP World History Teacher. Fred believes, “The best is yet to come.” Electing Fred guarantees that for us!

Position Statement

Social Studies represents the study of societies, cultural interactions, and human behaviors. Significant challenges such as competing agendas, standards and prescribed learning outcomes impact social studies. These challenges are often dictated by disconnected policy makers. However, I believe most significant issue facing our content may seem surprising and even old fashioned to some. I believe the loss of the family as the connected, supportive, loving norm and the provider of morals and ethics for children is the single most significant issue confronting Social Studies today. Families, exhausted, rarely read together leaving literacy vacuums that never get addressed. Families rarely even see each other, creating a generation of latch keys, video games and poor diets which all contribute to rising suicide rates and underdeveloped communication skills. Parents work two jobs because materialism has become the goal instead of raising our families, instilling our values, and promoting our politic. This has created generations of information rich but relationship bankrupt people. As your K-12 voice, I will work tirelessly providing tools, strategies, and aids utilizing our classrooms as the catalyst for reclaiming the home and reclaiming education. I want my mark on history to be, “He worked hard but always worked with his heart.”
Elementary Classroom Teacher

Vicki Gonterman

Being a third-generation educator inspires me to be the best teacher I can be. In my 38 year teaching career, I have taught elementary and secondary students as well as adults. I am a teacher who has a passion for learning with a Master’s in Social Studies Education, and I have completed all coursework for a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. In order to accomplish my goal of becoming a better social studies/global studies teacher, I have been an exchange teacher twice (West Germany and Japan); traveled on three university study abroad programs (Japan-1992, Mexico-2000, and China and Japan-2008), participated in numerous university summer seminars (University of Virginia, California State University-Sacramento, University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, Harvard University, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, and Arkansas State University), and written magazine articles, folk tales, and a biography of my school’s namesake, Judge Mifflin Wistar Gibbs. I have been honored with four national teaching awards including NCSS and am a Top 5 Finalist in the National Teachers Hall of Fame. I have served on the board of four state-side education organizations including as Vice-President of the Arkansas Council of the Social Studies and have enjoyed presenting multiple NCSS and ACSS workshops during my long career.

Position Statement

The educational issue that is close to my heart is promoting social studies education when literacy, mathematics, and science are receiving the elementary curriculum time, resources, and money in many school districts. Having had social studies in grades first through sixth in the small town where I grew up, I expected it to be important at every elementary school. Of course, social studies is important at my school as it is the theme of our school, but I have watched the time spent in social studies lessen over the years from daily classes to just two days a week! Social studies concepts should be identified in all reading content across the curriculum, but there should also be a social studies curriculum subject taught every day. Getting students prepared to become active, participating citizens and workers in a global marketplace is social studies. When lawmakers bemoan the fact that civic participation is dwindling and economic productivity is declining, they should look at increasing funding for the social studies. Of course literacy, mathematics, and science are important, but social studies education should rank right up there in importance. I believe that social studies education is the key to unlock students’ potential as productive citizens and future leaders.
Elementary Classroom Teacher

Rebecca Valbuena

Rebecca Valbuena, M.Ed., began teaching in South America and currently works in the Glendora Unified School District where she supports K-5 teachers in all curricular areas as a TOSA/Academic Coach. Rebecca also teaches Elementary Social Studies Methods at Cal State Dominguez Hills and continues to consult with districts aiming to implement inquiry-based Social Studies instruction. She has co-directed teacher institutes at the Autry National Center, UC Irvine, CSUDH and LACOE. A California History-Social Science Project fellow of UC Berkeley and CSU Dominguez Hills, Valbuena’s continued involvement provides continual professional growth. Rebecca co-directed a Multilingual Institute at CSUDH and taught for UCLA Extension assisting teachers with effective instructional strategies for English Learners. Valbuena is featured as a model teacher in history education textbooks and publications, as well as Common Core and C3 Framework videos for the California Department of Education, LACOE, and NCSS. She is currently a board member and Southern Area Vice President of the California Council for the Social Studies and immediately Past President of the Southern California Social Science Association. She is a past recipient of the California Council for the Social Studies Outstanding Elementary Teacher Award and a Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year.

Position Statement

From the vantage point of working in education for the past 30 years, I know the importance of quality History-Social Science instruction, especially in the foundational years of elementary school. Often times we see a deficit of Social Studies instruction in the elementary school day. But it is now, more than ever, that children need a quality, well rounded education that includes daily instruction in Social Studies. We know of the curriculum demands. We know of time constraints. We know at all levels, required content standards loom large. Teachers’ “plates” are too full and oftentimes Social Studies is just not as valued as other disciplines. But it’s the Social Studies that give all other content areas meaning. It truly is the “why” of education. What good are reading, writing, science, and math if students do not know their place in society, understand history, empathize, feel connected to humanity, and know how to be an engaged citizen? Social studies is not one more thing to add to the proverbial full plate. Social studies IS the plate, providing the platform for all other content areas. As we help students understand the interdependence of the world and view themselves as citizens who share the planet with 7 billion others, we teach beyond standards and beyond the next assessment. We teach them to ask questions, research thoroughly, think critically, and take action. History-Social Science provides the designated time to learn about the world from multiple perspectives, and develop conceptual understandings based on these perspectives. As we prepare our students for global citizenship, we must be vigilant about quality Social Studies instruction, materials, and daily inclusion for every student in every grade level. I will work with the NCSS Board to ensure our teachers have the resources, support, and a collective voice needed to steer the course of education and serve our children so they can reveal their multifaceted gifts, demonstrate purposeful knowledge of the Social Sciences, and remain active, engaged, civic-minded citizens.
Elementary Classroom Teacher

Heather Whyte

I currently live in Lexington, Kentucky but grew up moving across the country. This is one of the reasons I developed a love of history and travel. My desire to teach started when I was 7 years old. I am starting my 21st year of teaching elementary school. Most of my career has been in the intermediate level. I currently teach 5th grade social studies. I love to teach children about history, their role in their community, how to argue and disagree, and how see the opportunity they have to change the world.

I have my Master’s degree in elementary education and received National Board Certification in 2005 and recertified in 2015. I have worked at the local and state level with National Boards, and with KAAC (Kentucky Association for Academic Competition) as member, coach, and presenter. I have found working in professional organizations outside of my school district to be beneficial to my teaching practices, outlook on life, and opinions about how best to teach students. I have also represented my church as a voting lay delegate to our state annual conference.

Position Statement

I think the most significant issue currently confronting social studies education is the lack of attention it gets at every level. Schools feel the pressure to focus on reading, writing, and math, which, while important, pushes out subjects like social studies. The age-old question of “Why do we need to learn about the past?” continues to attach itself to the subject. And in today’s society we are more divided than ever. We need to not only teach the past so we know how to change our future for the better, but we need to teach students how to disagree, debate, argue, and concede a point all while compromising to meet the needs of our society.

We need to make sure that social studies education is taught in all our schools at all levels. I believe we need to add curriculum that addresses the need for us listen to each other, value conversation, and to accept differing opinions with respect. We need to change the course of the political atmosphere in our country. The only way to do that is if we teach students more than just the facts.