

2011

NCSS House of Delegates Resolutions

The House of Delegates (HOD) provides a forum for the general membership of NCSS, as represented by state councils, communities, and associated groups, to bring ideas, principles, beliefs, and actions regarding social studies education to the attention of the Board of Directors. Resolutions are the framework through which the NCSS membership at-large makes recommendations to the NCSS Board of Directors.

Any NCSS member can submit a resolution for consideration following the guidelines established in the House of Delegates manual. Resolutions are debated and voted on during the second session of the HOD meeting at the NCSS annual conference. Resolutions that are passed by the HOD are discussed and voted on by the Board of Directors following the NCSS annual conference at the Board's spring meeting. During this meeting, the Board discusses each of the resolutions to determine how it might help the Council reach its short and long-term strategic goals. Staff begins working on implementing the resolutions passed by the Board of Directors as soon as possible and feasible during the current and incoming fiscal years.

Resolution #11-01-01

NCSS to Recognize Annual Sustainability Education Week

Sponsors: NCSS Environmental and Sustainability Education Community and The U.S Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development

Co-Sponsors: Minnesota Council for the Social Studies

Rationale: Recognizing the NCSS Board of Directors has declared its support of a program that seeks to educate and prepare students to be active citizens by endorsing the U.S. Partnership for Sustainable Development's National Education for Sustainability K-12 Student Learning Standards of October 2010, and reaffirming NCSS recognition of the interconnectedness of the human and natural environment and the interrelated nature of events, problems and ideas. The promotion of civic competence requires that students have the ability to use their knowledge about their communities, nations, and world to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Bearing in mind, humanity and the planet today face unprecedented challenges such as climate change, food and water shortages, environmental degradation, conflict, and global health issues, which must be addressed through critical and creative thinking and innovative problem solving.

WHEREAS, a focus on education for sustainability by teachers across all content areas helps students learn skills, perspectives, and values that can guide and motivate them to seek sustainable livelihoods, fully participate in a democratic society, and live in a sustainable manner;

WHEREAS, sustainability resides at the intersection of a vibrant economy, an equitable society, and a healthy environment in the interest of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs;

WHEREAS, by applying the lessons of the past, the experiences and needs of the present, and their vision for the future, students can take an active role in acquiring the competencies, habits of mind, and knowledge necessary to participate as citizens in the creation of a sustainable future;

WHEREAS, colleges of education and social studies teachers play a vital role in creating a more just and sustainable world;

WHEREAS, school and district operations and services can contribute toward a learning model that is educating for sustainability;

WHEREAS, sustainability literacy is a prerequisite for participating in the emerging green economy and for engaging with critical local, regional, and global issues;

WHEREAS, young people will benefit academically and personally from expanded opportunities to engage in sustainability education

learning experiences;

WHEREAS, young people today have the motivation and ability to make important contributions to the creation of a sustainable world both now and for future generations and should be valued for the idealism, passion, energy, creativity, and commitment they bring to the challenges in their communities;

BE IT RESOLVED that the second week of November be devoted to the recognition of students, teachers, colleges of education, and the larger community working to create sustainable communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the second week of November be recognized by NCSS, as National Sustainability Education Week.

HOD Passed: 70 in favor, 63 against

BOD Passed

** NCSS BOD Liaison to the Environmental and Sustainability Education Community will be contacting that group to help put together a position statement.*

Resolution #11-01-02

NCSS to Create Clearinghouse of Social Studies Performance-Based Assessment Examples, Research, and Educational Policies to Inform Policy and Practice

Sponsors: California Council for the Social Studies, Southern California Social Science Association, NCSS Citizenship Community, Nisan Chavkin (CRFChicago), and Maria Gallo, (Center for Civic Education), Oregon CSS.

WHEREAS, NCSS defines social studies as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence”;

WHEREAS, NCSS believes that civic efficacy can best be achieved through powerful, rigorous social studies curriculum and effective teaching that allows students to connect what they are learning to their prior knowledge and to current issues, to think critically and creatively about what they are learning, and to apply that learning to authentic situations to address the challenges facing our diverse nation in an increasingly interdependent world;

WHEREAS, assessing students' knowledge and skills for civic competence in authentic ways is critical to informing effective instruction to meet the needs of all students to become effective citizens;

WHEREAS, research conducted by Bruce King, Fred Newmann, and Dana Carmichael at the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, and the Research Institute on Secondary Reform for Youth with Disabilities, 1990-2004, confirms that “authentic intellectual instruction and assessment” allows students to construct knowledge, engage in disciplined inquiry, and see value beyond school, [and] results in higher

achievement than students who experienced lower levels of authentic instruction and assessment, consistently for grades 3 through 12, across different subject areas, and for different students regardless of race, gender, disability status, or socioeconomic status;

WHEREAS, social studies performance-based assessment models in Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington have shown to be powerful tools in assessing students' knowledge and skills in authentic settings and provides teachers opportunities to engage in dialogue to understand what students need to know and be able to do and what teachers need to know and be able to do to prepare all students for effective citizenship in the 21st century;

BE IT RESOLVED that NCSS explore the possibility of developing and publishing a clearinghouse of resources that includes:

- examples of social studies performance-based assessment measures conducted at local and state levels that enable students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed for effective citizenship in authentic settings;
- research findings that support the use of performance-based assessment to inform instruction;
- existing educational policies that can inform advocacy efforts for the inclusion of social studies performance-based assessment at the local, state, and national level.

HOD Passed by Ayes

BOD Passed

*NCSS BOD Michelle Herczog will be contacting the Assessment Community to explore and lead work on this.

Resolution #11-02-01

Countering Budget Cuts in Social Studies Education K-12

Sponsors: The Association of Teachers of Social Studies/United Federation of Teachers – New York City, New York (ATSS/UFT-NYC), The New York State Council for the Social Studies (NYSCSS), and The Middle States Council for the Social Studies (MSCSS)

Co-Sponsors: Minnesota Council for the Social Studies; Peter's Colony Council for the Social Studies, California Council for the Social Studies

WHEREAS, state and local government education budget cuts often result in reduced time spent on social studies education instruction, and its status as an essential subject;

WHEREAS, social studies education encompasses essential skills and knowledge for developing effective citizenship, wise consumerism and economic literacy, global awareness, and critical thinking;

WHEREAS, electronic circulation continues to increase the amount of information and data students must process and understand;

WHEREAS, federal, state, and local governments have frequently reduced funding for social studies education;

WHEREAS, the National Common Core Standards emphasis on math and literacy continues to neglect important social studies concepts, skills, and understandings;

WHEREAS, social studies education is the key to a better communication between peoples and effective citizenship;

WHEREAS, NCSS is the national leader/advocate of social studies education;

BE IT RESOLVED that NCSS prepare and communicate materials and strategies for use by NCSS affiliated state and local councils:

- that advocate for maintaining or increasing funding social studies education;
- that advocate against any diminishment of the role of social studies in school curricula; and,
- that support increased parental and local community involvement in sustaining these efforts.

HOD Passed by Ayes

BOD Passed

* NCSS Vice President Steve Armstrong will be sharing this resolution with the Government Relations/Public Relations Committee to take on as part of their efforts. Their efforts could include the creation of an NCSS policy statement.

Resolution #11-02-02

Attracting, Supporting, and Advancing Early Career Social Studies Educators

Sponsor: Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies

Co-Sponsors: Arkansas Council for the Social Studies, California Council for the Social Studies, Minnesota Council for the Social Studies, Peter's Colony Council for the Social Studies

WHEREAS, the mission of NCSS is to provide leadership, service, and support for all social studies educators;

WHEREAS, NCSS promotes the ideal of social studies educators teaching students the content knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values necessary for fulfilling the duties of citizenship in a participatory democracy;

WHEREAS, NCSS needs to recognize the challenges of its changing membership base; i.e., foster growth in pre-service and early career educators and recognize the retiring demographic of the "baby boom generation";

BE IT RESOLVED that NCSS, over the next five years, should make more visible its services and resources specifically targeting the varied needs of early career educators through every means available including print publications, meetings, online/digital, and other emerging technologies;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NCSS should pay particular attention to assisting early career educators as they build their theoretical frameworks, broaden their understandings of literacy, and teaching strategies;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NCSS should aid in building collegial relationships within the NCSS state, local, college communities, and affiliated groups.

HOD Passed by Ayes

BOD Passed

*NCSS BOD Melissa Collum said she will share this resolution with the Pre-service Teacher Community. The community's efforts may include the creation of a position statement.

Courtesy resolutions were also passed in recognition of the service to the social studies community of NCSS President Sue Blanchette and Local Arrangements Committee Co-chairs Karen Muir of the Maryland Council for the Social Studies as well as Craig Blackman and Shannon Pugh of the Virginia Council for the Social Studies.

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