



HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

"Most of us know as much of history as a pig does of lipsticks"

Charles F. Lummis, in the *Los Angeles Times* (1926)

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Improved CST Scores at Grades 8 and 10

History teachers and students across San Diego should be proud to learn that History/Social Studies CST scores improved dramatically in grades eight and ten in 2008. The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced proficient on the eighth grade cumulative history/social science test increased from 33 percent in 2007 to 37 percent in 2008. The four percent gain means that a higher percentage of SDUSD students scored at this level than students did statewide. Some individual schools had particularly impressive gains. For example, Pacific Beach Middle School gained a 15 percent increase in percent of proficient or advanced students. Many high schools saw an increase in CST scores as well. There was a five percent increase in the number of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Modern World History CST. This increase represents a significant rebound after a one percent fall in 2007.

Teachers Gather to Prepare for the Year

Over two hundred history/social studies teachers have already participated in workshops offered by the History/Social Studies Department this school year. For many, the year began at the August 21 & 22 Elementary Social Studies training, during which teacher-leaders learned about academic literacy in history/social studies from the lead author of the Harcourt *Reflections* series, Dr. Priscilla Porter. These teachers will meet throughout the year to continue their work. On August 25 & 26 middle and high school teachers met to learn about the textbook programs used at their respective grade levels. Then, on August 28 over fifty educators from throughout the district met at Serra High School to participate in a talk given by Daniel Walker Howe, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*. (See adjacent column for more details).

Professional Learning Communities in History

Last year a group of teacher leaders from several district high schools met throughout the year in a professional learning community to discuss and seek solutions on issues related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development. This year this leadership opportunity is being extended to the elementary and middle school levels. Elementary teacher-leaders committee began their work in August (see above); however, there is still space available on the middle and high school committees. If you are interested, contact your school's vice principal and history/social studies department chair to see if your school already has a representative. mhayes@sandi.net

Teacher-Scholars Participate in Two Key Workshops

Many SDUSD teacher-scholars have continued the practice of enhancing content knowledge while improving their classroom instruction. On August 28, our colleagues who attended a book talk given by the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Daniel Walker Howe learned about how a technology revolution led by the advent of the telegraph helped pave the way for the transformation of the United States into an industrial leader. During his presentation, Dr. Howe modeled the use of photographs and art work to engage students in the study of history. Prior to his address to teachers, Howe conducted a workshop on the historian's craft with a group of history students representing schools from throughout the district. (Go to our Department's website to read a review of Howe's book).

On September 8, over 70 teachers and 15 students attended a panel discussion and curriculum fair on the 2008 Presidential Election. This event featured San Diego High's Stan Murphy, Mesa College professor Carl Luna, and presidential historian/NY Times best-selling author, Robert Dallek. The three panel members provided expert views and analysis of the issues and candidates as they fielded questions posed by Clairemont High teacher Jim Fletcher and members of the audience. Following the discussion, teachers shared ideas for teaching about the election.

Up Coming Events

Register on-line for the events below at <http://registration.sandi.net>
Teachers will be paid at workshop rate for all after school events.

- **Middle School History Textbook Technology Training:** Kimberly Plumber, curriculum consultant for Holt, will be conducting this hands-on workshop at the educational technology classrooms (IMC) on September 22 from 4:30-6:30. For questions, contact Matt Hayes at mahayes@sandi.net
- **Fourth and Fifth Grade Workshops:** October 1 and 8, respectively, at the Old Town Program Campus from 4:30-6:30. For questions, contact Lucy Laudate at llaudate@sandi.net
- **Personal Financial Literacy Curriculum Training at Midway:** Teachers of grade 12 Economics courses will receive training on the district-provided Personal Financial Literacy on October 14 from 8:00am-3:00pm onboard the *USS Midway*. Questions: contact Kirk Ankeney at kankeney@sandi.net
- **Historical Thinking and H/SS Literacy Strategies Featuring Sam Wineburg and Bill McBride:** October 28, 8:00-3:00 at Marina Village. Middle and high school level teachers of history/social studies will participate in a day-long workshop on historical thinking, primary sources, and history/social studies literacy strategies. For questions: contact Matt Hayes at mhayes@sandi.net

Mission Statement

To provide the curriculum, tools, resources, and professional development for history-social science teachers and students to succeed in the classroom.