



America 250 | CT Commission
Education Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 25, 2024
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Virtual via Zoom

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members

Steve Armstrong (Chair)
Bilal Sekou (Co-Chair)
Allison Rau
Danielle Johnson
Deborah Schander
Kathy Hermes
Abby Esposito
Elizabeth Devine
Tracey Wilson
Ruth Torres
Matt Farley
Sally Whipple
Jenny Heikkila Diaz (JHD)
Tony Roy
Jason Mancini

CTH Staff

Mike Kemezis
Rachel Gonzalez

The meeting began at 3:32 p.m.

1. Welcome & Updates
 - a. Rachel Gonzalez shared updates to the ct250.org website - events page, local committee page are now available. Subcommittee members asked to share any events or contacts that they are aware of. Also shared link to SignUp genius of commission festival appearances for the summer; subcommittee members were invited to register and attend festivals to share information on the commission with the public. Final update - invited subcommittee members to follow commission on social media.
 - b. Steve Armstrong asked subcommittee members to introduce themselves and share a fact - all subcommittee members did so.
2. Review of [Social Studies Standards](#)
 - a. S. Armstrong introduced new Connecticut social studies standards and asked if Abby Esposito and Danielle Johnson's schools have been working on adapting curriculum to the new standards; both teachers confirmed that they have. S.

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Armstrong explained that the subcommittee will be working to align resources to the new standards, so members will need to become familiar with them, and asked that everyone take a few minutes to review Grades 5 & 8. R. Gonzalez added that, as subcommittee members are reviewing the standards, they should consider the best way for a resources page to be structured - should resources be aligned with Course Questions, Course Topics, Inquiry Standards, or Content Standards. J. Mancini added that members should also consider how this may intersect with the Red, White, and Blue Schools initiative. S. Armstrong asked subcommittee members to turn off their cameras to review & return when finished.

- b. At minute 41 in video, R. Gonzalez started a conversation about standards. Subcommittee members began to offer feedback and suggestions. D. Johnson noted that tying resources explicitly to all related content standards, particularly at the elementary level, would enable teachers to more effectively use the resources.
- c. S. Armstrong inquired whether standards allow for teachers to bring in different voices. D. Johnson and T. Wilson provided feedback. B. Sekou inquired about the best way to align resources to CCSS. R. Gonzalez pulled up current mockup of resources page and asked to confirm whether it was accurate to say that the best way to organize content on this page was by content standard. S. Armstrong confirmed that most districts are organizing this way. T. Wilson noted that it may be best to organize in a different way for middle/high school teachers - for example, by "big idea" instead of by individual content standards, as those teachers are typically content experts. A. Esposito agreed, and added that middle/high school teachers could also benefit from learning new content and being provided with new content resources. S. Armstrong noted that these comments were what the standards hoped to address. A. Esposito agreed that the new document does that, and added that content development PD will be crucial to ensure that teachers are able to successfully implement new learning. The question of whether the subcommittee would be able to provide professional development was raised. R. Gonzalez noted that there is not currently money in the budget to provide large-scale PD, so the goal is to make free resources available to teachers. S. Armstrong asked if a single-day PD was possible; R. Gonzalez replied that it may be possible in conjunction with the planned conference in the spring. E. Devine asked if it was possible to pursue grant opportunities; S. Armstrong noted that CT Humanities has grant lines and 250 projects are a priority. S. Whipple noted that museums can and should use the standards as a blueprint for programming to assist.
- d. B. Sekou noted that, at this stage, the subcommittee should be focusing on what we can do and take action on; S. Armstrong concurred. R. Gonzalez described 2 volunteer roles for the month of July:
 - i. Role 1: Ensure information for [current resources](#) is complete
 - ii. Role 2: Assign social studies standards to resourcesS. Armstrong noted that he and T. Roy led the writing of the standards, so could easily assist in tying resources/standards to America 250. T. Roy agreed, and added that JHD recently wrapped up a professional development at the New Haven Museum where they tied the new standards to items in the Museum's

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collection, so this could be done as well. A conversation on this topic continued, including M. Kemezis, S. Whipple, B. Sekou, and A. Rau.

3. Action Plan

- a. R. Gonzalez briefly outlined the Action Plan and noted that the subcommittee will be called on in the coming months to aid with sharing resources with various groups, then shared a survey that is intended to be sent to museums across the state to request information on field trips related to America 250. Link was not working properly; will be sent to subcommittee members in recap for feedback.
- b. S. Armstrong noted that he and B. Sekou should provide feedback on the Action Plan and bring it to the subcommittee for review at a future meeting.
- c. Conversation about the new social studies standards continued until the meeting was adjourned by S. Armstrong.

The meeting ended at 5:02

Next Meeting
July 30, 2024