

SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAMS OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

DESCRIPTION AND CRITERIA

Introduction

National Council for the Social Studies will identify exemplary social studies programs throughout the United States each year. A directory of programs will be published and two will be singled out for national awards. This effort will be designated *Social Studies Programs of Excellence*.

Purpose

To identify and provide recognition for outstanding social studies programs currently being implemented in the United States.

To encourage the growth and development of innovative and effective programs in the social studies.

Definition

An exemplary program is a currently implemented social studies program of outstanding quality based on a curriculum framework consistent with the NCSS *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* or the revised *NCSS Standards for the Preparation of Social Studies Teachers*. NCSS Social Studies Programs of Excellence will recognize complete social studies programs, not single courses or parts of programs, which encourage articulation, balance of content, a variety of teaching strategies, and the involvement of teachers, students, and the community.

Please complete the following form. PLEASE NOTE: All descriptive information must be on single-sided, double-spaced, typewritten pages on 8" X 11" paper

I. Categories of entry

Indicate one of the following categories:

1. ___ District Social Studies Program: district-wide at the elementary school, middle school/junior high, senior high, or K–12 levels
2. ___ Elementary School Social Studies Program: K–6; may be a segment of an elementary program, e.g., primary K–3, intermediate 3–6.
3. ___ Middle School/Junior High School Social Studies Program: may be 5-7, 6–9, 6–8, etc.
4. ___ Senior High School Social Studies Program: may be 9–12, 10–12, etc.
5. ___ Social Studies Teacher Education Program: may be district staff development or preservice training at college/university level.
6. ___ Non-commercial organizations, agencies, or institutions in ongoing association with category #1-5 above (this includes state or local NCSS associations).

II. Criteria

Describe how the program meets these criteria:

1. The Teacher – (maximum one page)

An exemplary social studies program should involve social studies *teachers* who:

- A. Evidence both *scholarship* and *expertise* in the curriculum they teach.
- B. Evidence *participation* in all aspects of the development of this curriculum, including setting goals and objectives as well as program development, implementation, evaluation, and revision.
- C. Apply *sound instructional theory* and *practice* in the implementation of the program.

2. The Curriculum – (maximum three pages)

An exemplary social studies program should include a social studies *curriculum* that:

- A. Is *guided by* thoughtfully selected as well as clearly stated and defined *goals and objectives*.
- B. Is based on *sound scholarship* from the content areas relative to the social studies.
- C. *Sets high expectations* for students and *uses a variety of systematic and valid measures to evaluate* student performance.
- D. *Relates appropriately* to the *age, maturity, interests, and needs* of the students for whom it is designed.
- E. *Incorporates effective instructional strategies and techniques* that engage students directly and actively in the learning process both in and out of the classroom.
- F. *Provides valid evidence* that the outcome of the program is consistent with the stated goals and objectives.
- G. Is consistent with the ten thematic strands identified by *NCSS Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*.

3. The Students – (maximum one page)

An exemplary social studies program should engage social studies *students* in:

- A. The *critical examination* of significant content, issues, and events from a variety of perspectives.
- B. Focused systematic *observations*, comprehensive *decision making*, and active *participation* in their school, community, and world.
- C. *Understanding democratic principles* and *participation in the democratic process*.

III. What makes this program innovative and unique? -- (maximum one page)