

October, 2009

# Social Studies Updates



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Keeping Maine educators  
informed about current issues  
from the Maine Dept. of Education.

## **2010 Supreme Court Summer Institute for Teachers**

**June 17–22, 2010 - Washington, DC**

Co-sponsored by Street Law, Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society

Street Law, Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society will sponsor the annual Supreme Court Summer Institute, June 17-22, 2010. The institute is open to secondary level social studies teachers & supervisors, who will spend five stimulating days on Capitol Hill and inside the Supreme Court learning about the Court, its past and current cases, and how to teach about them from top Supreme Court litigators & educators. We will also be in the Court to hear the Justices announce the final decisions of the term and attend a private reception at the Court.

The Supreme Court Summer Institute provides teachers with a valuable opportunity to expand their knowledge and learn new methods for teaching about the Supreme Court of the United States.

- Spend six days with high-caliber instructors and expert resource people who lead their respective fields.
- Visit the Court to hear decisions and attend a private reception
- Engage in a thorough study of nine recent Supreme Court cases.
- Participate in sessions on the certiorari process, judicial nominations, interest groups, the media, online resources, and judicial philosophies.

Find event details and application information online [www.streetlaw.org/scsi\\_apply](http://www.streetlaw.org/scsi_apply). Application and letter of recommendation deadline: March 15, 2010.

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## **Local Authors Receive National Award**

**2009 Moonbeam Children's Book Awards Finalist Results Celebrating Youthful Curiosity, Discovery and Learning Winner: Multicultural Picture Book - Gold Award:**

*Remember Me: Tomah Joseph's Gift to Franklin Roosevelt*, by Donald Soctomah and Jean Flahive; illustrated by Mary Beth Owens (Tilbury House, Publishers)

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Moonbeam Awards, Finalist Judging is complete. The Moonbeam Awards ceremony was held on October 10, 2009 as part of the West Virginia Book Festival in Charleston, WV.

The Moonbeam Children's Book Awards are intended to bring increased recognition to exemplary children's books and their creators, and to support childhood literacy and life-long reading.

Creating books that inspire our children to read, to learn, and to dream is an extremely important task, and these awards were conceived to reward those efforts.

We congratulate this year's award winners and applaud the role these books play in enriching children's

lives, says Moonbeam Awards founder Jerrold Jenkins, father of four children ranging in ages 6 to 16.

"Today's world is a confusing place to grow up, and children's book authors and publishers have risen to the occasion, creating books that not only celebrate the joys of childhood, but also help families deal with its challenges. We created Moonbeam to reward the best of these books and bring them to the attention of parents, booksellers, librarians and to the kids themselves."

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## **Common Core State Standards**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a significant opportunity for states to collectively develop and adopt a core set of academic standards in mathematics and English language arts. The initiative is being jointly led by the National Governors' Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in partnership with Achieve, ACT, and the College Board. It builds directly on recent efforts by leading organizations and states that have focused on developing college- and career-ready standards and ensures these standards

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**Common Core State Standards** (continued from page 2)

are evidence- and research-based and internationally benchmarked to top-performing countries.

The concept of common standards has been discussed for quite some time. Because education is a matter of the states, CCSSO and NGA have taken the lead on developing a set of Common Core State Standards, sometimes referred to as the “common core.” Notice that they are not called national standards as they can only be approved and implemented by each state but not by any national agency.

The governors and chiefs were provided a first draft of the mathematics and English language arts proposed standards for college and career readiness document in July. They had a brief time to review and respond. Those comments were then considered as the original document was revised. This second draft, now available for public review, reflects the consideration given to the previous round of comments.

The Common Core Standards can be found at <http://www.corestandards.org/>. As you evaluate the document in its entirety, think about whether it represents college and career readiness, whether it is appropriate for Maine, and what are the consequences of adoption and implementation, both intended and unintended.

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*For social studies teachers who teach multiple content areas, please consider the following opportunity.*

**Standards, Assessment, and Instruction:  
Connecting the Dots  
Instructional Planning for the 2009/2010  
School Year**

**November 12 - Portland, ME  
November 13 - Brewer/Bangor, ME**

The Maine Department of Education announces the first in a series of workshops to help Maine educators understand accountability standards and their relation to the Maine *Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction*, and plan classroom instruction to support student learning. The science sessions will begin with an examination of the MEA data and incorporate

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**Two Million Minutes  
The Documentary**

(Run time: 54 minutes)

Regardless of nationality, as soon as a student completes the 8th grade, the clock starts ticking. From that very moment the child has approximately...

Two Million Minutes until high school graduation...  
Two Million Minutes to build their intellectual foundation...  
Two Million Minutes to prepare for college and ultimately career...  
Two Million Minutes to go from a teenager to an adult.

How a student spends their Two Million Minutes - in class, at home studying, playing sports, working, sleeping, socializing or just goofing off -- will affect their economic prospects for the rest of their lives.

How do most American high school students spend this time? What about students in the rest of the world? How do family, friends and society influence a student's choices for time allocation? What implications do their choices have on their future and on a country's economic future?

This film takes a deeper look at how the three superpowers of the 21st Century - China, India and the United States - are preparing their students for the future. As we follow two students - a boy and a girl - from each of these countries, we compose a global snapshot of education, from the viewpoint of kids preparing for their future.

Our goal is to tell the broader story of the universal importance of education today, and address what many are calling a crisis for U.S. schools regarding chronically low scores in math and science indicators.

In many ways the six kids simultaneously fit and break national stereotypes.

Take Rohit in Bangalore. He is under intense pressure from his folks to get into a top engineering university but blows off steam singing with his “boy band” and dreams of sending demos out to record companies. In Shanghai we meet math whiz Xiaoyuan, who, while awaiting word from Yale to see if she gained early acceptance, tries out as a violinist for the top music conservatory in Shanghai.

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**Two Million Minutes** (continued from page 3)

In Indianapolis we go to school with Neil. The senior class president and former star quarterback who gave up football to focus more on his studies. He has cruised through school, but now, with a full academic scholarship to Purdue University, wonders if he is up to the college challenge. The other students profiled in the documentary -Ruizhang, Brittany and Apoorva - face many of these universal adolescent pressures as well.

To put these narratives in context we have assembled an array of interviews with specialists like former U.S. Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, Congressman Bart Gordon, chair of the House Committee on Science, Harvard economist Richard Freeman as well as top Indian CEOs, and leading scientists in America.

Statistics for American high school students give rise to concern for our student's education in math and science. Less than 40 percent of U.S. students take a science course more rigorous than general biology, and a mere 18 percent take advanced classes in physics, chemistry or biology. Only 45 percent of U.S. students take math coursework beyond two years of algebra and one year of geometry. And 50 percent of all college freshmen require remedial coursework.

Meanwhile, both India and China have made dramatic leaps in educating their middle classes - each comparable in size to the entire U.S. population. Compared to the U.S., China now produces eight times more scientists and engineers, while India puts out up to three times as many as the U.S. Additionally, given the affordability of their wages, China and India are now preferred destinations for increasing numbers of multinational high-tech corporations.

Just as the Soviets' launch of a tiny satellite ignited a space race and impelled America to improve its science education, many experts feel the United States has reached its next "Sputnik moment." The goal of this film is to help answer the question: Are we doing enough with the time we have to ensure the best future for all?

<http://www.2mminutes.com/>

**Conncting the Dots** (continued from page 3)

instructional strategies. The ELA and mathematics sessions will begin with a focus on instruction related to standards and anticipate use of NECAP data when it is available.

**November 12 - Portland**

Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland

ELA: 8:30 – 3:00

Math: Middle Level 8:30 – 11:30

Elementary: 12:30 – 3:30

Science: Middle Level 8:30 – 11:30

Elementary: 12:30 – 3:30

**November 13 - Brewer/Bangor**

Jeff's Catering, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer

ELA: 8:30 – 3:00

Math: Middle Level 8:30 – 11:30

Elementary: 12:30 – 3:30

Spectacular Event Center, 395 Griffin Road, Bangor

Science: Middle Level 8:30 – 11:30

Elementary: 12:30 – 3:30

To register, go to the following link by November 6:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zfQ2ZVKxKaTGZ\\_2fmozQrheQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zfQ2ZVKxKaTGZ_2fmozQrheQ_3d_3d)

For more information on session content contact:

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Math and science are three hours each with middle grades (6-8) convening in the morning from 8:30 to 11:30 and elementary grades (3-5) convening in the afternoon from 12:30 to 3:30. English language arts will be full day sessions for all grades 3-8, with the morning session focused on reading from 8:30 to 11:30 and the afternoon session focused on writing from 12:15 to 3:00. Lunch will be provided for ELA participants. Light refreshments will be provided for science and mathematics participants.

**Contact Jana Boody** - Social Studies Specialist: [jana.boody@maine.gov](mailto:jana.boody@maine.gov) / [www.maine.gov/lres/ss](http://www.maine.gov/lres/ss)