

NEWS RELEASE



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\$5 Million State Grant to Help Transform K-12 History Education

- ***California Historical Society to lead statewide effort with California History-Social Science Project***
- ***Initiative will digitize historic archives and create free, innovative online resources to foster better understanding of California's history, improve student literacy and promote civic learning and engagement***

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Efforts to transform K-12 history education in California received a major boost today with Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco) announcing a \$5 million state grant to the California Historical Society (CHS). CHS will work with the California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP) at UC Davis to establish and implement *Teaching California*: an innovative, free, online resource of instructional materials to support the State's new History-Social Science Framework.

The objective of the program is to ensure California's large historical and archival resources, starting with those held at CHS, are readily accessible to all K-12 students to foster better understanding of the state's history, improve student literacy, and promote civic learning and engagement. The initiative creates a sustainable model for instructional material development in history-social science as well as other content areas.

"The tools of our education system must adapt to the tech we use every day. This \$5 million investment by the state will provide students and their teachers with the resources they need to learn about – and from – the people, places, and events that have shaped California for thousands of years," said Assemblymember Ting, who spearheaded funding for the new initiative. "*Teaching California* will adopt the model of today's multimedia age to innovative learning."

Through *Teaching California*, CHS and CHSSP will develop dynamic, expansive online curriculum composed of primary and secondary source materials, drawing upon CHS's vast archival resources and those of the libraries across the state and nation. These resources will be carefully curated and tailored to provide K-12 teachers and students with online resources they need to analyze and understand the past. Critically, these materials will also embody an interpretation of history that places California at the center of the study of the past by offering local and state examples of national and worldwide histories, highlighting the rich, varied, and impactful contributions of Californians.

"The California Historical Society is honored to help lead this program and work together with educators throughout the State to help implement California's new History-Social Science Framework," said Dr. Anthea Hartig, Executive Director of CHS. "*Teaching California* helps ensure that California teachers and students will have access to the rich, complex history that has made our state what it is today."

Teaching California, helps implement California's new History-Social Science Framework, which was adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) in July 2016. The CHSSP served as the primary writer of the new Framework, which outlines an instructional approach that promotes student-centered inquiry and encourages students to develop clear and persuasive arguments based on their own interpretations of the past, using relevant evidence. The Framework also details how teachers can teach students history-social science, while at the same time developing their proficiency in English, as outlined in the Common Core and English Language Development Standards.

“At the heart of *Teaching California* is a one of a kind partnership between a state historical society and a statewide network of history educators, working together to help California students understand and appreciate the contributions of Californians to our national history and our global past.” said Nancy McTygue, Executive Director of the California History-Social Science Project.

Teaching California will offer schools, teachers, and students a free and classroom-ready collection of resources designed to engage children in exciting and inspiring investigations of the past. At the same time, the collection will offer teachers a research-based approach to improve student reading, writing, and critical thinking.

Importantly, leaders from San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), along with several educators and history advocates from across the state participated in the announcement at the California Historical Society’s headquarters. With its exhibition galleries and free research library as a backdrop to illustrate resources that will be available through the new initiative, they had an opportunity to see first-hand rare artifacts and documents from the CHS archives that will be digitized as part of the program.

Dr. Brent Stephens, Chief Academic Officer, SFUSD, spoke to the significance of the grant, saying, “SFUSD’s path-breaking work in teaching with primary source materials has proved to increase student engagement and learning. We look forward to working together to create *Teaching California* and enhance history education here and around the State.”

Kate Bowen, who leads teacher training programs for the CHSSP, said the new materials will give her fifth graders at Patwin Elementary School in Davis a deeper understanding of history, adding, “the partnership between the CHS and CHSSP will give educators around California a golden opportunity to engage students in history. The carefully selected online sources will be ideal for teachers and students.”

The \$5 million grant was approved as part of the FY 2017/2018 fiscal budget (Assembly Bill 99, Section 82), which was introduced by Assemblymember Ting, chair of the Assembly Budget Committee. San Francisco Unified School District will contract with CHS to administer the grant in partnership with CHSSP to develop the resources for California schools. CHS and CHSSP will work with the State Department of Education to make the online resources available and accessible to all teachers statewide.

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About the California Historical Society: Founded in 1871, the California Historical Society (CHS) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to inspire and empower people to make California's richly diverse past a meaningful part of their contemporary lives—in order to create a more informed and just future. CHS provides access to residents of the State of California to its vast collection, research library, exhibitions, publications, and over fifty educational programs annually representing a wide range of California communities, perspectives and experiences. Governor Jerry Brown and the Legislature declared CHS the State's official historical society in 1979. In 2015, the CHS established the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Educational Fund to both honor Mrs. Hearst's remarkable legacy and to work to change the very face of K-12 history education in California. Also that year, CHS laid the foundations for its Digital Library, which launched in the autumn of 2016, with the support of the Hearst Foundations, the Henry M. Newhall Foundation, the Stephen M. Silberstein Foundation, and David Rumsey. In partnership with the City and County of San Francisco and with the support of the State, CHS is now undertaking a comprehensive feasibility analysis to develop a sustainable rehabilitation project of the Old U.S. Mint (1874) as its new headquarters and as vibrant history and cultural center. For more information, please visit www.californiahistoricalsociety.org.

About the California History-Social Science Project: The California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP), a network of scholars and teachers dedicated to improving student literacy and learning in history-social science, served as the primary writers of the new Framework. Each year, the CHSSP – headquartered at UC Davis – serves more than 4,000 teachers in over 150 different professional learning programs at local schools and universities. The CHSSP has also developed a wide variety of free instructional materials, including its History Blueprint series, which featured an instructional approach that integrated the Common Core and History-Social Science Standards. The CHSSP is part of the California Subject Matter Projects, administered by UC Office of the President. For more information, please visit <http://chssp.ucdavis.edu/about-us>