

Dear Colleagues,

Do you want to be informed, up to date on the latest issues in social studies at all levels? Want to know how your colleagues around the state are implementing the Georgia Standards of Excellence through inquiry? If so, join us in Athens, October 12 – 13 for the GCSS annual conference at the Classic Center. Last year was tremendous, over 800 social studies teachers attended and experienced great content and strategies from sessions, keynote speakers that informed pedagogy and content including knowledge of future DOE assessment plans, an awards luncheon, and inspiration. Together, at each GCSS conference, we help each other teach as we learn from our colleagues. This year promises to be even better; there will be over 125 sessions on topics to appeal to all subjects and grade levels from kindergarten through post-secondary. Send someone from your area to represent and report back on the details or bring your whole social studies faculty.

Thursday features many excellent sessions, the awards luncheon, sessions on the new Georgia Standards of Excellence, and closes with the first keynote session. Mr. John Stokes, an original plaintiff of *Brown v. Board of Education*; Dr. Herman Viola, curator emeritus of the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History; and Dr. Lois Wolfe, authors of *Students on Strike: Jim Crow, Civil Rights, Brown and Me* will speak. Friday, the Mary Hepburn Lecture Series keynote features Professor Emerita, Catherine Cornbleth, University of Buffalo whose recent work applies critical theory to teacher education. In her words, "I've retired from UB," she says, "not from academic work or from life." Both keynotes promise to be engaging and thought provoking. Over thirty exhibitors will attend and the exhibit hall will be in the atrium as will the poster sessions.

Why should you attend? Why do I attend year after year? Because without fail, I gain new strategies, methods and ideas for teaching. I receive complimentary resources from exhibitors. I see old friends and make new ones. I am reminded of why I entered teaching when I hear the comments of our award recipients. This re-energizes me and I continue to strive to improve. If these reasons are not enough, consider that we are beginning a new period of social studies in Georgia. Together, we are seeking excellence in ourselves and our profession. Be a part of it as we roll out the new GSE!