



Joel I. Klein, Chancellor



***Experiences in  
American  
History: Setting  
the Stage for  
Grades K-2  
Teaching  
American History  
Grant***

***Office of  
Curriculum,  
Standards and  
Academic  
Engagement***

***Experiences in American  
History: Setting the Stage for  
Grades K-2, Year Three***

The New York City Department of Education Office of Social Studies is beginning Year Two of its federal Teaching American History (TAH) grant for grades K-2. In 2008-09 and 2009-10 30 schools participated in workshops led by experts in social studies and child development and received visits from the experts back in their classrooms. In 2009-10, an additional 30 schools will have the opportunity to start our third cohort.

We believe that the teaching of social studies is important at every age and recognize that teaching social studies in the primary grades brings us unique opportunities and challenges. Teaching young children about their world is an exciting and essential undertaking and through this grant we will provide students and teachers with high-quality support and experiences that meet the following NCSS recommendations for a quality social studies curriculum:

- **Plan for consistency to ensure cumulative and systematic study of people and their interactions**
- **Maintain depth across content and themes**
- **Make it relevant and interesting for students**
- **Honor balance and developmental appropriateness**

NCSS, 1989

*Experiences in American History: Setting the Stage for Grades K-2* addresses the challenge of providing early childhood teachers with engaging and age appropriate strategies for presenting American History to young learners.

The NYCDOE partners in this innovative initiative are:

- ⇒ Bank Street College of Education, whose instructional expertise assists us in providing support to teachers around pedagogy and best practice instruction for early childhood,
- ⇒ The New-York Historical Society, which has identified age appropriate documents and objects, provides training in strategies for introducing children to examining primary sources, and collaborates in identifying and providing classroom materials for each of the three themes, and
- ⇒ The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, which provides historians and scholars who give teachers insight on the three themes we identified as they connect to key events and individuals in American history.

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**Three essential themes that we believe have relevance and are age-appropriate:**

- American Symbols
- American Presidents
- American Traditions

These three themes will be explored in a series of nine full-day workshops; three for each of the participating grades. Workshops will include sessions facilitated by the Gilder Lehrman historian and N-YHS museum educators, where teachers will explore the themes through developmentally appropriate historical content, documents and artifacts. Bank Street specialist teachers will engage teachers in age-appropriate instructional strategies to integrate content and pedagogy.

Participating schools receive on-site follow-up visits by Bank Street and N-YHS. We are also planning a Summer Institute (Summer 2011) to focus on opportunities for teachers to discuss content and pedagogy across the K-2 grades. A cohort of teachers will be identified for further training as lead teachers. Strategies will include modeling, demonstration lessons, reflective activities, and one-on-one coaching. As part of their leadership training, these teachers will assist with the development of primary units of study in social studies for citywide distribution.

Participating schools must commit to sending a team of three teachers – one from each grade— to each of three workshops for that specific grade. Schools must also identify a point person, preferably one of the teachers on the team, to work with the DOE and grant partners to coordinate on-site support. **Priority will be given to SINI schools.**

#### **Grant Contact Information**

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US Department of Education TAH Webpage <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/index.html>

For a copy of the **Grant Application**, e-mail Norah Lovett at [Nlovett@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:Nlovett@schools.nyc.gov). The application deadline is May 14, 2010.

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