

Dear Parents,

This is a note about our Social Studies Fair/Open House scheduled for Friday, January 27th from 6:00 to 8:00.

Social Studies Fair

Who will participate?

All students in grades 5 through 8 will prepare an entry for the Social Studies Fair. The project will be graded by your child's social studies teacher and will count for 10 grades towards each student's social studies grade.

The first step to take is to sit down with your child to decide on the type of project. Types of projects to choose from as well as details regarding them are listed elsewhere in this note. You will also find an entry form. Once you and your child have decided on a project, please fill out the entry form and return it to **Mr. Stubalt** by **Wednesday, November 23rd**. If an entry slip is turned in late, one point for each day late will be deducted from the total score the project receives from the judges. Students may change their project after they turn in an entry form, but must inform Mr. Stubalt of this.

The students must bring their Social Studies Fair projects to their classrooms on **Monday, January 23rd**. They need to bring them in before the Fair so that the judges have time to score them. The Social Studies Fair/Open House is Friday, January 27th from 6:00 to 8:00. All are invited to come view the projects at that time.

What knowledge and skills do we want the students to demonstrate?

Social Studies is a term that covers several topics. History includes the political, military, or social history of a country. Geography covers the types of landforms, vegetation, and climates found in a country or continent.

The students should develop a deeper understanding of a social studies subject as they work on their projects. When all of the projects are displayed on January 22nd, many others will benefit from the work each student has done.

As Christians we acknowledge that the Almighty Lord created the heavens and earth. We also believe that He is in control of our lives. He establishes governments and removes them. Sin has affected God's perfect creation, but His handiwork is still very evident. As the students develop their projects, we hope they will realize the wisdom and power of the Lord as He directs the events of this world.

The theory of evolution is sometimes introduced with certain topics that fall under social studies. Please make sure that no part of your child's presentation proposes the idea of evolution.

What types of projects are available to the students?

Research This is a written report on a social studies topic. Drawings, graphs, or other data may be included. The report may be handwritten or typed. **A list of sources must be included at the end of the report.** The source information should include title, publisher, copyright, and page numbers used. For a research project a student must use at least three sources for written material and they must be either books, magazines, or an encyclopedia. What about the Internet? The Internet may certainly be used to gather written information and/or pictures but should not be counted as one of the three sources needed. Too much information on the Internet is false or

misleading. There is no limit on the length of the report, however the subject should be adequately covered.

It is **extremely important** the report is written in a student's own words. I cannot stress this enough. Do not let your child simply copy pages from a book or retype something word for word. **The vocabulary and writing of the report should correspond to the grade level of the student.**

A major factor in a student's final score will be **evidence of research**. We will need more than just the final report. One example of evidence of research is any index cards a student used to jot down information from sources. Many students use 3" x 5" or 4" x 6" index cards. As they read from books or magazines, they transfer the information onto the index cards in **their own words**. They should not just copy whole sentences or phrases directly from the source. For example, a student finds this sentence in a source - "The logistic effort involved in moving, feeding and maintaining an army of no less than 10,000 men (and possibly many more) and its train over roughly 300 miles was formidable." The student should change this sentence into his or her own words when writing it on the index cards and it may then appear as this - "Armies back then had around 10,000 men. They would need to carry a lot of extra food and clothing with them. This took a lot of planning and made the job of moving an army from one place to another very hard."

If a student uses index cards for taking notes, he or she should be sure to write down the title of the source at the top of the page as well as the page numbers used. This will prevent major headaches later on when putting together the list of sources (bibliography). For example, a student is doing a research paper on the battle of Antietam.. She has three books and two magazines for sources. One of the books is titled Landscape Turned Red. Any index cards containing information from that source should have Landscape Turned Red at the top (or some type of abbreviation of the title) as well as the numbers of the pages used (pp. 45 - 48, 69-77 for example). The number of index cards used can get pretty high.

Another type of evidence of research is to simply use sheets of paper instead of index cards. The sheets of paper should be marked with the correct title of the source and pages used like they would be for index cards. Some students don't like using a lot of individual index cards or sheets of paper and prefer a spiral bound notebook or three ring binder to hold their pages of research. These are also acceptable.

Researching various sources is the main work of the report. Once all the index cards or sheets of paper are filled with information, it is time to write the first draft of the report. If a student has kept the research cards or pages in good order, then the work of forming sentences and paragraphs that fit together becomes much easier. Remember that the information found in a source is changed into a student's own words when put on an index card or sheet of paper. When a student looks over those index cards or sheets of paper the words on them are already his or her own. The first draft is not the final report. Some students will make up to five drafts as they find mistakes in previous drafts, rearrange words or sentences, or try to present information more clearly.

Computers have made the work of writing drafts much easier. Whole sections of a report can be cut and pasted into different places. Diagrams and pictures can be inserted at just the right spots. Different styles of fonts and colors can be used as well. On a computer, mistakes are easily erased. This saves quite a bit of time and effort. Because of this, a student does not need to include a draft of the report except the final one. However, points are lost if the final draft contains a high amount of punctuation, spelling, capitalization, or usage errors. Points are also lost if the report is difficult to understand or fails to stick to the topic. Remember to give your research paper a title.

Model This is a 3-dimensional project. The students may use just about any building material they wish. Pre-fabricated models or kits are not allowed. Three-dimensional puzzles are also not allowed. Written information about their model **must** be included, however, the model itself should be the most important part of the project. A **list of sources** must accompany any written material. The list of sources should include title, publisher, copyright, and pages used. For models, at least one source is needed. What about the Internet? A student may use information from the Internet, however it does not count as a source. Any material used from the Internet should be cited. Please read the guidelines listed above under research about how to carry out research. Evidence of research must be included to back up any written material. Examples of evidence of research are listed above under research. Models may include cities, buildings, ships, or other **man-made** structures from any period of history from any country. This category also includes battlefields. Sometimes with battlefields students want to place those plastic army men you find in stores on the battlefield. Try to avoid doing this. In past Social Studies Fairs when this was done points were lost. Students used the wrong type of soldier or the soldiers were much too large to fit the battlefield model. A List of Materials page and a List of Steps page should be included.

Since the model itself will be the focus of the project, it is important that you include at least two pictures of the actual structure. For example, if a student did a model of the Eiffel Tower at least two pictures of the Eiffel Tower should be present for the judges to see. The more detailed the pictures the better. Some structures are so large that a picture of the entire object is not possible (for example the Great Wall of China). If that is the case then at least two pictures showing the section on which the model is based should be included. The pictures may be copied from books or magazines or found on the Internet. Give your project a title.

Maps Any type of map is suitable for presentation as long as it is the student's work. Maps showing the world, continents, countries, or others areas of the earth are allowed. The maps should not be simply enlarged copies from a book and then colored in. The students should use books as a guide, but the lines and markings should be their own. Maps should include a compass rose and a legend explaining the symbols used. A picture of the continent, country, or state should be included. This will help the judges decide how accurate the map a student made is. A List of Materials page and a List of Steps page should be included. A **list of sources** must be included. The list of sources should include title, publisher, copyright, and pages used. For maps at least one source, not including the Internet, is required. The Internet may be used, but will not count as a source. Any material used from the Internet should be cited. Give your map a title.

How will the projects be judged and scored?

In order to give the judges adequate time, the projects are due **Monday, January 23rd**. The students in grades 7 and 8 should bring the projects to their classrooms. For those students, please make sure your project is able to fit through the doors of the classrooms. The students in grades 5 and 6 should put their projects in the Narthex of the church. The doors leading into the Narthex can both be opened so the size of the project is not as much of a concern as it is for the students in grades 7 and 8. We have never limited the size a project has to be, however those maps or models can become very heavy or very large rather quickly, so the students should plan everything carefully before they start.

The projects will be judged during the week and displayed Friday evening. Copies of the forms for judging are included. Please look over the one for the type of project your child will do to make sure he or she has included everything the judges need. For example, evidence of research is an important part of a research project. If there are no index cards or sheets of paper showing

evidence of research, then that project would lose points. For models, at least two pictures of the model are required. If no pictures are provided, points will be lost. If a student makes a map of the United States and has the Great Lakes in the wrong location, points will be lost.

Important The projects are due on Monday, January 23rd. During that week before the Social Studies Fair, each student will present his or her report to Mr. Stubalt. They will be asked to talk about various parts of their projects. The students should not try to memorize every detail. If they put forth the time and effort, they will do well in this part.

Ribbons will be given for 1st through 5th places based on the number of points earned. Students do not compete against each other. It is actually possible for every student to receive a first place ribbon. Please remember that one point is deducted from a student's final score for each day the entry form or project is late. Entry forms are due Wednesday, November 23rd.

A student may change to a different topic after handing in the entry form. That student must see Mr. Stubalt. For example, a student turns in his entry form in October indicating that he is doing a model of the Golden Gate Bridge. A few weeks later he wants to change to a model of the Titanic instead. He needs to bring a signed note from home indicating the change and give that to Mr. Stubalt. He may even change from doing a model to writing a research paper or making a map. However, if Mr. Stubalt is not informed of the change, points will be deducted from that student's final score.

Please remember that besides receiving a ribbon, the projects are also graded by your child's social studies teacher. The ribbons are displayed on the night of the Social Studies Fair. The grades are not. The grade given to a project counts as 10 grades towards the social studies grade for that quarter.

If you have any questions about the Social Studies Fair, please contact Mr. Stubalt. (226-5609)

OPEN HOUSE

Also on January 23rd we will have an Open House for any friends you would like to bring to the school. You are all invited to tour the campus and view the projects for the Social Studies Fair as well as any special projects the students have done during the year. More information about the open house will be sent home as the time for it approaches.