

GRIT & GLORY

South Dakota Historical Society History Conference

June 1-3, 2026 - Fort Pierre, SD



teachers' conference schedule

Location: Drifters Event Center at 325 E. Hustan Ave., Ft. Pierre, SD

All times are in Central Daylight Time

EDUCATORS ONLY

Monday, JUNE 1

7:30 - 8:30 AM Registration at Drifters Event Center

8:00 - 8:30 AM Welcome Teachers & Key Info
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones, Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society & State Historian

CHOOSE ONE Workshop

8:30 - 9:30 AM

Workshop 1A

Teaching Methods for High School (Elementary Ed)

Dr. Christian D. Pirlet, Assistant Professor of Educational Technology, Northern State University specializes in technology integration in PK-12 settings. His primary focus has included the use of game-based learning to study student motivation in the social sciences.

8:30 - 9:30 AM

Workshop 1B

Lincoln's Apple of Gold in a Frame of Silver (High School)

Dr. Jon D. Schaff specializes in American government, the presidency, and political thought., while also directing the Center for Public History and Civic Engagement at Northern State University. He's passionate about helping students think deeply about what it means to live a good life and be an engaged citizen.

9:30-9:45 Morning Mingle - meet & treat

CHOOSE ONE Workshop

9:45 - 10:45 AM

Workshop 2A

Teaching Methods for High School (Elementary Ed)

Dr. Christian D. Pirlet, Assistant Professor of Educational Technology, Northern State University specializes in technology integration in PK-12 settings. His primary focus has included the use of game-based learning to study student motivation in the social sciences.

9:45 - 10:45 AM

Workshop 2B

Lincoln's Apple of Gold in a Frame of Silver (High School)

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Monday, JUNE 1 *continued*

- 11:45 AM-1:00 PM **Lunch**
- 1:00-2:00 **Using the New Museum in Your Classroom**
Ronette Rumpca, Curator of Interpretation at the South Dakota State Historical Society Museum, creates educational content and experiences surrounding artifacts. She also leads the Suitcases for Education program, delivering hands-on materials to classrooms, museums, and libraries statewide.
- 2:00-3:00 PM **Founding Virtues for Teachers**
Jon Schaff
- 3:00 - 3:15 PM **Afternoon Swoon - meet & treat**
- 3:15 -4:15 PM **SimCivics at Black Hills State University**
Jason McConnell, Director of Civic Engagement at Black Hills State University, will introduce SimCivics, an initiative creating immersive, standards-aligned simulations for K-12 social studies classrooms. Teachers will learn how these tools can bring key moments in American history to life and how to integrate them into teaching.
- 5:00 - 6:00 AM **Registration** desk is open at Drifters Event Center
If you have questions, please stop by.
- 6:00 - 8:00 PM **Trivia Night: History Smackdown** - open to the public
Drifters Event Center
Hosted by the South Dakota Historical Society Museum Staff
Put your historical know-how to the test! Join history fans and curious minds for an evening of trivia covering South Dakota and American history. Bring a team or come solo, we'll place you with other players. Compete for bragging rights and fabulous prizes!

FOR TEACHERS & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tuesday, JUNE 2

- 7:30 - 8:30 AM **Registration**
Drifters Event Center
- 8:00 - 8:30 AM **Kickoff & Key Info**
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones, Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society & State Historian
- 8:30 - 9:30 AM **Session 1: From Statehood to the Ballot: The Constitutional Story of South Dakota**
Professor Patrick M. Garry, USD School of Law, local resident expert on the South Dakota Constitution.

Tuesday, JUNE 2 *continued*

- 9:30 - 9:45 **Morning Mingle** - meet & treat
- 9:45 - 10:45 AM **Session 2: Meanwhile in the Black Hills...the Founding Principles Live On**
Mario Gonzales, has served as legal counsel to the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and has devoted much of his career to Indian legal issues.
- 10:45 - 11:45 AM **Session 3: U.S. Constitutional Law & American Indian Rights**
Hon. Frank Pommersheim, Emeritus Professor of Law at the University of South Dakota School with more than forty years of experience in the area of Indian Law and Policy.
- 11:45 AM - 1:00 PM **Lunch**
- 1:00 - 2:00 **Session 4: Wintercounts: Recording the Revolution**
Christina Burke, Curator, anthropologist, and independent researcher.
- 2:00 - 3:00 PM **Session 5: Civic Education in our Republic in Grit & Glory**
Dr. Christian D. Pirlet, Assistant Professor of Educational Technology, Northern State University
- 3:00 - 3:15PM **Afternoon Swoon** - meet & treat
- 3:15 - 4:15 PM **Session 6: Sioux Falls, the Queen City & the Founding Women Who Shaped It**
Podcast host Lori Kent, aka "Local Lou," shares her love for history with South Dakotans and beyond.
- 5:00 - 7:00 PM **History Unwinded Networking Social**
Cultural Heritage Center, 900 Governors Dr, Pierre
Hosted by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation
Enjoy an evening sipping and snacking, connecting with friends, and sharing stories...followed by a sneak peek of one of our new exhibits as you stroll through the gallery led by Francis Whitebird, David Grabitske, and Dan Moeckly. And don't miss the Curator's Nightcap!

FOR TEACHERS & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wednesday, JUNE 3

- 7:30 - 8:30 AM **Registration**
Drifters Event Center
- 8:00 - 8:30 AM **Welcome Back & What's Next**
David M. Grabitske, South Dakota State Historical Society Assistant Director & Museum Director

Wednesday, JUNE 3 *continued*

- 8:30 - 9:30 AM **Session 7: Little Houses of Liberty: Laura Ingalls Wilder, Rose Wilder Lane, and the American Revolution**
Dedra McDonald Birzer, Director and editor-in-chief of the South Dakota Historical Society Press and a lecturer in history at Hillsdale College.
Sponsored by Americans for Prosperity
- 9:30-9:45 **Morning Mingle - meet & treat**
- 9:45-10:45 AM **Session 8: South Dakota's First 4th & other 4ths**
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones
- 10:45-11:45 AM **Session 9: The Northwest Ordinance Informs South Dakota**
Paul Finkelman is an American legal historian and is currently a visiting professor at the University of Toledo College of Law
Sponsored by State Bar of South Dakota
- 11:45 AM - 2:00 PM **Session 10: Awards Luncheon and Keynote Speaker**
1776 and All That: The Road to American Independence
Dr. Bradley J. Birzer, American historian, Russell Amos Kirk Chair in History at Hillsdale College and Fellow of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.
- 2:00 PM **Conference concludes**
- 3:00 PM **South Dakota State Historical Society Board of Trustee Meeting**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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