

THE LegiSchool

Fall 2002

PROJECT



The LegiSchool Project

Thought-provoking, controversial, timely and engaging. These words best describe LegiSchool's meetings and materials. Welcome to another year of exciting and educational LegiSchool activities! Plans for LegiSchool events in the 2002/03 school year are well underway and it is the goal of LegiSchool staff to make this the most successful year ever. From the general election in November to legislation regarding Native American sacred sites to human cloning and stem cell research, LegiSchool's Town Hall Meetings and curriculum materials are developed to not only engage students in public policy debates that are taking place everyday at the Capitol, but also to heighten students' awareness about state government, how it works and the importance of civic involvement as a means to improve the society in which we live. Detailed Town Hall Meeting information can be found in the Calendar of Events section of this newsletter.

In addition to our Town Hall Meetings, LegiSchool, in conjunction with the California Channel, offers a wide range of free, government-oriented classroom materials. From videotapes such as *A Day in the Life of a Candidate* and *How a Bill Becomes*

continued on page 3

Mission Statement

The LegiSchool Project is a civic education collaboration between California State University, Sacramento, and the California State Legislature, administered by the Center for California Studies. The Project's mission is to engage young people in matters of public policy and state government by creating opportunities for students and state leaders to meet and share ideas on the problems affecting Californians. In doing so, we hope to motivate young people to take an interest in the public life around them and to encourage their active participation in our political process.

Thank you...

The LegiSchool Project wishes to thank the following legislators for their participation in 2001/02 LegiSchool Town Hall Meetings:

Senators Betty Karnett, Richard Polanco, and Jack Scott; and Assemblymember Rod Pacheco

Additional thanks to:

Suzanne Ambrose, Attorney General's Office

Teri Burns, California Department of Education

Mark Carlson, Lutheran Office of Public Policy

Bruce Chan, Assembly Committee on Public Safety

Manny Hernandez, Office of Senator Speier

Karen Pank, Assembly Republican Caucus

Jeff Orlinsky, California Teachers Association

Kerri Ruzicka, Republican Policy Office, California State Senate

Richard Simpson, Office of Speaker Emeritus Hertzberg

Robert Spurlock, Office of Secretary for Education

LegiSchool would also like to acknowledge the Wells Fargo Foundation for its generous support of the Real World Civics Summer Internship Program.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to another exhilarating year of LegiSchool. On behalf of our collaborators—the California State Legislature, California State University, Sacramento, and the California Channel—I am pleased to invite you to participate in this year's thought-provoking curriculum.

LegiSchool enjoyed much success last year in covering some extremely informative issues. The first meeting dealt with the values of our juvenile justice system as we explored the pros and cons of trying minors as adults. From there we moved on to issues such as standards-based education, the use/misuse of backpacks, the overabundance of testing in high schools, and gun control verses gun ownership rights. Those that watched our Town Hall Meetings witnessed the transformation from high school students into well-informed panelists willing to express their viewpoints and debate current issues with legislators and guest panelists.

This year promises to be even more intellectually challenging. We will explore the pros and cons of developing Native American sacred sites. We will hold a mock election based on the Davis and Simon campaign for Governor in California, which will hopefully motivate students and others to race to the polls to cast their vote. We also plan to learn about stem cell research, cloning, keeping California safe from violence, and the rights and privileges of students on high school campuses.

We are very proud of the award-winning LegiSchool Project and hope that you will continue to support our efforts by your interest and participation. With your help, expertise and fresh ideas, this coming year will be LegiSchool's best ever!

Sincerely,
Greg Schmidt
Secretary of the Senate



Real Issues, Real Debate, Real Curriculum

Free Videos and Curriculum Materials From the LegiSchool Project and the California Channel

New!

The Voting Process: **YOU** Have the Power!

See article on page 5 for complete details.

New!

Dialogue on Freedom, A Nation Called Quest

In February 2002, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy visited his old high school in Sacramento, McClatchy High School. There he engaged a political science class in his "Dialogue on Freedom" using the fictitious country of Quest as a model for applying the best concepts introduced by the students. The purpose of this "Dialogue on Freedom" is to explore American civic values and legal traditions in the context of a hypothetical situation. The video is 30 minutes long.

"LegiSchool consistently puts out comprehensive and contemporary law and policy programs for secondary-level youth that rise to, and often beyond, the bar of excellence—and you are to be commended." Teacher, San Marino High

A Day in the Life of a Candidate
During an election, citizens are bombarded with campaign literature and media coverage of candidates, but running for public office takes much more than slick mailers and TV commercials. This 35-minute video demonstrates some of the more routine, but critical work that goes into running for public office and features the Republican and Democratic candidates for the November 2000 race for California's 5th Senate District. Two students serve as the video's hosts as they take viewers through the last four weeks leading up to the election. Highlights of the video include footage from precinct walking,

"It is so important for students in our demographic area to be able to participate in LegiSchool. The socio-economic levels of our students make it difficult for them to have experiences out of their local environment. Thank you for offering them this opportunity." Teacher, Rosemead High

phone banking, staff briefings, interviews with both candidates, and election night coverage.

A Day in the Life of the Secretary of State

Have you ever wondered what California's Secretary of State does? Grace Pak, a student from Sacramento, recently spent a day with Secretary of State Bill Jones to get the answer for us. Approximately 25 minutes in length, the video highlights some of the key aspects

of the job, including the Secretary's role as chief elections officer, member of the World Trade Commission, and overseer of the State Archives.

A Day in the Life of the Legislature

This 30-minute video features two key members of the Legislature, Senator Jim Brulte and Assembly Member Robert Hertzberg. Highlights of the video include footage from a Senate floor session, an Assembly committee hearing, a meeting between Senator Brulte and a group of lobbyists, and a staff briefing with Assembly Member Hertzberg.

The Initiative Process

This 8 1/2 minute video takes a fun, informative and step-by-step look at the initiative process as well as providing a strong message of civic involvement and personal empowerment. Daylight savings time and the banning of nuclear power plants are just two of the examples provided which illustrate the power of this important political tool of the people. Thomas Jefferson stated that "there is no safer depository of the ultimate power of society but the people themselves"—a frank recognition of the important role the initiative process plays in making law and placing the public in power to set this state's political agenda.

Checks & Balances: The Three Branches of State Government

This ten-minute video is geared towards helping middle and high school students learn more about how our state legislative process works – and is presented in a way that is enjoyable for everyone. The main premise for the lesson is that as in the federal government the framers of our state's constitution wanted to be sure that no one branch of government would have too much power, so they divided the powers of the government into three equal branches.

Video Order Form

Indicate below which video(s) you would like:

- The Voting Process: **YOU** Have the Power!
 Dialogue on Freedom, A Nation Called Quest
 A Day in the Life of a Candidate
 A Day in the Life of the Secretary of State
 A Day in the Life of the Legislature
 The Initiative Process
 Checks & Balances: The Three Branches of State Government
 How a Bill Becomes Law

Mail to:

Name: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

City/St/Zip: _____

Return by mail, fax or e-mail to:

California State University, Sacramento
 The Center for California Studies/LegiSchool
 6000 J Street
 Sacramento, CA 95819-6081
 Fax: (916) 278-5199

Or e-mail your request to: legischool@csus.edu

Your order will be mailed to you within 2-3 weeks.
 Thank you!

How a Bill Becomes Law

Produced by the California Channel, this ten-and-a-half-minute video uses AB 2268, the Bicycle Helmet Law, to describe how a bill becomes law in California. Ideal for high school students, the video introduces concepts such as how a bill is authored, the process of first, second, and third readings, and how legislation is assigned to various committees within the Legislature.

Each video is accompanied by a Video Viewing Guide, which includes two pages of critical thinking exercises and pertinent vocabulary for teachers to use as an assignment for students. To order free videos, please complete and return the Video Order Form.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead



2002–2003 LegiSchool Calendar of Events

Mark your calendars now for this year's LegiSchool Town Hall Meetings! All meetings, with the exception of the October meetings, will take place at the State Capitol. If you are interested in attending one of the meetings with your class, contact the LegiSchool Project. A limited amount of travel money is available to classes. Call or email for more information.

September 19, 2002, Town Hall Meeting, 1–2 p.m.

Native American Rights vs. Development in California: Balancing Competing Interests

For thousands of years, California Native Americans have practiced religious ceremonies and rituals on specific sites ranging in size from a small area of rock to an entire mountain. Many of these sites, while considered sacred to Native Americans, have long since been developed and have become unavailable for the traditional practices at the core of the tribal community identity. Yet some land, still considered to be sacred, remains undeveloped and it is this land which Senate Bill 1828 seeks to protect. SB 1828 would require meaningful consultation with Indian tribes at the beginning of the permitting process, independent verification of the traditional use of a sacred site, and acceptable mitigation measures to protect the site before a permit to develop the land could be issued. Who should ultimately make decisions regarding land use if a piece of land is deemed sacred by one group, but potentially profitable to another group? How do we determine whose interests should take precedence?

Oct. 10 (Sacramento) and Oct. 30 (Los Angeles), 1–2 p.m.

Election 2002: California's Race for Governor – High School Students Debate and Vote in Mock Elections

On November 5, 2002, voters in California will go to the polls to determine who will be our state's next governor. The major party candidates are Governor Gray Davis, a Democrat, and challenger Bill Simon, a Republican. Find out what the parties have to say about the issues young people care about from education to public safety to how California should deal with its large budget deficit. This meeting will enable students to make informed "voting" decisions as they learn more about the candidates who seek to lead the state over the next four years. Following the meeting, students will vote in mock elections. Written materials developed for these meetings will assist teachers in the classroom in simulating the voting experience as closely as possible.

January 17, 2003, Essay Contest Deadline

See back page for contest details

February 6, 2003, Town Hall Meeting, 1–2 p.m.

Protecting California: Keeping the State Safe While Maintaining Civil Liberties

Life in California and around the nation has changed in many ways since 9-11-2001. From strict airport security to armed security forces in public places, the liberties that many of us once took for granted, have been affected. States around the nation, including California, have implemented tough new laws to keep people safe. At the same time, many are left wondering what the consequences might be to civil liberties in the name of public safety. Can we be "safe" and still enjoy our usual "freedoms"? How has California tackled the issue of terrorism within our borders? What are policymakers doing to tighten security in public places and, at the same time, ensuring that our cherished civil liberties are not being violated? This meeting will give students the opportunity to weigh in and offer their opinions to state leaders.

March 20, 2003, Student Run Press Conf., 11 a.m. –noon

Cell Phones at School: Necessary Convenience or Irritating Intrusion?

In recent years, cell phones have become a mainstay in American culture. From malls to restaurants to cars, cell phone users are everywhere! But existing state law prohibits a school from permitting the possession and/or use of a cell phone by a student while at school or at school sponsored events, unless medically necessary. Senate Bill 1253 calls for shifting the decision-making powers from state authorities to local school districts. The bill would allow school districts to maintain a no cell phone policy or to adopt a different policy appropriate for their students. Do cell phones belong on school campuses? Is learning disrupted by the potential use of cell phones at school? Are students entitled to have access to cell phones at school for safety reasons or to be able to communicate with their parents? This meeting will give both students and teachers the forum to voice their opinions.

May 1, 2003, Town Hall Meeting, 1–2 p.m.

Science in the 21st Century: Have We Gone Too Far or Not Far Enough?

Recent state and federal legislation has tackled complicated and often controversial issues around stem cell research and human cloning. While some see this type of research as a potential means to improve the health and quality of life of individuals, others consider this type of research to be deeply troubling, from social, religious, and scientific viewpoints. As scientists become increasingly knowledgeable in stem cell research and human cloning, and their ability to conduct research in these areas increases, public debate continues to grow. How far is too far when it comes to this type of science? To what degree should the scientific community be able to go in the name of improving health and health care to potentially millions of people? Students will explore these delicate and controversial issues, and provide their own opinions.

Get Out the Vote!

Exciting and Educational Free Election Materials Offered

The Video: *The Voting Process: YOU Have the Power!*

This energetic 8-minute video gives students a step-by-step look at procedures for voting in California. The goal of the video is to give young, first-time voters the knowledge and confidence to become involved in our most cherished constitutional right, the democratic process. Registration, absentee ballots, resources (websites, phone numbers, etc) and demonstrations of the three prevalent forms of voting systems in our state are given a thorough treatment. The video will be updated as voting changes and reforms take place.

Written Materials:

Developed to be used along with the video, these materials will take your students through a mock election, with the 2002 California governor's race as the model. Materials include a mock voter registration form and instructions, a ballot, suggestions for in-class exercises and take home assignments. Sample class activities include:

- Students will be asked to write a short essay on why they have affiliated with a particular political party on their mock voter registration form.
- Students can be asked to develop TV and/or radio campaign ads.
- Invite representatives from both campaigns to meet with your class to have a debate or have your own mock debate with students representing the candidates.
- Once students have cast their votes for California's governor, have a debriefing exercise after the election to compare results and discuss the outcome.

Not only can these materials be used to develop familiarity with voting practices and elections, but they can also be used as a stepping-stone to fulfill the state's history/social science content standards. Specifically, all of the points outlined in standard 12.6 can easily be incorporated into the use of these LegiSchool and California Channel materials.

To order your free voting video and curriculum materials, complete and return the Video Order Form on page 2.

Incorporating LegiSchool into the State's History-Social Science Content Standards

History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools Grade Twelve: Principles of American Democracy and Economics

California's Grade 12 History-Social Science standards pay particular attention to the principles of American democracy, which are intended to provide students with the knowledge and skills that are required to assume the responsibilities of citizenship.

Topics addressed at LegiSchool meetings and in LegiSchool curriculum materials have been aligned with many of the social studies standards now required by the state. Below are just a few of the standards that can be met through the use of LegiSchool and its curriculum materials. By using LegiSchool materials, students are given the opportunity to:

- 12.1.6 Understand that the Bill of Rights limits the powers of the federal and state governments;
- 12.2.1 Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured;
- 12.2.3 Discuss the individual's legal obligations to obey the law;
- 12.2.4 Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service;
- 12.3.1 Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes;
- 12.3.3 Discuss the historical role of religion and religious diversity;
- 12.4 Analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution;
- 12.4.3 Identify their current representatives in the legislative branch of the national government;
- 12.5.1 Understand the changing interpretations of the Bill of Rights over time, including interpretations of the basic freedoms articulated in the First Amendment and the due process and equal protection of the law clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment;
- 12.6 Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices;
- 12.6.3 Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding;
- 12.6.4 Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process;
- 12.7.5 Explain how public policy is formed, including the setting of the public agenda

and implementation of it through regulations and executive orders;

- 12.7.6 Compare the processes of lawmaking at each of the three levels of government, including the role of lobbying and the media.

For a complete list of the standards, visit the Department of Education's website at: www.cde.ca.gov/board/pdf/history.pdf

The LegiSchool Project

continued from front page

Law to voter education curriculum materials, LegiSchool products offer students lively and engaging opportunities to learn about the basic functions of state government. Furthermore, whether it's a Town Hall Meeting videotape you're using in the classroom or curriculum materials on the initiative process, LegiSchool materials are designed to be easily incorporated into the states' history and social science content standards.

To learn how you can involve your students in one of our LegiSchool activities or to order LegiSchool's free classroom materials, contact the Project at (916) 278-6906 or email LegiSchool at legischool@csus.edu. You can also learn more about LegiSchool's exciting plans for the 2002/03 school year at www.csus.edu/calst/legischool.htm.

LegiSchool State Government for Beginners Handout Binder

Looking for good, basic handouts about state government and the legislative process? Then this binder is for you! Easy-to-duplicate handouts include:

- legislative terminology
- a diagram of the legislative process
- a step-by-step description of the process
- a sample bill with instructions on how to read legislation
- voter registration and elections information
- useful state government and political websites and much more!

Contact LegiSchool for your free binder at (916) 278-4642 or complete and return the "free binder" form on the LegiSchool website (www.csus.edu/calst/legischool.htm).

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LegiSchool's Sixth Annual Essay Contest

Cell Phones at School: Necessary Convenience or Irritating Intrusion?

Have you ever been in a theater watching a movie when all of a sudden a cell phone rings? Do you ever find yourself stuck in traffic and tempted to call a friend to pass the time? In recent years, cell phones have become a mainstay in American culture. However, current state law prohibits a school from permitting the possession and/or use of a cell phone by a student while at school or at school-sponsored events, unless medically necessary. Senate Bill 1253 calls for shifting the decision-making powers from state authorities to local school districts. The bill would allow school districts to maintain a no-cell-phone policy or to adopt a different policy appropriate for their students. Whether or not this bill becomes law, the question remains, "do cell phones belong on school campuses?" This year's essay contest will ask students to examine their own school's cell phone use policy and to offer their opinions on the issue.

Ten winning essayists will be invited to spend a day in Sacramento at **LegiSchool's Sixth Annual Student Journalism Summit** on March 20, 2003. Look for essay contest details in late October!



For more information about LegiSchool, contact:

California State University, Sacramento
Center for California Studies/LegiSchool
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819-6081
(916) 278-6906
legischool@csus.edu

Visit LegiSchool on the Internet at:
www.csus.edu/calst/legischool.htm

Your feedback is important to us! Tell us what you think...

If you have an idea for a future Town Hall Meeting, suggestions on how to improve LegiSchool, or want to share a story about a successful civic education program in your community, please contact Kolleen Ostgaard at the Center for California Studies.