



We the People

PROJECT Citizen

Citizen Lyceum



From the Massachusetts Center for Civic Education

MACCE Newsletter

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Grade 4 to 8 Teachers Eligible for CEAS Grant

By Roger Desrosiers, President

The Center for Civic Education received a three year SEED (Supporting Effective Educator Development) grant from the U.S. Department of Education in late September which will give upper elementary and middle school teachers the opportunity for professional development. The first year of the research grant called **CEAS (Civics that Empowers All Students)** began in January, 2023 with the states learning more about the grant. The New England states and New York state decided to form a coalition whereby we would work with 30 teachers from our states. Each of the state coordinators will seek 4 teachers from their respective states and then 2 teachers on their waiting lists will be added to complete the 30 teachers for our coalition. (Here you will find the [flyer](#) regarding eligibility and details of the grant as well as the [teacher agreement](#) for those wishing to apply for this opportunity.)

Over the March 17 - 19, 2023 weekend, the state coordinators and mentors from each state met in California for an annual meeting to learn more about the grant: its purpose, its research, its implementation, and the professional development for Year One of the grant. Our coalition had time to meet as well so that we could discuss recruitment, scholars, and meetings. (You can see the picture of those from our seven state coalition who attended the annual meeting below, as well as all the members of our coalition.)

Our flyer and teacher agreement has already been sent to most superintendents in the state who meet the standard of having “30% high needs students, students of color, Title 1 schools, students with disabilities, ELL students and other underserved students”, as well as many curriculum directors and elementary and middle school teachers with whom we have worked with in the past in Massachusetts.

Teachers have until April 30, 2023 to send in their teacher agreement form. As the flyer states, teachers who teach in grades 4 to 8 and have not received professional development in *We the People* before, may apply. They must also have the opportunity to use the *We the People* text during the 2023-24 school year to be eligible. Some of the perks are a free set of textbooks (at the level of their choice, Level 1 or 2), listening to recognized scholars, a year’s worth of assistance with a mentor, and a stipend of \$500.

In the first part of Year One, the summer institute will take part at the University of Massachusetts at Boston from August 6 through 11, 2023. Of the 52 hours of professional development, 36 hours will take place during this 5 and 1/2 day institute. The remaining 16 hours will be spread out during the 2023-24 school year.

We are pleased to be addressing the professional development needs for elementary and middle school teachers by providing FREE professional development. We certainly can include 52 PDPs for any Massachusetts teachers. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact Roger Desrosiers at rodesros@gmail.com or call 508-728-4733 and leave a message.





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Congratulations to the students of Easthampton High School and to their teacher, Ms. Kelley Brown, on becoming the 2023 Massachusetts State Champions.



We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution MA State High School 2023 Competition

By Kayla Nordman, Program Manager

Celebrating the first in-person competition in three years, students from Auburn High School, Easthampton High School, Norwood High School, and Salem Academy Charter School competed in mock congressional hearings at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute in Boston, MA for the 2023 Massachusetts **We the People** State Finals.

First, we wish to thank our six facilitators who seamlessly helped navigate our judges through the competition. Their preparation and commitment throughout helped mitigate any potential challenges that come with returning after a multi-year hiatus to an in-person competition was incredible.

We are also very appreciative of the 25 judges who helped us on this day; many of them served both the morning and afternoon sessions. Their dedication to civic learning and to the time and effort to support tomorrow's future is most appreciated. A big thanks as well to the many other volunteers who stepped up throughout the day to put together a great experience for the participating schools.

To our five teachers and 113 students who participated, we applaud the long hours dedicated throughout the semester to learning the material and the exceptional display of learning exhibited on competition day. We know the road to the competition wasn't easy, but we are so proud of the students and what they accomplished. The day was filled with excitement and incredible presentations about American Government and its principles.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Adam Hinds, the CEO of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute, who greeted the students in the morning, Sarah Yezzi, the Director of Education, who spoke to them in the afternoon and all the additional staff members who worked to help make this day happen. We greatly appreciate their support in allowing us to return to the EMKI after two years of virtual competitions due to the pandemic.



Students from Auburn High School (Grey) give a presentation that helped their team place second in the competition.



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In addition, it was a pleasure to hear from members of the first class to represent Massachusetts at the We the People National Finals in Washington, DC in 1988. At a time when they participated, this program was expected to be a five year program within the National Bicentennial Commission recognizing the 200th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution. Its success was so vibrant and exciting that the U.S. Department of Education sponsored the program until 2011. With the loss of national funding, the program has continued by virtue of either Bar Foundations or other institutions or simply through the efforts of volunteers and teachers who believe its importance must remain.

Six students attended our event from the Millbury Memorial High School junior class of 1988: three in person, Arlene (Mattrick) Limanek, Dr. Wendy Stead, Michael Tift and three remotely, Dr. Melissa Haglund, Scott Pease, Rodney Williams. They spoke of their experience and the impact of the We the People 36 years ago and even today. Thank you for sharing your stories!

The Unit Awards for this year are as follows:

- Auburn High School (Blue) - Unit 2
- Auburn High School (Grey) - Unit 4
- Easthampton High School - Unit 2
- Norwood High School - Unit 6
- Salem Academy Charter School - Unit 6

The top 3 teams this year were:

- 1st Place - Easthampton High School
- 2nd Place - Auburn High School (Grey)
- 3rd Place - Salem Academy Charter School

Both Easthampton High School and Salem Academy Charter School will have the opportunity to represent Massachusetts in the **We the People: The Citizen and Constitution National Finals** this April 22-24, 2023.

Pictured Below is the group from Salem Academy who will be competing in the Wild Card spot at the National Finals in April.



Congratulations to all of the schools and thank you for another successful State competition!



Project Citizen Research Program

Since the **Project Citizen Research Program** (PCRP) Summer Institute at UMass Boston last summer, nineteen participants from six northeastern states and Washington, DC have had follow up sessions throughout this school year (2022-23). Two of these sessions dealt with the entire group, one in September and the other in November 2022. These follow up sessions allowed the teachers to discuss any issues with implementation of Project Citizen, any obstacles or issues as well as additional pedagogy from the mentors. Since then, the mentors have held several meetings with their groups.

On Saturday, May 5 in Providence, RI, the entire group will reassemble for the final time to deepen their understanding of public policy, reflect on their year, their progress, and to prepare for the hearing process in which the teachers will allow their students to participate in at the end of the school year. At the end of the year, the teachers and the students will take the post test that will end this research grant and culminate this third year of the three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education granted to the Center of Education.

Research results from the two prior years have continued to document the positive effectiveness of the Project Citizen curriculum. Massachusetts participants include Mentor Dustin Brideau, Littleton Middle School; participants, Nina Georges, Sharon High School; Emma Sainsbury, Taunton High School; Julie St. Francis, Dudley Middle School; and Kevin Turner, Cape Cod Collaborative.



Project Citizen Showcase

The annual **Project Citizen Showcase** for 2022-23 academic year is scheduled for Friday, June 2, 2023, at the Boston State House. Any schools using Project Citizen, whether Middle School or High School, should contact Ellen Barber Morse, the Project Citizen Massachusetts State Coordinator if they wish to participate in this year's Showcase .

Citizen Lyceum



After a three year hiatus, our Citizen Lyceum will be resurrected this spring. Our first event is on Wednesday, May 17th at the Malden Public Library in Malden, MA from 7 to 8:30 pm. This is sponsored by the Malden Reads organization. We will use the wonderful graphic novel, They Called Us Enemy by George Takei, who as a child was held in one of the Japanese Internment camps. He is known best for his role in Star Trek as Lieutenant Sulu. We will use this as the launching for a discussion on democratic principles v. how fear can subvert our principles in times of crisis or lack of information. Learning about our human nature and understanding that our Framers tried to build a government that would withstand this, is important in realizing that in a democracy, we are always tested during times of crisis.



Our second event is on Wednesday, June 14th at the Asa Waters Mansion in Millbury, MA from 7 to 8:30 pm. This is sponsored by the Friends of the Asa Waters Mansion. The topic is How Can We Include the Underrepresented Into the Discussion about the Divisions in Our Nation. The presumption of our discussion is that most Americans are good people who struggle to understand what is true and valid today. It simply appears that the only news that they hear are the extremes of both the right and the left and they are left annoyed, frustrated, and even turned off by media and government. The result is apathy and disinterest. The purpose of this lyceum is to provide information and encourage understanding about what the government's role is supposed be as it was established.

Therefore, anyone interested in reviewing what our Constitution and Bill of Rights, as established by our Framers, believed at the time of our founding are invited to join us. We welcome a civil discourse and with the expectation that with knowledge and understanding, and with respect for each others differences of opinion, we can maintain our constitutional democracy as established by our Founders.



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Upcoming Workshops

Learning the Principles and Values of American Government

When and Where?

Tuesday, June 6 & Wednesday, June 7, 2023
at Norwood Public Schools

A two day workshop at the Norwood Public Schools with Grade 5 teachers will explore the Level 1 We the People text as it aligns with the grade 5 standards of the DESE History and Social Science Framework.

A focus on the principles and values of American government will be the main activities and terms broadly examined. The teachers will understand how our government has evolved through the eyes of the Founders as they established the Constitution and the Bill of Rights that guide us today,

Therefore, they can guide their students through the difficulties of today's differing points of view, thus allowing students to begin the process of understanding through a sound comprehension of the principles and ideals that the Founders sought to foster through the government they created.

How Can We Preserve Our Democracy?

When and Where?

Monday, June 12, 2023
At the Old South Meeting House in Boston, MA

Last November 18, 2022 we held a similar workshop with tremendous success, where we discussed the philosophical underpinnings of our government, the founding documents, and the general principles of government that were adopted through our constitution. We then discussed how these principles have evolved throughout history and how they continue to progress in the present, by examining the contemporary events that our country is experiencing today. In combination with the domestic investigation, we also broadened our scope to discuss international struggles going on through the war in Ukraine and how the people have continued to fight for their democracy

Shortly after the workshop in November, we received this comment from Ryan Lambert, of Concord Public Schools, which speaks to the value of the program; "Having been in education for almost 20 years...I have attended endless amounts of PD and Conferences. Without a doubt this was one of the most interactive and useful ones I have attended. I am glad I went and hope to be involved in the We The People program more moving forward."

Therefore, in the upcoming workshop we will continue to work on activities that you can take back to your students to familiarize them with the democratic values and principles that our founders inscribed in our Constitution and Bill of Rights. We will also once again take a look at the democratic challenges today within our country, as well as throughout the world in order to better understand what we can do to preserve it. Some examples of case studies we might discuss include, Israel, Ukraine, and Georgia.

Given the times we're in, this workshop can be really helpful for elementary, middle, and high school teachers in discussing our democracy with their students.



Pictured above are teachers from Boston Latin Academy, Concord Middle School, Easthampton Junior High School, and Winthrop Middle School, listening to presenter Kelley Brown at the November 18, 2022 workshop, discussing how we can preserve our democracy.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO REGARDING THE JUNE 12TH WORKSHOP](#)



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Citizen Lyceum



CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION
April 6, 2023	State House Visit and Showcase: Easthampton High School and Salem Academy Charter School
April 22nd - 24th	We the People National Finals
April 30th	CEAS Teacher Agreement Due
May 5th	Project Citizen Research Program
May 17th	Citizen Lyceum, Malden Library
May 20th	CEAS Mentor Meeting, Publick House
June 2nd	Project Citizen Showcase, State House
June 5 - August 6th	FSU - MACCE Course
June 6th & 7th	Grade 5 Teachers Workshop, Norwood Public Schools
June 12th	Preserving Democracy Workshop
June 14th	Citizen Lyceum, Asa Waters Mansion
August 6th - 11th	CEAS Summer Institute, UMass Boston

Framingham State University: MACCE Summer Course

We will once again offer an online three credit course for the summer for elementary, middle and high school teachers. This course is a holistic understanding of our American government from its philosophical and historical beginnings through the challenges in its third century. The course title essentially tells it all: Understanding the Fundamental Principles, Values, and Institutions of American Government. This 9 week course will begin on June 5 through August 6, 2023.

Although it is an online course, participants have the opportunity to work with each other through a discussion forum each week as well as create valuable lesson plans which they can actually use during the school year as well as share with each other and culminate with a short paper on a research topic that would support their teaching.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Roger Desrosiers at **rodesros@gmail.com** or calling him at **508-728-4733** and leaving a message.

Actively Learn

We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution is available as an enhanced ebook edition for your 21st-century classroom. The enhanced ebook is perfect for blended learning, 1:1 classrooms, and differentiated instruction.

Actively Learn is available as age appropriate interactive ebooks for the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

By purchasing *We the People* on **Actively Learn**, you are purchasing a subscription to Actively Learn Social Studies, which gives you access to all three levels of *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* for one low price: just \$9.99 per user, per year.

Order directly through **Actively Learn**.

As a non-profit organization, we rely on the support of the organizations and individuals within our community and state to help us promote civic awareness in our schools. Your funds will help provide professional development resources, textbooks, learning opportunities and help us continue the work we do to promote civic education for all people.

