



**Arizona Department of Education**  
(Policy and Government Relations Office)

**American Civics Education Pilot Program Annual Report 2020**

**TO: Doug Ducey**  
**Governor**

**Karen Fann**  
**President of the Senate**

**Russell Bowers**  
**Speaker of the House of Representatives**

**CC: Katie Hobbs**  
**Secretary of State**

**From: Callie Kozlak**  
**Associate Superintendent, Policy and Government Relations**

**RE: American Civics Education Pilot Program**

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Laws 2018, Chapter 289, Section 3, established the American Civics Education Pilot Program within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). The program was established to provide high school students in selected schools with an enhanced focus on American civics education. The legislation directed ADE to submit a request for proposals (RFP), subject to Arizona State Board of Education approval, to procure an American civics education assessment that is more rigorous than the legislatively required civics assessment, which consists of the 100 questions on the USCIS Naturalization Test Study Guide. As part of the law, ADE is required to submit a progress report on or before September each year to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Secretary of State.

Between July 2018 and November 2018, ADE developed the Scope of Work for the American Civics Education Pilot Program Assessment. Multiple units within ADE collaborated to develop the scope of work, including the Policy team, K-12 Standards, Assessment, and Procurement. At the December 17, 2018, State Board of Education meeting the board approved the Scope of Work and the request to open the RFP. The RFP closed with no submissions for the bid. ADE then began the process of working with the Governor's Office and State Board of Education staff to adjust the parameters of the RFP and resubmit for bids.

During the fall/winter of 2019, ADE stakeholders met and drafted an amended Civics Pilot RFP Scope of Work (SOW), which was sent out to the ADE Procurement team for review in December. During the next few months, several meetings occurred for revisions and to secure needed supplemental documents. In March 2020, the final revisions were complete, and the Civics Pilot RFP was approved for release and opened for submissions. In April 2020, a virtual Pre-Offer Conference for the American Civics Education Pilot Program was held so vendors could ask questions about the Scope of Work in the RFP. On April 23, 2020, the RFP submission window closed. There were two vendor submission and a committee convened to evaluate the applications and choose the organization awarded. Ultimately, The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education was awarded the contract.

The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education (Foundation) was created in 1978 with the mission of promoting access to justice for all Arizonans. The Foundation strives to meet this mission through two approaches. One, preparing Arizona youth with the knowledge, active participation, and understanding of their individual roles in meeting their civic responsibility today and in the future. Two, providing knowledge of the law, court system, and resources to help all Arizonians seeking access to our justice system. The Foundation has partnered for almost three decades with the Arizona Department of Education, local law enforcement agencies, and national civic organizations and, for over three decades, with the Arizona State Bar, county agencies, and the Arizona Courts to provide training and resources for educating youth in civics and the law. The Foundation is staffed with a team of nineteen highly qualified individuals including two Arizona Certified teachers. Average tenure of the staff is ten plus years.

The Foundation will partner with ADE to disseminate the evidence based civic education program, We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution to all pilot schools. This program is a standalone civic education program that includes a culminating performance assessment task- A Simulated Congressional Hearing. This program, including the assessment piece at the end, will not only increase student knowledge of civics but will go beyond to increase their civic skills and dispositions thus making this a more rigorous assessment than the current requirement of the UCSIS Naturalization Test. The We the People Program is considered the gold standard for civic education programs. In May 2018, the Center for Civic Education published results from a nationwide research evaluation. "The findings indicate that students in the We the People group scored significantly higher on a test of civic knowledge than the control group students. The results demonstrate the effectiveness of the program in preparing students in civics and American Government." In addition to the gains in student knowledge, the study also measured the extent to which students acquired civic dispositions- the commitment to democratic ideals, the development of a sense of public duty, and an inclination to participate in civic life. Students reported that their sense of civic responsibility increased as a result of participating in the program. The program covers the historical and political foundations of the American political system, the creation of the Constitution, the formal and informal changes to the Constitution and how they furthered the ideals contained in founding documents including the Declaration of Independence, how the values and principles embodied in the Constitution have shaped

**Kathy Hoffman, Superintendent of Public Instruction**

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American Institutions and Practices, the rights and protections in the Bill of Rights, and American constitutional in the 21st century. The program and assessment are fully aligned with the new History and Social Science Standards. The Foundation will collaborate with ADEK-12 Standards staff to implement the pilot program.

Several planning meetings have been held between the Foundation and ADE staff to prepare the school application, create a plan for publicity and marketing of the pilot application, and preparing timelines for training and resources. The application draft is complete and once approved will be disseminated through ADE communication channels including social media, newsletters, outreach to stakeholder groups, and email notices to districts and school leaders. Applications will be collected and evaluated through October 2020 and schools will be notified in the fall. Training and resources will be available to a total of 75 teachers and 3,000 students each year of the pilot. Training for teachers will consists of 5 half day training institutes per year of the program, curriculum resources, online texts, and a rigorous performance assessment that all students will take. The pilot schools will also receive the We the People text electronically, as well as the supporting materials to effectively implement the program.

Due to COVID 19 and the stress it has placed on the beginning of the school year, the pilot will have two phases. Phase 1 will begin in Spring semester 2021 and Phase 2 will begin in Fall semester 2021. For LEAs participating in the first phase, teacher training will take place in the Fall of 2020 and the program and assessment will be implemented in Spring 2021. LEAs that choose Phase 2 will be participate in teacher training in the Summer of 2021 and implement the program and assessment in the Fall 2021 semester. When LEAs apply for the pilot, they will indicate whether they will begin implementing the program in Spring 2021 or Fall 2021.

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