

Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education

American Civics Education Program

Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Progress Report through June 30, 2023

Contract CTR049997

Executive Summary

By providing high-quality professional development training and technical assistance, the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education (Foundation) supports the successful implementation of performance-based assessment with participating teachers of the American Civics Education Program (ACEP).

Through collaboration and in partnership with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, the Foundation:

- maintained webpages on LawForKids.org dedicated to ACEP implementation and recruitment.
- met with prospective ACEP teachers/administrators virtually to help recruit new participants.
- secured teacher edition WTP e-books for 7 teachers.
- secured student WTP e-books for all participating students when requested.
- distributed classroom resources, gavel pencils, and pocket constitutions to each participating teacher.
- distributed evaluation stipends to 6 teachers.
- distributed professional development stipends to 6 teachers.
- hosted 1 virtual workshop.
- hosted 5 virtual technical assistance sessions.
- administered midyear and end year technical assistance surveys.
- collected data for the program evaluation.
- provided phone and e-mail based technical assistance to participating and potential program teachers.

SCHOOL DATA

The ACEP ended FY22 with 11 participating teachers and the opportunity was not re-opened by ADE for the FY23 implementation. Several of the former 11 teachers left teaching or moved to new school sites that were not part of the program. This resulted in 7 continuing ACEP teachers at the beginning of this fiscal year. The following sites continued in the program from the previous fiscal year.

School District	School	Entity ID	City	County	Number of Teachers	Number of Participating Students
Chandler Unified School District 80	Casteel High School	92892	Queen Creek	Maricopa	2	357
Country Gardens Charter School	Country Gardens Charter School	79074	Laveen	Maricopa	1	12

Chino Valley USD 51	Chino Valley High School	6110	Chino Valley	Yavapai	1	147
Scottsdale Unified School District 48	Saguaro High School	5068	Scottsdale	Maricopa	2	115
Tucson Unified School District	Rincon High School	5760	Tucson	Pima	1	N/A

As the school year progressed, 6 of the participating schools/teachers maintained contact with the Foundation and were diligent in providing their program data. Rincon High School, the 7th school, remained in contact with the Foundation for the majority of the school year through email and attending some of the virtual Q & A sessions. They requested and received e-books for their students at the beginning of the school year. However, no response was provided at the end of the school year despite numerous attempts. The school year concluded without any data from Rincon High School and they were considered dropped from the program. The program began with 7 participating teachers and concluded with 6 teachers and 713 students.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Demographic data for the participating schools are listed in the table below.

Gender	Totals
Male	364
Female	349
Unknown/Unreported	0
Total	100%

Age	Totals
14	0
15	0
16	7
17	460
18+	249
Unknown/Unreported	0
Total	100%

Race	Totals
African American/Black	41
Asian	27

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	6
Caucasian/White	459
Native American	31
Other	122
Hispanic	142
Unknown/Unreported	6
Total	100%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Foundation hosted a virtual workshop on August 24, 2022, for the participating ACEP teachers. The workshop was hosted via zoom outside of school hours to eliminate the need to remove them from their classrooms. Teachers were given the option to attend and a total of 6 out of the 7 joined the workshop and received professional development stipends for their time and work. The workshop was facilitated by the Foundation’s Instruction Specialist, Mark Cable, who is an experienced We the People teacher formerly teaching in the middle school system. The workshop provided an overview of the program, reminder of the evaluation requirements, two lesson demonstrations, and a review of teaching resources available to the teachers. Participants were allotted time to ask clarifying questions and were reminded of the google link that provided them with implementation resources. They were also reminded of additional technical assistance offered to them, including regional coordinators, Foundation staff, and virtual Q & A sessions.

In addition to the fall virtual workshop, the Foundation offered the teachers an in-person training at the We the People State Competition. This hands-on training was designed to enable the participants to experience the program as judges for the showcasing teams. The goal was to strengthen their knowledge and experience as We the People teachers through another lens of the program. By extension, it would help them better understand the performance-based assessment goals of the program. The in-person opportunity would have been followed up with a virtual workshop to debrief the experience and clarify questions that may have arisen. Professional development stipends and travel accommodations were offered to help the participants join. This was an optional training and none of the teachers opted to join.

A survey of the workshop was administered and collected. The Foundation compiled the evaluation forms to create meaningful reports and data analysis. Below are the average participant scores on a scale of 5 to 1 (5 – Strongly Agree to 1 – Strongly Disagree):

Date	Professional Development	Average Score
8/24/2022	ACEP Workshop	4.46

TEACHER SUPPORT

The Foundation continued with the strategy of the previous year to keep communication open for teachers and allow them the opportunity to ask questions as needed. Emails were sent monthly containing reminders about the program and resources available to them. Included in the emails were invitations to contact Foundation staff when needed for additional assistance and to inform them of the virtual Q & A sessions made available 5 times during the school year. Foundation staff had regularly scheduled zoom meetings planned and logged onto every meeting to ensure assistance was available to those who would rather communicate verbally. A google drive was maintained that housed all handouts that would be useful to the participants during their ACEP implementation. The link was sent to participants and the information was also sent when requested individually and during the monthly emails. Teachers were invited to ask questions about any aspect of ACEP implementation.

During the school year, each teacher received gavel pencils, pocket constitutions, a set of We the People textbooks, if requested, that included 30 student texts and 1 teacher's guide or e-books. The hearings were reviewed during the virtual workshop as a reminder of the performance-based assessment. The Foundation offered the regional and state showcases/competitions as an avenue to complete their hearings and collect their hearing data. All 6 of the teachers opted to host their hearings in their classrooms and secure their own volunteer judges.

EVALUATION

In FY22 the Foundation, in collaboration with ADE, developed a plan for completing the assessment in the classroom and presented the information to the teachers. This same plan was utilized in FY23. The teachers were required to engage their students in answering one hearing question per unit utilizing the questions in the back of the WTP textbook. The scoring rubric was provided to the teachers and modeled during the summer institute. Additionally, the teachers were required to administer a pretest before any content lessons began and a posttest after all classroom instruction and hearings were conducted. The data was collected in an aggregate format as requested by ADE. The teachers did a very good job of collecting usable data by ensuring the same students who took the pretests also participated in the hearings and took the posttests. All of the data submitted was usable which was an improvement from the previous year. The pre and posttest data that was viable is included in the table below:

FISCAL YEAR 22	Pretest	Posttest
Total Students	727	727
Total Classes	29	29
Total 60% & Above	215	530
Total 59% or below	479	164

Failing	479	164
Percent Failing	66%	23%
Passing	244	1257
Percent Passing	30%	73%

The terms outlined in the ACEP deem 60% and higher as passing in the pre and posttest and the hearings which is the performance-based assessment. This was the second year of implementation for all 6 teachers. There was an improvement in both the data collected from the teachers and the

performance of the students. This demonstrates that as the teachers became more familiar and comfortable with the We the People program, the more the scores aligned between the standardized testing and performance-based assessments.

Each teacher conducted a performance-based assessment in the form of simulated congressional hearings prior to administering the posttest and at the end of the semester/year. The WTP text is comprised of 6 units with each unit having 3 possible hearing questions. Teachers chose one hearing question from each unit and the students answered the hearing questions with 4 minutes of prepared speech and 6 minutes of follow-up questions. The students completed the hearings in groups but were scored individually. The total number of students completing the performance-based assessment is higher than the total number of students that took the pre/posttest. This is due to the students completing all of 6 unit hearings. For example, a class of 20 students where all 20 students participated in each of the 6 unit hearings would show a number of 80 students who completed the hearings (20 students x 6 units). Teachers had the option of all students completing all hearings or dividing the class into 6 hearings. The results of the hearings are below.

HEARING TOTALS	
Students Failed	298
Percent Failed	13%
Total Passing	1793
Percent passing	74%

The pretests scores and posttests scores show marked student improvement with higher scores, higher passage rates, and lower numbers of students failing for the posttest. This marked improvement speaks highly of the instruction given and learning achieved throughout the classes. The hearing totals reflect a greater passage rate with only 13% failing compared to the 23% of students failing with the written posttests. While acknowledging that any comparisons of the testing models should be made with caution, the low failure rate does show that the opportunity to discuss core concepts learned through the hearings allowed for students to showcase their knowledge to a greater degree than when asked to complete a written posttest. With an opportunity to share their knowledge (4 minutes of prepared speech and 6 minutes of follow-up questions) only 13% of the students were unable to express the knowledge required to pass. The standardized written pretesting and post-testing did show learning with 66% failing in the pretest and only 23% in the posttest, but there is a marked percentage increase of students passing with the hearing performance-based assessment. The skills required to apply knowledge to specific issues in the performance-based testing demonstrate the learning needed (74% passing), whereas the standardized testing, in the recollection of specific data points required in the standardized testing, was similar in 73% of the students demonstrated their knowledge.

CONCLUSION

During FY23, the Foundation has developed and implemented a virtual workshop, purchased curriculum and educator resources for the participating teachers, implemented a performance-based assessment, compiled training evaluation data, and provided technical assistance for participating and potential ACEP teachers. The Foundation looks forward to collaborating with ADE and implementing the ACEP program in its final year in FY24.