



Center for Education in Law and Democracy

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September 6, 2011

Dear Friends of the Colorado We the People Program:

For the past several years, you have contributed your time and expertise to provide Colorado high school students with a high level, authentic civic experience—talking with prominent adults in the community about the history and relevance of the Constitution to our nation and our communities. This year, I am writing to ask you to support the program financially as well as programmatically. As you may know, Congress voted last spring to cut all funding for the We the People Program that had been funded continuously since 1987. CELD is working closely with teachers to solicit community support so that we can continue to offer this worthwhile experience to students throughout Colorado. *Offering this program equitably throughout our state is a huge challenge.*

### **Background**

Teacher leaders in more than 25 schools representing all 7 congressional districts have expressed interest in continuing the competitive format of the We the People program. Based on projections from these teachers, we anticipate that more than 3000 Colorado high school students will participate in a simulated hearing through the program this fall. While schools and teachers absorb many of these costs, additional funds are needed to provide congressional level hearings as well as a culminating state finals-- events that students consistently tell us are especially meaningful to them.

The program that we have planned, based on polling all 25+ teachers who wish to continue, or in some cases, begin offering this experience as part of their civics and government program, will include a series of in-school hearings at many schools, 7 congressional district hearings held during the week of November 14 and the state competition on December 12, 2011 at the State Capitol. Teachers have agreed to pay a registration fee from their schools and community organizations.

### **How you can help**

For the program to continue in Colorado we are asking individuals, corporations and community organizations who value civic learning to make donations to make sure that this worth while experience continues. Many of our smaller rural and mountain WTP schools as well as under- resourced urban high schools are having a difficult time with fundraising efforts.

Based on estimated costs for student travel, renting facilities, postage, printing, and communication we estimate that we will need another \$15,000 to conduct the student hearings around the state. We believe that this amount will provide for maintenance of the Colorado WTP high school competitive program. Your donation will be used to cover the required registration fees for participation in the Colorado WTP program. As in years past, we anticipate that at least two classes from beyond the metro area in Congressional Districts 3, 4, and 5 will need transportation and housing for the state finals. If we exceed this funding goal, we hope to provide a 2012 summer professional development program to support and encourage new teachers to join this network of Colorado teachers.

Given the short notice about the end to federal funding, CELD staff will volunteer the time needed to organize a program similar to past years. As a 501(c)3 organization, CELD is accepting donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations. Please make your checks payable to: CELD, PO Box 18490, Denver, CO 80218. Write "Colorado WTP Program" on the memo section of your check so we can provide you with a letter for tax purposes.

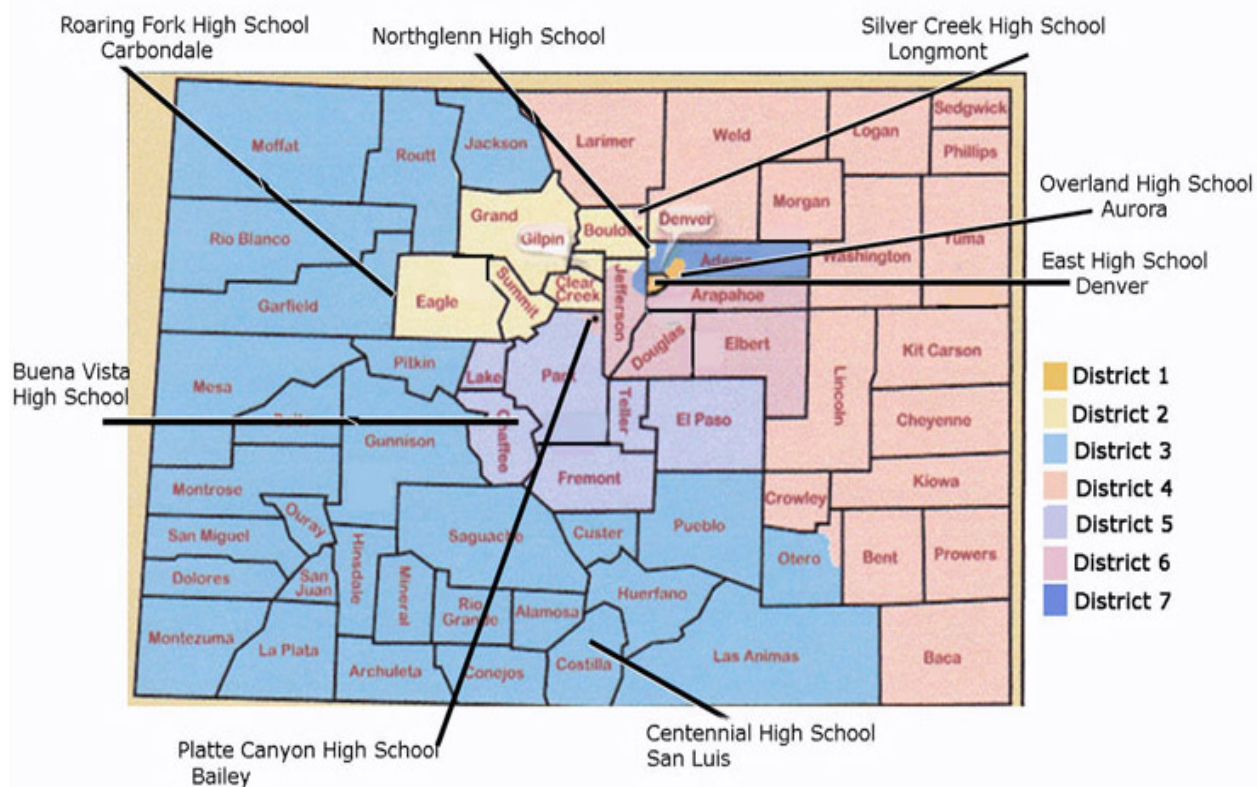
We encourage you to share this letter with others in your network who also value high quality instruction on the Constitution and authentic civic learning for our next generation of Colorado citizens. We thank you in advance for your continued support for the Colorado We the People Program.

Sincerely,



Jackie Johnson  
State Coordinator, We the People Program

## 2010 Colorado We the People State Finals: School Locations



Please note: Registration fees for participation are on a sliding scale based on the number of students: Schools with more than 2000 students-- \$1,000; schools with 2000 - 1,000 students-- \$750; schools with fewer than 1,000 - \$500.

Congressional level hearings were held last November in 8 locations around the state: Denver, Aurora, Westminster, Centennial, Greeley, Grand Junction, Salida and Carbondale.