



CIVIC LEADERS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Throughout the course of the program, students will improve their civic efficacy, knowledge of local, state, and national issues, and develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills by applying content knowledge to a series of constructed responses and a final persuasive speech on a chosen issue impacting Maryland.

WEEK 1: BUILDING COMMUNITY AND UNDERSTANDING VALUES AND TENSIONS

- 1. Building a Learning Community & Introducing Political Values:** Students begin by establishing the goals of the program and completing a community timeline that reflects their collective experiences, political engagement, and identity.
- 2. Extended Constructed Response and Building Literacy Skills:** Students will create a baseline for their writing growth by completing an extended constructed response. They will then grow their literacy skills by learning how to unlock a prompt and a scoring rubric.
- 3. Understanding Political Values and Tensions:** Students are introduced to several American political values (such as liberty, equality, justice, security) and consider how those values help us to understand the American political system and public policy discussions and debates. Students discuss how they individually prioritize political values and how those values are often in tension.

WEEK 2: POLICY DELIBERATIONS AND DEVELOPING PERSUASIVE ESSAY TECHNIQUES

- 4. Review Persuasive Techniques and Speech Examples:** Students will review and analyze examples of persuasive speech. Students will write a constructed response detailing what persuasive techniques they find effective.
- 5. Community Deliberation:** Students will simulate a deliberation of a local decision-making organization that is responding to a pressing community issue. Students will develop recommendations to a hypothetical local government issue.
- 6. Structured Response Essay:** Students read a sample text of three public policy issues and formulate a long form response to build reading and writing comprehension skills.

WEEK 3: SHARING OUR VOICES

- 7. Local Issue Deliberation:** Students will learn about one local or state issue that is currently being debated in a relevant legislative body. Students will develop their own opinions and ideas about the issue and engage in a deliberation process to seek consensus.
- 8. Final Writing Practice and Program Reflection:** Students will receive feedback on their session 6 Structured Response Essays, will review sample work from a previous session to consider how applying persuasive techniques and political values could improve written work, and will reflect on the program.
- 9. Post-test and Program Reflection:** Students will reflect on their learning and consider how to stay engaged on issues that matter to them. They will consider the importance of communication and writing to democratic participation.