



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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LA LEGISLATURE PARTICIPATING IN NATIONAL CIVIC ED PROJECT

The Louisiana Legislature is one of five states selected to pilot a civic education curriculum called "Appreciating Legislatures," sponsored by the Alliance for Representative Democracy.

Alliance partners include the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Center for Civic Education, and the Center on Congress at Indiana University.

This program offers an opportunity for outstanding civics educators to have additional tools to teach about representative democracy and to help build a strong network of educators and practitioners dedicated to civic learning and civic engagement in Louisiana.

The pre-eminent scholar on state legislatures, Dr. Alan Rosenthal, Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, developed the lesson plans in collaboration with a former high school teacher. They have been tested in classrooms by high school teachers in Nebraska, New Jersey, and Ohio. Dissemination of the two lesson plans, "Appreciating Democracy" and "Appreciating Representation," and promoting their use is the principal task of the first phase of the project.

Louisiana's kickoff event will be the "Appreciating Legislatures" workshop, hosted by legislative staff coordinators at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge on June 13-14, 2005. Professor Rosenthal will provide hands-on training in the lessons to 10 Louisiana teachers. The program will also include presentations by Louisiana legislators, legislative staff, and other civic education experts, and a visit to the Legislature to observe the legislative process first-hand.

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These teachers will then orient and train other teachers on how to use the plans in civics, government, history, and social studies classes. After the pilot project, the goal will be to develop strategies to train educators in the classroom and to promote the use of the lesson plans throughout Louisiana's civic education community.

The 10 educators in Louisiana selected to participate in the kickoff are: Lindsey Bruno, Bossier City; Nancy Ensminger, Baton Rouge; Regina Galjour, Galliano; Drena Hutchinson, Slidell; Mark Lester, St. Francisville; Wade Price, Marrero; Mary Ann Riddle, Monroe; Jamie Staub, Metairie; Joel Stevison, Alexandria; and Deborah Tatman, Eunice.

Teachers' expenses for attending the workshop will be paid by a grant from the National Conference of State Legislatures.

This program is designed to be a professional development experience for teachers: it is content-focused (civics and government), it aligns with high quality professional development standards, and it is State Department of Education-approved for CLU's.

State partners for the program include: Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education Louisiana Commission on Civic Education Center for Civic Education and Project Citizen coordinators statewide Louisiana Council on Social Studies.

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