



## **The Student Voices Project – Pennsylvania 2005-2006**

### ***What is Student Voices?***

The Student Voices Project is the nonpartisan, national civic education initiative of the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) of the University of Pennsylvania. The project was created to address the problems of declining political participation and low voter turnout by young people in America. The goal is to help teens become informed about government, elections, and policy issues so that they may understand and appreciate the value of being part of the political process.

### ***What do Pennsylvania Student Voices students do?***

Students assess the issues facing their communities – by interviewing family and community members, conducting surveys, analyzing data and observing challenges firsthand. They access their local newspapers to research community issues by logging on to the Pennsylvania Student Voices website, **[www.student-voices.org/pennsylvania](http://www.student-voices.org/pennsylvania)**. Each class forms a Youth Issues Agenda, which is posted on the website so that students can share their concerns with their peers throughout the commonwealth. Students use the website to voice their opinions on the issues by responding to Speak Out! questions and click polls. They invite community leaders, government officials and political candidates to their classrooms to answer their issue-based questions; attend meetings of government bodies to watch how their leaders make decisions; and communicate their concerns to the public by writing to their local newspapers and taking part in local television and radio forums.

### ***Who is participating in Pennsylvania Student Voices?***

Approximately 400 teachers from cities, suburbs, small towns and rural areas in almost 200 schools in 48 Pennsylvania counties have been trained in or given access to the Student Voices curriculum. In fall 2005 teachers will implement the “Student Voices in Local Government” curriculum to help students determine who represents them in their local government and how to communicate issues they care about to those elected officials. In spring 2006 students will use the “Student Voices in the Campaign” curriculum to follow the candidates and issues in the primary races for Pennsylvania Governor and U.S. Senate.

### ***Where else is Student Voices being implemented in the 2005-2006 school year?***

In addition to two statewide projects in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the Student Voices curriculum is being taught in Columbus, Denver, Greater Pittsburgh, North Texas, Philadelphia and San Antonio.

### ***Who funds Student Voices?***

Student Voices is funded by the Annenberg Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

### ***For more information, please contact:***

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