

We, the People

While most of the students who visit here are too young to vote, the Old State Capitol places a strong emphasis on the roles that everyone plays in a democracy. From the air you breathe to the roads you drive on, everything you do in a day will be touched in some way by government.

Our education programs help students explore challenging topics and learn to engage in civil discourse in ways they may not encounter elsewhere.

The importance of the public is reflected in the building's design; specific areas were created for the public to watch their representatives at work. The public viewing area in the House of Representatives is still intact, located on the balcony above the main chamber.

But we want students to be more than observers! Through the Secretary of State's Geaux Vote app, students can find out who their elected representatives are.

Your assignment: Develop an action plan focusing on a particular issue that is important to you. Then, keep a journal that accounts for the actions you are taking to observe, comment, and guide your representatives. Your diary can be in the form of a blog, series of tweets, etc.

Here's a sample Action Plan

GET EDUCATED: Learn about the issue. Research proposed bills in Louisiana by going to www.legis.la.gov. Watch the Legislature online or CPAN for live coverage of Congress. Find out who my representative is and where they stand!

REACH OUT: Contact my representatives and let them know my position. Ask what they are doing to support my issue or why they feel differently.

ORGANIZE: Poll my family and friends to see how they feel about the issue.

PASS THE WORD: Educate others on how their elected officials stand.

CAMPAIGN: Make a commitment to support the election or re-election of a candidate that supports your issue.

CONNECT: Contact the candidate to tell him/her I support them based on my issue and ask how I can help. (This could include distributing yard signs, hosting a "meet and greet" in my neighborhood, distributing campaign materials, etc. It does not have to involve donating money.)

ASSESS: What have I learned from this process.

What are additional ways for citizens to become politically involved?