

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Kids Voting North Alaska****Federal Tax ID: 92-0171529****Project Title:****Project Type: Equipment and Materials**

Kids Voting North Alaska - Program Revitalization

State Funding Requested: \$15,000
One-Time Need**House District: Fairbanks Areawide (7-11)****Brief Project Description:**

To purchase necessary equipment and printing charges to encourage young people to participate in civic engagement.
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Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$15,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$15,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

*Funding Details:**Private funds are currently being raised through fundraisers and private solicitation.***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Description of the organization:

Kids Voting North Alaska is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that fosters an informed, participating electorate by educating and actively engaging young people and their families in voting and other elements of effective civic engagement.

Brief Description of the program:

Kids Voting North Alaska offers a K-12 civic education program that includes both grade-appropriate activities and an authentic voting experience that replicates the adult process. The idea is to introduce students to the concepts of citizenship in the earliest grades and continue throughout their school years.

It is the combination of classroom civics education and an authentic voting experience that replicates the adult process that has the greatest impact on future behavior. This ongoing education and practice develops strong skills and habits for living in a democracy. The program creates community, school and family bonding, where each entity works with the others to create a dynamic experience for students.

The emphasis on giving students an "authentic" voting experiences separates Kids Voting from other program. This authenticity is achieved primarily by familiarizing students with a ballot that includes both candidates and issues that are on official ballots for adults. Kids Voting North Alaska works closely with personnel at the Alaska Division of Elections in ballot creation. Additionally, Kids Voting North Alaska has developed its own online voting program E-VOTE ALASKA.

In the classroom, KVUSA classroom civics activities introduce students to the concepts of citizenship in the earliest grades and continue throughout their school years. The program is designed to work with the social studies curriculum currently used allowing teachers to choose activities that are appropriate to lesson plans and that fit time requirements. Kids Voting USA classroom materials are not an "add-on" to an already full teaching-schedule. These activities are tools to help teachers meet the standards outlined in the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies as well as state curriculum standards for social studies.

Benefit to the Community:

Specific Activities:

- Provide an authentic voting experience for all K-12 students in the Fairbanks area
- Provide Kids Voting USA® educational resources and all supplementary materials.
- Provide curricular training sessions for all teachers in public, private, and home schools
- Distribute weekly lessons on civics and civic responsibilities leading up to elections
- Available for consultation and in-service opportunities
- Support other civic education programs
- Provide information sessions for parent groups
- Sponsor teacher-incentive grants
- Develop and implement an online voting program
- Coordinate ballot with State Division of Elections
- Conduct Kids Voting Poster, Writing, and Political Cartoon Contests
- Plan Kids Voting Golf Classic
- Provide national affiliation with Kids Voting USA®
- Participate in National Program Development
- * Media Recognition

Research Results:

The Report on The Civic Mission of the Schools states:

"Kids Voting USA is a school-based program that combines mock voting with lessons about issues and the history of the franchise. Rigorous evaluations show positive effects on students' attention to news, discussion of current events with their families, and knowledge, especially among low-income participants. Parents of students involved in Kids Voting programs vote at significantly higher rates than other adults."

Students who participate in Kids Voting USA activities learn how to gather information, think critically and make decisions. They also learn important collaboration skills as well as respect for differing points of view – skills useful not only for civic participation but also for life.

Research findings shows that Kids Voting works on many levels:

18-Year-Old Voters. In 1996, Dr. Diana B. Carlin, dean of Graduate School & International Programs at the University of Kansas, in conjunction with Kansas Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh, found a strong correlation between student participation in the Kids Voting USA program and subsequent registration and voting as a first time 18-year-old voter. In Kansas communities with a Kids Voting USA program, the voting rate for registered 18-year-olds was six percentage points higher than that of their non-participating peers.

Trickle-up Effect. Dr. McDevitt and Dr. Steven Chaffee found that students who participate in the Kids Voting USA program actually impact their parents. As students learn about the election process and current events, they are motivated to initiate discussions at home. These discussions can provide interest and incentive for parents who received little political stimulation and encouragement during their youth. Also noted was an increase in students' sense of empowerment and self-esteem stimulated by initiating and engaging family members in political discussions.

Increases Adult Voter Turnout. Communities with Kids Voting USA programs see adult voter turnout increase by 3 percent to 5 percent, according to findings by Dr. Bruce Merrill, who says: "To be able to say that any one program is a factor for why 5 percent of the population voted is nothing less than remarkable."

Organization's Target Audience:

Last year precinct sponsors, helped approximately 16,000 students in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, including private and home school students, participate in and become more aware of a process integral to the American system of government: casting a vote for an elected official. Your donation will help continue curriculum coordination, teacher trainings, parent workshops and aid implementation of the Kids Voting electronic voting program

Project Timeline:

All funds will be spent directly following the appropriation in FY12.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Kids Voting North Alaska

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No