Dear Parent or Guardian,

All of us at Constitutional Rights Foundation are excited to be field-testing a new program called The Civic Action Project (CAP) in high schools throughout the nation. The CAP curriculum provides policy-related lessons and a student “civic action” component. Through readings and classroom activities contained in the lessons, students learn how government content applies to policymaking at the local level, how policy is made and can be influenced, and strategies for effective citizenship. The civic action component requires students to select a problem or issue relating to policy, examine and analyze the problem or issue, and consider and implement civic actions to effect change.

Your child’s government/civics teacher will be asking students to think about problems, issues, or policies that they would like to address and once approved, they will start taking “civic actions” to address their selected issue. Civic actions include doing research to find out more about the problem/issue. Student might also write, call, or meet with public officials or other community leaders, attend a public meeting, or do projects that raise public awareness.

Many CAP activities will take place outside of class time, and students will keep their teachers informed about the civic actions they intend to take. The overarching goal of CAP is to help students prepare to be informed and engaged citizens. Students will be assessed on their ability to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills—not on how successful they are in impacting the problem they select. They will also be required to analyze public policy and continually connect their CAP experience to policy, since that is a key component of all government/civics courses.

The Civic Action Project is a program of Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) and is funded by the Annenberg Foundation and supported by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation. CRF selected five national sites to participate in this field-test: Chicago, Denver, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. CRF, located in Los Angeles, is a non-profit, non-partisan organization known for its innovative social studies programs. Please feel free to visit both the CRF and CAP websites:

Constitutional Rights Foundation: www.crf-usa.org
The Civic Action Project: www.crfcap.org
As CAP develops, CRF would like to be able to post student work, photographs, and possibly video showing students participating in CAP lessons on the website to share with other CAP teachers and students.

A permission slip will be sent home for this, and we appreciate your support. We are very excited to have your student involved and please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Keri Doggett
Director of Program Development
Constitutional Rights Foundation