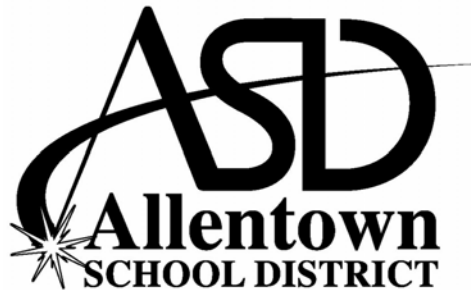


For Immediate Release

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**ALLENTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM
CULMINATING EVENTS ANNOUNCED**

(April 20, 2005– Allentown, PA) – Allentown School District’s civic education program is announcing the culminating events for the 2004-2005 school year. The culminating events allow students to employ material learned throughout the year to a project or activity with ties to their local community. The goals of the civic education program are to engage students in learning about a participatory democracy and encourage lifelong engagement and involvement in government and civic activities. The civics-based program for K-5 is part of the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program administered by the Center for Civic Education.

“Allentown School District’s students excel with their innovative ideas and intelligent approach to civic engagement,” says Yoder. “Our students are learning about participatory democracy and are taking an active approach to making Allentown a better place to live and work. We are all tremendously proud of our students and I am proud to announce the culminating activities and to be able to showcase the great work of our students in Allentown School District.”

Allentown School District’s civic education is a K-12 program. There are three programs in civic education. Grades K-5 learn from the *Foundations of Democracy* program that focuses on issues of authority, justice, privacy, and responsibility. Classes in Grade 5 additionally participate in the

We The People program that also involves a mock congressional hearing as a culminating activity and the *Project Citizen* program. Grade 8 is focused on Civics and Grade 12 students focus and participate in a course on American Government.

Allentown School District's fifth graders also participate in the *Project Citizen* program in which students choose an ongoing project involving public policy, brainstorm a solution, and advocate the solution to public officials. It is in this arena that ASD has earned national attention. During the 2003-2004 school year, Teacher Terry Haas' Muhlenberg Elementary 5th grade class won the state competition and proceeded to finish second at the national competition. Their project was in regard to school uniforms. This year, Teacher Sue Kandianias' Ritter Elementary 5th grade class won the state competition and also finished second in the national competition, representatives from the class presented their portfolio to a Congressional Conference on Civic Education in Washington DC this past December. They derived the program, "Ritter Against Litter." Allentown School District swept the top three places in this state contest two years in a row. The state competition this year takes place at the National Constitution Center the week of May 9-12, 2005. Not to be outdone, Dieruff Teacher Keith Ronald's AP Government class was among the final six teams in the state competing in the "We the People" mock Congressional hearing.

About Allentown School District

As the fourth largest of 501 districts throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Allentown School District educates approximately 17,521 students in 23 pre-school, elementary, middle and high schools located throughout the City of Allentown, and employs over 2,000 administrators, professionals, staff members and employees. The District has successfully completed a three-year Empowerment Plan. 2004 PSSA scores revealed 64 percent of all students were in the basic, proficient or advanced PSSA categories. Just fewer than 70% of ASD's students take part in a district-wide free or subsidized lunch program.

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