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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: May 24-25, 2011
SUBJECT: Randallstown High School – We the People Team

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to recognize the Randallstown High students and teacher of the *We the People* Team who represented Maryland at the National Finals in Washington, D.C.

BACKGROUND:

The twenty-fourth annual *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* National Finals were held in Washington, D. C. from April 29-May 2. This program is sponsored by the Center for Civic Education through a USDE grant and Congress. The purpose of the program is to promote an understanding of constitutional principles and civic practices. The simulated congressional hearing is a performance based assessment and culmination of the unit of study. Teams from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands competed. During the hearings, students present prepared testimony in response to three Constitutional questions and then respond to follow-up questions posed by a team of judges comprised of state jurists, lawyers, and Constitutional scholars.

In order to qualify to represent Maryland at this event, a team must first compete at district level hearings. Winners of the district competition then must compete at the state level. This year teams from Washington County and Montgomery County (Congressional Districts 6 and 8) competed with Randallstown (District 2) for the state title and the privilege of representing Maryland at the National Finals.

Maryland's winning team is Randallstown High School, Congressional District 2. The team is comprised of 13 AP Government students most of whom come from other countries (Egypt, Nigeria, Liberia, and Grenada). The students represent some of the best and brightest of the school. They include the top eight students in the senior class, all of whom rank in the top 10 percent. They have taken classes together for years, often moving throughout the school from one AP or gifted-and-talented class to another.

Members of the State Board of Education
May 24-25, 2011
Page 2

Their teacher, Richard Weitkamp, received training for the program at the *We the People* Summer Institute at James Madison's Montpelier and MSDE's American Government Governor's Academy.

This is the second team from Randallstown High School to represent Maryland at the Finals. The school's first trip occurred in 2009. While did Randallstown did not place in the 10 ten finalists this year, they did place in the top third overall nationally.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Randallstown High School We the People team represented Maryland at the *We the People* Simulated Congressional Hearings (National Finals) in Washington D.C. from April 29-May2.

ACTION:

We are requesting recognition by the Board for the student and teacher's accomplishment.

NSG/Preparers Initials
Attachments (If appropriate)