



Washington State Senate

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Superintendent Larry Nyland
School Board President Betty Patu
Seattle Public Schools
2445 3rd Ave South
Seattle, WA 98134

Dear Superintendent Nyland and President Patu,

I am writing to express my support for the Civics for All Initiative. This program offers invaluable civic education to Seattle's youngest students and can serve as a critical first step in becoming part of an active and informed body politic. This is especially true for many low income kids and kids of color, two demographics that are strongly represented in the 37th Legislative District.

As an activist, I have spoken with many students from immigrant, people of color, and low income communities about the importance of their voice in the policy making process. The emphasis on voting in mock elections under Civics for All seems like perfect way to help students like these realize their political voices at the most basic level: voting. As the former Executive Director of OneAmerica, I organized Lobby Days to bring students from Seattle and as far as Eastern Washington to meet with their elected representatives and get issues important to them and their respective communities addressed. I can honestly say that invoking the confidence and motivation of first generation students and others who have never been exposed to the workings of civic life remains one of my most rewarding experiences to date.

Additionally, during my first term in the Washington State Legislature, I have strongly advocated for the inclusion of students from underrepresented communities to come fill Page and Intern opportunities. I have seen the imitative that is created in these passionate young people after spending time here in the Legislature. This spark then stays with them as they head back to their communities and begin to navigate their own place in the world around them. This is why I believe we can, and should, do more to invigorate this interest among more of our young people. Civics for All clearly will do so.

It is our social responsibility to begin this education process as early as we are able. Civics for All is a program that I believe supports this mission and I hope that you will agree.

Sincerely,

Pramila Jayapal
State Senator
37th Legislative District



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