

# Mock Congress

## Year in Review: 2015



# Overview

Mock Congress is a student--led activity for the senior class which simulates the American Legislative process. Over the fall semester, Government teachers guide students through the process of learning about the United States government system, the inner- workings of Congress, America's political landscape, and our country's legislative process.



# Process

1. Each student, or Senator, will research a particular subject and compose a bill for submission to their senate. Students will also write a substantial research paper in support of their bill.
2. Students will then participate in committees to study and edit fellow students' bills.
3. Select bills will be sent to one of our four senate floors where the bills will be debated, amended and then either passed or defeated by the student Senators.





# Mission and Goals

Mock Congress aims to increase students' knowledge and interest in political issues, current events, congressional affairs, legal topics, legislative activities and the government process.

The skills developed and practiced in Mock Congress will help students in college and career- regardless of their field of study or career choice. These skills include research, reading, writing, speaking, listening, technology, debate, compromise, collaboration, negotiation, perseverance, and hard work.

Our main goal for Mock Congress however, is both simple and vital -- we want all students to realize and understand that in the United States of America they truly have the power to make the change they believe in.

# Curriculum Learning Objectives

- To understand the duties performed by those who serve in Congress.
- To explain how committees function.
- To identify the specific steps and process through which a bill becomes a law.
- To compare the Senate rules for debate with those in the House.
- To evaluate the actions the President can take after both houses have passed a bill.



# Skill Development

- Research
- Reading
- Writing
- Negotiation
- Participation

- Compromise
- Collaboration
- Perseverance
- Organization
- Focus

- Speaking
- Listening
- Technology
- Debate
- Determination



# Student Work

- *Close GTMO Act of 2015*
- *School and Health Act of 2015*
- *Anti-Abortion Legislation Act of 2015*
- *Class-Size Reduction Act of 2015*
- *Freedom Vaccination Act of 2015*
- *Agricultural Pesticide Elimination Act of 2015*
- *Housing Act of 2015*
- *Privatizing Amtrak Act of 2015*
- *Abolish Child Labor Act of 2015*





# Parents, what was a specific highlight that you observed during Mock Congress?

- “The amount of passion that went into many bills and discussions.”
- “Highlight was seeing the girls speak. They were so organized and well spoken.”
- “90% of the students seemed highly engaged. It was great to see that enthusiasm and willingness to raise their hands and debate an issue. I thought it was terrific!”





# Parents, what was your overall opinion of the Mock Congress activity?

- “The kids were so impressive! So well behaved and respectful of each other!”
- “Very inspiring! Just getting students to open up, stand and speak in front of their peers, and get out of their comfort zone... will help them in college and life. While this is a great learning exercise for Senior year, it's an even better exercise for life skills.”
- “Amazing.”



# Students, what did you think of Mock Congress?

- “I learned so much about significant problems facing our country.”
- “Even though it was hard and a lot of work, it was worth it.”
- “I valued the opportunity it gave to us to become more involved in politics and real world issues.”
- “I enjoyed the process a lot because it gave us an inside look how a bill goes through Congress.”



# Students, what would you tell future Seniors about MC?

- “Stay organized and don’t procrastinate.”
- “Go into the debates with an open mind, and have research prepared - it will help!”
- “Mock Congress is what you make of it. Be prepared, be respectful, and force yourself to form your own opinions... Don’t just vote with the crowd.”
- “There’s a lot of work, but it makes the two days of Mock Congress that much more rewarding and exciting.”





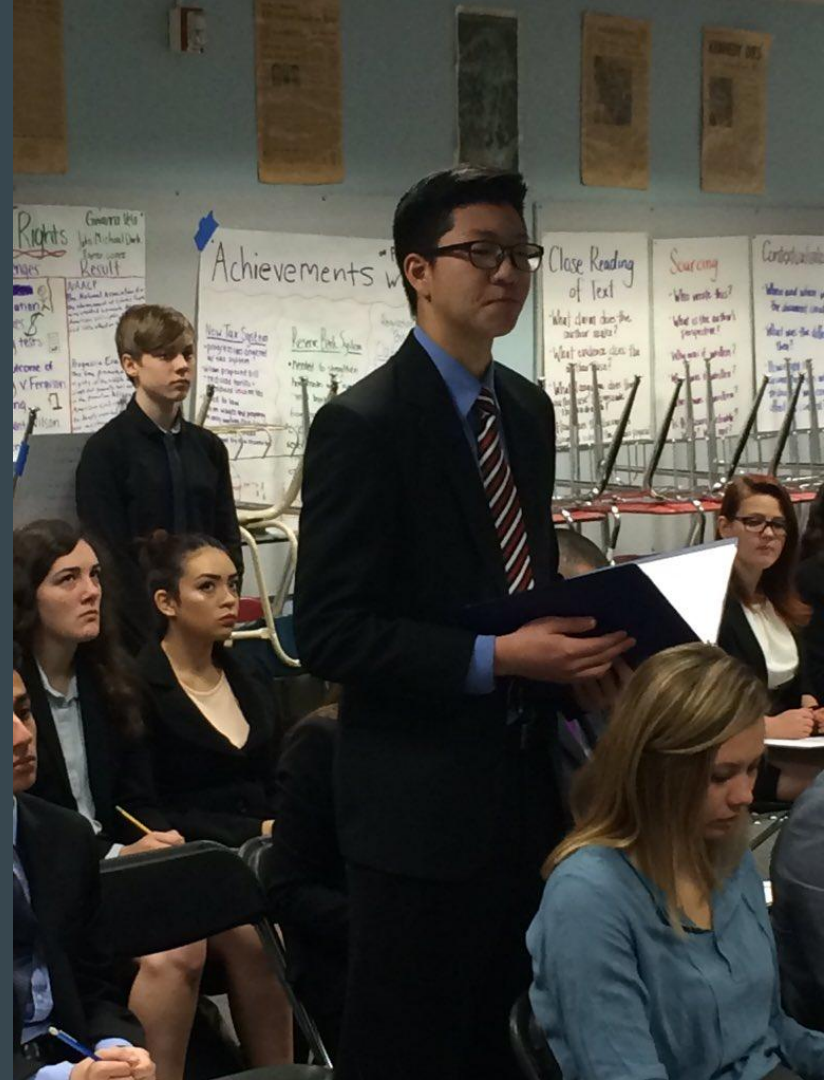
# Teachers, what thoughts do you have about this year's Mock Congress?

- “I loved seeing how far students have progressed since I had them Freshman year - they have become adults discussing and debating real life topics.”
- “It’s so rewarding to see years of work come together for them during this simulation.”
- “I saw students who never speak up in class give very articulate arguments about very complex issues ... very cool.”
- “So relevant and engaging!”



# Staff, how does Mock Congress support Northgate's mission?

- “Mock Congress is the epitome of Common Core curriculum - it is student-driven, focused on skill development, and creates educated citizens for the future ”
- “This activity is something that takes the curriculum and brings it alive. Mock Congress brings the real world into school.”
- “We want our students creating, collaborating, and engaging in the content - this event allows them to do all that and more.”



# Operating Expenses

- 200 Chairs = \$275
- 2,000+ Copies = \$300
- Subs for 5 Teachers for 2 Days of Mock Congress = \$1,500
- Subs for 5 Teachers for 2 Grading Days = \$1,500

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE BY  
SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT:**

**\$3,575**





# APPENDIX A: Common Core State Standards: WRITING

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1:** Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.A:** Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.B:** Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.C:** Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.D:** Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.E:** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

# APPENDIX B: Common Core State Standards: READING

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3:** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6:** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8:** Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.10:** By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

# APPENDIX C: Common Core State Standards: SPEAKING & LISTENING

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A:** Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B:** Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C:** Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.



# APPENDIX D: Common Core State Standards: SPEAKING & LISTENING (con't)

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D:** Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2:** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3:** Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.6:** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.