

Dear Parents and Friends of NMSD

While teaching and learning at a distance is a challenge for educators and for students it also presents some encouraging opportunities. The Hawkins Middle School Humanities students are a case in point. The humanities are those studies most proper to, closest to, the human person as person. Nothing is more proper to us as human beings than how we are governed. The central question of government, particularly in the United States is, to paraphrase Alexander Hamilton is *Can we govern ourselves by choice, reflection and deliberation or must government be imposed upon us by force, fraud or historical accident?"*

Ms. Winn and Mrs. Lester support our kids to understand government by participating in it as citizens whose voices matter. Ms. Winn and Mrs. Lester have partnered with lobbyist, Rhonda Weaver of TVW. Ms. Weaver serves our class and other Washington State classes as our lobbyist and knows her way around Olympia. The aim of the class is to enable our students to see state government in operation and to participate in it themselves. Due to space limitations, we are one of only twelve schools participating in the TVW process and one of only four Middle Schools. Here is the link to our Hawkins [Capitol Classroom Zoom Connections 2021](#).

Below are the three Bills that our Hawkins eighth graders followed.

- Making Juneteenth a legal holiday: [HB1016](#)
- Concerning menstrual products in schools: [HB1273](#)
- Concerning school-based Health Centers: [HB1225](#).

Here is how the program works: TVW makes videos available that address several questions:

How does legislation travel from the introduction of a bill to its enactment or rejection? See leg.wa.gov

How is a bill amended and why?

What will each bill cost and how will that impact the state budget?

What is the role of public participation in shaping a bill? (The students view and listen to public testimony.)

How did our legislators vote on each bill and why did they vote as they did?

Students discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each bill and form their own opinions on whether a bill should be opposed or supported. The students, having formed their opinions, then write the representatives and senators offering reasons they should agree. The students were thrilled when a senator or representative would write back in agreement. Our students

gained a lesson one may hope will stay with them throughout their lives—knowledge based on personal experience that active involvement in the democratic process can make a difference.

The impact of our students on the legislative process was made particularly clear when Senator Wellman made a video congratulating our students on their letter-writing campaign. [Sen. Wellman remarks.](#)

May Letter from the Board

JohnC

John Campbell

Position 4 NMSD

5/25/21