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STATE OF KANSAS

NEWS RELEASE

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Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach to Address *We the People* Competition

Ten schools from across Kansas will bring twelve teams to Topeka, Monday, Feb. 28th, to compete in the state *We the People* competition to be held at the Topeka Capitol Plaza Maner Conference Center. Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach will join the students for lunch, and speak about some of the court cases that he has litigated which involve constitutional issues.

We the People ... The Citizen and the Constitution is the most extensive educational program in the country to educate young people about the history and principles of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The curriculum was developed by the Center for Civic Education. Funded by an act of Congress, the program is designed to commemorate the framing and adoption of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and to revitalize educational programs on the Constitution and civic education in our nation's schools.

The competitive program for the 2010-2011 academic year is designed for students at the high school and middle school level. Students at the elementary school level showcase their talents at non-competitive hearings. After completing a semester-long course using "*We the People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*" textbooks, participating classes may choose to compete in mock congressional hearings. Each member of the class becomes an expert witness on one of the six units in the text and then testifies in small groups before a panel of judges acting as U.S. congressional representatives.

More than 1200 high school students and their teachers participate annually in the *We the People* national finals. Through competitive hearings, one school from every state in the nation, the District of Columbia, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam is selected to attend the national finals in late April. While in Washington, D.C., students also have an opportunity to visit historic sites and meet with members of Congress and other dignitaries.

Since the inception of the *We the People* program in 1987, more than 28 million students and 90 thousand educators have participated in this innovative course of study. Sue Boldra, an Instructor at Fort Hays State University, coordinates this event.