



# Civic Seal Toolkit



## Sample Letter to your Legislator, School Board, or State Education Officials

Date

Recipient's Name

Location

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

As your constituent and a supporter of civics education, I am writing to ask you to consider developing a Civics Diploma Seal for the State of \_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_ School District).

I strongly believe that schools have an obligation to prepare students to be knowledgeable and active citizens throughout their lives. Democracy by nature requires an informed and engaged electorate, and [research](#) tells us that it is critical that students participate in civic learning that includes collaboration, cooperation, and consensus-building, an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and knowledge on the roots of our democracy. Preparing students for citizenship has been a perpetual challenge and a civics diploma seal can help students become informed and active citizens.

A diploma seal is a special recognition placed on a high school diploma signifying that a student has excelled in a certain area. Civics diploma seals are currently offered in \_\_\_\_\_ states and require students to demonstrate a high level of proficiency in civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Diploma seals vary by state, and no two seals have identical criteria. Some states, such as California, affix seals to a student's transcript in grade eleven or twelve or offer a certificate of completion. Generally, states require students to complete a culminating project as well as assessments and/or coursework in areas related to the seal. Several states do this by requiring a capstone project that demonstrates civic engagement in conjunction with proficient coursework. Other states require service learning that is based on research along with proficient coursework.

Diploma seals benefit students and the community in numerous ways. Diploma seals can highlight important areas of study and encourage students to participate in learning that challenges them beyond what is required. Earning the diploma seal is an incentive for students and a signal to colleges and employers that a student has excelled in the area of civics. Diploma seals have a benefit for the community because students are usually involved in activities that benefit society like volunteer organizations.

Again, I ask that you support/develop a diploma seal program for the State of \_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_ School District). Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I appreciate the time you have taken to hear my concern, and I am hopeful that you will continue in your work to protect the best interests of \_\_\_\_\_ and its communities.

Sincerely,

Sender's Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip