



## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SEAL

### Purpose & Process

#### I. Seal Purpose

*“You will ever remember that all the end of study is to make you a good man and a useful citizen.” – John Adams*

**IN A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY**, productive civic engagement requires knowledge of the history, principles, and foundations of our American democracy, and the ability to participate in civic and democratic processes. People demonstrate civic engagement when they address public problems individually and collaboratively and when they maintain, strengthen, and improve communities and societies. Civics is not only the study of how people participate in governing society, but also encompasses participation in classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, groups, organizations, and government institutions.”

- C3 Framework

Civics enables students to not only study how others participate but also to practice participating by taking informed action themselves. The Civic Engagement Seal honors students’ civic knowledge and activities. It is a recognition of merit for students who appreciate the importance of serving their community and taking informed action in our democracy

#### II. Seal Description & Eligibility

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, high school seniors are eligible to apply for a civic engagement diploma seal to be affixed to their high school graduation diploma. To be eligible to apply students must satisfy the 4 criteria below:

##### Student Eligibility Requirements

1. Fulfill the Social Studies requirements to earn a high school diploma
2. Take and pass the American Government Basic Skills Test, a subset of 56 questions taken from the USCIS Citizenship Test. Students may take the test until they receive a 70% or higher.
3. Complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities during the student’s high school career (participation can be counted starting the summer prior to 9th grade).
  - Of the required service hours, a minimum of 15 hours must be obtained participating in civic engagement activities.
  - Additional volunteer hours may be obtained through participation in charitable or service based organizations or school sponsored extracurricular activities.
  - Beginning the 2018-2019 School year, all students can count previous volunteer experiences and civic engagement participation accumulated from their 9th to 12th grade years to meet service hour eligibility requirements.
  - **NOTE:** Any student who enlists in the US Military prior to graduation will be deemed to have met Criterion 3.
4. Capstone Portfolio Presentation
  - Students must present a capstone portfolio on the knowledge gained in social studies and/or civics/government related courses and activities listed above.
  - Students must receive a “proficient” level or higher on each criteria of the presentation rubric.
  - They may present their portfolio until they reach the “proficient”.

#### III. Suggested Timeline/Deadlines

Students declare/confirm intent to apply for seal	February 25, 2019
Take American Government Basic Skills Test (criterion 1)	March 1, 2019
Complete community service, extracurricular activities, or SS electives/pathways (criterion 3a)	March 8, 2019
Complete civic engagement activities (criterion 3b)	March 8, 2019
Present Capstone Portfolio (criterion 4)	March 22, 2019
Local School Coordinator submits list of students receiving diploma seal (and number of American Government Basic Skills test attempts, if taking paper test) to Cobb’s District Coordinator	March 29, 2019 (hard deadline)

#### IV. Student Application Process

1. Visit school website and read/familiarize yourself with relevant seal information:
  - a. Purpose
  - b. Description & Eligibility
  - c. Timeline
  - d. Student Application
  - e. Capstone Portfolio presentation Rubric
2. Fill out the **Intent to Apply** form. Example form at <https://goo.gl/forms/nQNAX2CadX7RD3v33>
  - a. Name
  - b. Grade
  - c. School
  - d. Contact information – email/phone number
  - e. Questions
3. Contact the Local School Coordinator **in person** to confirm your intent and receive appropriate paperwork.
4. Attend informational meeting about the application process organized by the Local School Coordinator.
5. Complete Student Eligibility Criteria 1-4 by desired times.
6. Turn in paperwork to Local School Coordinator
  - a. Student application (paper)
  - b. Supporting paperwork/documents for criteria 1-4
7. Local School Coordinator submits required information to District Coordinator by end of March.
  - a. Excel spreadsheet with list of students who have met the diploma criteria. See format below:

Student First Name	Student Last Name	School	District
<i>John</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Example High School</i>	<i>Cobb County</i>
<i>Jane</i>	<i>Doe</i>	<i>Example High School</i>	<i>Cobb County</i>

- b. If administering the American Government Basic skills test on paper, an Excel spreadsheet of student names, final grade, and # of test attempts (see section VII below).

V. **Link to Student Application**      <http://bit.ly/cesstudentapp>

VI. **Form for Student Questions**      see IV. 2. Intent to Apply

#### VII. American Government Basic Skills Test

1. The American Government Basic Skills Test is based on the USCIS Civics Test, the test immigrants take during naturalization process. Here is a link to the study materials for the USCIS test.  
<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/study-test/study-materials-civics-test>
2. Administration Options
  - a. GOFAR (online)
  - b. paper version (See Teams for printable version)
3. Administering the Test
  - a. The test must be administered under teacher supervision.
  - b. Students may take the test until they receive a passing grade (70% or higher; at least 40 out of 56 questions correct).
  - c. If you choose to give the paper version, please keep track of how many times each student takes the test before receiving a passing grade. Report the students' name, grade, and number of attempts to the district via an Excel spreadsheet. For Example:

Student First Name	Student Last Name	Final Grade (%)	# of Test Attempts
<i>John</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Jane</i>	<i>Doe</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>1</i>