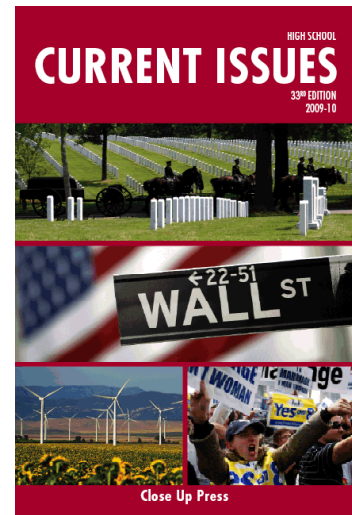


Close Up Student Writing Program

A great way to stand out in college admissions



- Admission:** College-bound student in grades 11-12
- Program Length:** 40 hours (can be done entirely in your community)
- Program Dates:** Sessions run in Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer
- Level of Difficulty:** Advanced, but rewarding and fun
- Tuition:** \$2,800 per student
(\$2,000 for grads of our Washington High School Program)
- To inquire:** Contact Rick Rockelli at rockelli@CloseUp.org
or 703-967-6688
- College Credit:** Students who pre-register with University of Virginia can earn 1 college credit if they complete both our Washington High School Program and our Student Writing Program.

This advanced program gives college-bound students a real-world experience in writing, editing and producing an essay that will inform their peers in high schools nationwide. Working under the tutelage of our accomplished publishing team, students contribute to every phase of the project, including selecting a topic, researching it, preparing an outline, and writing the essay. Throughout, they participate with us in a rigorous, but fun, editorial process that transforms the draft into a publishable essay. Students receive by-lines for their contributions on essays published in one of our flagship print publications or on one of our national web sites.

Program Length: Students can complete this program in approximately 40 hours, working remotely with us from their home communities. No travel to Washington, D.C., is required. Instead, we use conference calls, emails, and instant messaging, working closely with individual students and small groups of student teams. This enables students to experience “best practices” in public policy publishing. Students can do the program in either Fall, Winter, Spring or Summer.

What people say about the Program: Teacher Kevin McGrath from Newton North High (MA) said this after his students completed the program:

“My students were thrilled to participate. They gained a real-life experience writing for a reputable publication read nationwide. They got to work with Close Up’s great editorial staff, and under a real deadline. Their task was to describe a complex policy issue, and with a word limit. This forced them to gain a deep understanding of the subject and make their writing very concise. Rather than working for a grade, they were twice as motivated by knowing that their efforts would help people their age better understand all sides of the issue. Seeing their work published, and under their own names, was the perfect culmination to a great program.”



What topics do Students write about in essays? Students can write about a wide variety of policy challenges facing the United States. This typically can include the U.S. presence abroad, foreign policy, the economy, immigration, school reform, health care, energy, the environment, and much more.

About Close Up: The Close Up Foundation is the most renowned civic educator in the U.S. Nonpartisan and nonprofit, Close Up exists to help students become informed and engaged citizens. Over 650,000 students from all 50 states have graduated from Close Up's Washington High School Program over the past four decades. In addition, millions of students nationwide have used our flagship social studies text, *Current Issues*. Close Up's partners include the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, the University of Virginia and many other venerable institutions. Over 100 members of Congress are on our Advisory Board.

Registration: You can register for this program as a student on your own -- or with a group of up to four students from your school. You do not need a teacher, counselor or administrator from your school to nominate you or to advise you during the program, although some students choose to have one. To get started, or for more info, contact: Rick Rockelli at rockelli@CloseUp.org.

See 2 min. video. 

EDUCATION
 By: Newton North High School, Newton, MA
 Project Advisor: Kevin McFarlin
 Student Authors: Kenneth Luskens, Benjamin Miller & Andrew W. King

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. gives students a free education from kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12). This reflects a national ideology that an educated citizenry is the key to a strong democracy, a healthy economy, and a position of leadership in the world.

In the U.S. today, over 90% of the 45 million students in grades K-12 attend public schools. Since the Constitution reserved responsibility for education to the states, traditionally each state has set its own curriculum and ways to measure effectiveness. Increasingly, however, the federal government has gotten involved. In 1980, for example, the U.S. Department of Education was formed to foster educational excellence and equal access for students. Source: www.ed.gov.

The importance of education in the U.S. makes it a hotly debated topic. The debate is particularly true today given the need to compete in a globalizing world. Questions abound, including:

- What public school reforms will enable U.S. students to compete in the domestic workforce and in a globalized world?
- How should society balance the roles of the federal, state, and local governments in public education?
- Should states change their curricula to emphasize the so-called "21st Century Skills" such as critical thinking and collaboration?
- How can school systems eliminate achievement gaps among different groups of students, including the poor?
- How can society improve the performance of failing schools?
- How can the U.S. expand access to post-secondary education, which has been shown to increase earning potential?
- What will these reforms cost and who will pay for them?

In this chapter, we examine some key questions that policymakers face in education, why there is so much debate over them, and what consequences might flow from the choices policymakers make.

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HIGH SCHOOL
CURRENT ISSUES
 33rd EDITION
 2009-10

Close Up Press

