

# GRANT PROPOSAL RECORD

## Democracy Prep Public Schools

**ADDRESS:**

511 Amsterdam Ave. #4S  
New York, NY 10024

**CONTACT:**

Mr. David Feith

**AMOUNT REQUESTED:**

Unspecified

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

\$50,000

**PROJECT TITLE:**

To support the Civic Education Initiative

**BOARD MEMBERS AFFILIATED  
WITH REQUEST:****STAFF:**

Dianne J. Sehler

**MEETING DATE:**

11/8/2011

**PROPOSAL ID#:**

20110509

**BACKGROUND:** Democracy Prep Public Schools requests a grant to support the Civic Education Initiative.

The Civic Education Initiative was co-founded in a Columbia University dorm room in 2009 by then senior David Feith, now Assistant Op-Ed Editor of the *Wall Street Journal*. Its purpose is to spearhead a national campaign to improve the pre-collegiate teaching of US history. The Initiative is housed at Democracy Prep, a network of four high-performing New York City charter schools co-founded by AEI scholar Frederick Hess.

The Initiative was formally launched in September with publication of *Teaching America: The Case for Civic Education* (Rowman and Littlefield), a volume of original essays authored by 20 leading thinkers and public figures. The book is part call to action, part policy, and part blueprint for lawmakers, school officials, and philanthropists. Upon its release, the Initiative began arranging wide media coverage and authors' media appearances; excerpting chapters in major press outlets; creating online platforms; publishing open letters; and widely distributing copies of the book to education leaders and elected officials. It has also begun to arrange public events with Harvard, AEI, New York public libraries, and James Madison's Montpelier.

While continuing its public education efforts next year, the Initiative will also send speakers into classrooms to tell stories of America's exceptional achievements, pair high schools with military units to advance understanding of military history, and establish competitive prize programs for students and schools. To complete its modest budget requirements of \$238,000, Bradley funding is requested.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Strongly endorsed by the Jack Miller Center, the Initiative is an ambitious new effort to cultivate, in K-12 classrooms, a civic identity and appreciation for America's constitutional system. The dedication and resourcefulness of its young, founding staff is noteworthy, and a \$50,000 start-up grant is recommended.

# CIVICS

Our citizen-scholars are prepared with the explicit knowledge, skills, and dispositions to take leadership roles in civil society and democratic institutions upon graduation from college.



Mission and History

Approach

Civics Program

Korean Program

Photo Gallery

Democracy Prep Public Schools was founded with the explicit vision of preparing our responsible citizen-scholars for success in the college of their choice *and* a life of active citizenship. We accomplish this public purpose by focusing on what we call *Authentic Civic Education*.

Each Democracy Prep school has a civic education coordinator that works to create and implement our civics curriculum for each campus and track our citizen-scholars’ long term civic dispositions. Knowledge and skills alone are not sufficient, we must cultivate the habits and appetites of engaged citizens in order to prepare our alumni for a life of active citizenship.

The American Enterprise Institute recently identified Democracy Prep as one of the nation’s leaders in civic education. They published a policy paper entitled “Charter Schools As Nation Builders: Democracy Prep And Civic Education” which highlights our focus on both abstract citizenship and operational citizenship. Click here to read the policy paper.

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Our citizen-scholars first learn the civic content knowledge they need to understand our system of government. We then provide authentic opportunities to engage in the applied civic skills we've identified as essential to become an engaged citizen. These skills include oral testimony in front of a public body, lobbying, and campaign work among others.

#### ADVOCACY

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We provide our scholars with opportunities each year to travel to City Hall, Albany and Washington D.C. to lobby our elected officials on issues ranging from charter school funding to the DREAM Act. Scholars have registered thousands of New York City residents to vote and conducted Get-Out-The-Vote campaigns for local and national elections. Our scholars have even testified before Congress!

#### CITIZENSHIPFIRST

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"What's your secret?" For years, Democracy Prep has been asked by policymakers, school leaders, and teachers around the world how we achieve our academic and civic results. We tell them that authentic civic education has been an essential part to our overall academic success, and that we are now launching a new vehicle to disseminate what we've learned.

We hope that CitizenshipFirst will become the country's most creative driver of authentic civic education innovation. Housed at Democracy Prep, the organization began in 2011 with the publication of *Teaching America: The Case for Civic Education*, edited by David Feith. Through creative advocacy, in-school programs, curriculum, and published research, CitizenshipFirst aims to remind educators, policymakers and all Americans that the founding purpose of education was to prepare our nation's young people for self-government.

Restoring the civic mission of education must be an urgent national priority.

SCHEDULE A

(Form 990 or 990EZ)

Department of the Treasury

Internal Revenue Service

Public Charity Status and Public Support

Complete if the organization is a section 501(c)(3) organization or a section 4947(a)(1) nonexempt charitable trust.

► Attach to Form 990 or Form 990-EZ. ► See separate instructions.

OMB No 1545-0047

2011

Open to Public Inspection

Name of the organization

DEMOCRACY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

Employer identification number

20-3683193

Part I Reason for Public Charity Status (All organizations must complete this part.) See instructions

- The organization is not a private foundation because it is (For lines 1 through 11, check only one box )
- 1

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A church, convention of churches, or association of churches **section 170(b)(1)(A)(i).**
- 2

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A school described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii).** (Attach Schedule E )
- 3

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A hospital or a cooperative hospital service organization described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iii).**
- 4

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A medical research organization operated in conjunction with a hospital described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iii).** Enter the hospital's name, city, and state
- 5

☐

An organization operated for the benefit of a college or university owned or operated by a governmental unit described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iv).** (Complete Part II )
- 6

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A federal, state, or local government or governmental unit described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(v).**
- 7

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An organization that normally receives a substantial part of its support from a governmental unit or from the general public described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)** (Complete Part II )
- 8

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A community trust described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)** (Complete Part II )
- 9

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An organization that normally receives (1) more than 33 1/3% of its support from contributions, membership fees, and gross receipts from activities related to its exempt functions—subject to certain exceptions, and (2) no more than 33 1/3% of its support from gross investment income and unrelated business taxable income (less section 511 tax) from businesses acquired by the organization after June 30, 1975 See **section 509(a)(2).** (Complete Part III )
- 10

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An organization organized and operated exclusively to test for public safety See**section 509(a)(4).**
- 11

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An organization organized and operated exclusively for the benefit of, to perform the functions of, or to carry out the purposes of one or more publicly supported organizations described in section 509(a)(1) or section 509(a)(2) See **section 509(a)(3).** Check the box that describes the type of supporting organization and complete lines 11e through 11h

a

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Type I

b

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Type II

c

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Type III - Functionally integrated

d

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Type III - Other
- e

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By checking this box, I certify that the organization is not controlled directly or indirectly by one or more disqualified persons other than foundation managers and other than one or more publicly supported organizations described in section 509(a)(1) or section 509(a)(2)
- f

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If the organization received a written determination from the IRS that it is a Type I, Type II or Type III supporting organization, check this box
- g

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Since August 17, 2006, has the organization accepted any gift or contribution from any of the following persons?

(i)

a person who directly or indirectly controls, either alone or together with persons described in (ii) and (iii) below, the governing body of the the supported organization?

(ii)

a family member of a person described in (i) above?

(iii)

a 35% controlled entity of a person described in (i) or (ii) above?
- h

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Provide the following information about the supported organization(s)

	Yes	No
11g(i)		
11g(ii)		
11g(iii)		

(i) Name of supported organization	(ii) EIN	(iii) Type of organization (described on lines 1- 9 above or IRC section (see instructions))	(iv) Is the organization in col (i) listed in your governing document?		(v) Did you notify the organization in col (i) of your support?		(vi) Is the organization in col (i) organized in the U S ?		(vii) Amount of support?
			Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Total									