

STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

PROJECT Citizen



Writing a Law

“A student can make a difference in society,” said Tucson, Arizona, student Mounir Koussa. Other students in Ms. Cheri Bludau’s class also know that they have a voice in their community. In fact, they wrote a bill that is now Arizona state law.

Community Connection The Tucson students were concerned about bullying in schools. Some of the students had experienced bullying personally, and after the class researched the issue, all of the students learned how serious the effects of bullying can be. The class found out that students who are bullied are much more likely to miss school and develop other personal problems. What could these teens do about such a large challenge?

Taking Action With the help of State Representative David Bradley and the support of other legislators, the students wrote a bill as part of their participation in the Project Citizen program. It would let students report bullying without having to reveal their names, require teachers and other school staff to report bullying, require all reports of bullying to be investigated, and discipline those found guilty of bullying. Bradley submitted the bill to the Arizona House of Representatives almost exactly as the students wrote it. Tashina Sosa, one of the involved students, described what happened next as “a very long process. It’s like a never-ending thriller book.” For the Tucson students, the book had a happy ending. The bill passed in both houses of the Arizona legislature. Then on June 30, 2005, Governor Janet Napolitano signed the bill into law.



Bullying often takes place in the halls between classes.

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KEYWORD: SZ7 CH5

SERVICE LEARNING

1. How did the Tucson students and the state legislature work together to help the bill become a law?
2. What problem would you like a law passed to solve? Why?