LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Name: AP Government
Length: Full year
Teacher: Hagan

Course Description:
AP US Government is a deep and methodical dissection of the American system of government. It will culminate in the AP Exam in May. Students will leave the class with a strong understanding of the inner workings of the American system of government. As this is an AP course, the workload will be significantly higher than the normal LWHS class. Help is available before and after school most days. Students will be expected to keep a notebook in which they take notes on the text and materials, keep class notes and various materials I may hand out from time to time. Most assignments will be managed through Google Classroom, and all assignments will be left available in the classroom until the conclusion of the class for review purposes. Also, failure to complete summer work is grounds for expulsion from the class.

Competencies or Standards Assessed:
Skill categories

- **Concept Application:** Students can apply political concepts and processes to various authentic and hypothetical scenarios. This demonstrates an understanding of how the government functions in real-life situations.
- **SCOTUS Application:** Students can apply the principles and reasoning from foundational U.S. Supreme Court decisions to different contexts. The curriculum requires knowledge of 15 specific landmark cases.
- **Data Analysis:** Students can analyze and interpret quantitative data presented in various formats, such as charts, graphs, and tables, to find patterns and draw conclusions.
- **Source Analysis:** Students can read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents—including the Constitution, Federalist papers, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"—as well as other text-based and visual sources.
- **Argumentation:** Students can develop and support an evidence-based argument in an essay format. This includes crafting a thesis, using relevant evidence (including

from foundational documents), and explaining the reasoning behind their claim.

Course content areas

To develop these competencies, students must also gain a deep understanding of five core content units:

- **Foundations of American Democracy:** The core principles and historical context of the U.S. government, including the Constitution, debates between Federalists and Anti-Federalists, and the concepts of separation of powers, checks and balances, and federalism.
- **Interactions Among Branches of Government:** The structures, powers, and functions of Congress, the presidency, the courts, and the federal bureaucracy. This unit also explores the policy-making process.
- **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights:** The protections guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the expansion of these protections through the due process and equal protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.
- **American Political Ideologies and Beliefs:** The factors that influence citizens' political ideologies and beliefs, as well as the impact of public opinion on policy debates.
- **Political Participation:** The various ways citizens participate in the political process, including voting, elections, political parties, interest groups, and the role of the media.

Anchor Texts or Major Curriculum:

Text- We will be using the AMSSCO AP GOV book and the Challenge of Democracy, though primarily the AMSSCO.

Course Outline (major units of study):	
Unit Title	Essential Question or Overarching Understanding
Unit One- The Civic Street Fight	The boxing match between the need for stability and personal liberty. How do

	Governments grapple with the opposing needs and desires of its citizens? How do Citizens understand how to relate to their government? How did the US develop a government to try to deal with the balance? We will study the Constitution, the ideas behind it, the concepts around Federalism, and how it all balances out (often imperfectly) Unit one of the Text *Aug-Oct*
<u>Unit Two-</u> How to make Human sausage-	Taking a vast number of citizens and creating a government out of them. How do we apply the constitution on the ground to make laws and take actions that (in theory) represent the will of the people? How do the courts look at those actions and judge their adherence to the Constitution? *Oct-Dec*
<u>Unit Three-</u> Civil Liberties and Civil Rights-	How far can the government go in limiting your actions? What does the Constitution protect you from? How far do your personal freedoms extend? *Dec-Feb*
<u>Unit Four: Gaming</u> the System-Political Ideologies	How do groups of American citizens and corporations attempt to game the system to their benefit? How do they try to shape laws and society to suit themselves? How far can this go? What about the other people? We will look at American political organizations, parties and action committees and how they win and lose elections and how far they can go in influencing the government. *Feb-March*

<u>Portrait of a Learner</u>

Independent Learner
I make thoughtful plans and do my best to reach personal goals using feedback to work through challenges.

Responsible Collaborator
I work with others to achieve shared goals by listening actively, contributing ideas, and managing conflict.

Critical Thinker
I analyze information, ask thoughtful questions, and apply reasoning skills to solve problems and make decisions.

Effective Communicator
I express ideas clearly, adapting strategies based on the audience, setting, and/or purpose.

Global Citizen
I show that I care and take responsibility by helping in my community and the world around me.

Additional Classroom Expectations: