

Welcome

Welcome to “Closest to the People,” a study of local government in Fairfax County, Virginia. Designed for the County’s government teachers and their students, the project is an initiative of the *Fairfax County Government* in cooperation with the *Fairfax County Public Schools*.

“Closest to the People” supplements the *Virginia/United States Government Program of Studies* made available to the County’s government teachers in August 1998. This curriculum guide includes resources and lesson plans for the four Fairfax County Government *benchmarks* in the Program of Studies, as well as information on the County’s *history, demographics, and current issues*.

In consideration of what we want students to know and be able to do relative to a study of local government, the title of this program “Closest to the People” provides a framework for answering those questions. It has long been a tradition in studying government that the focus is set squarely on the major institutions at the federal level. The aim of this unit is to provide teachers with materials to foster greater civic understanding by students through an exploration of the numerous day-to-day connections which citizens have with government at the local level. We also seek to expand students’ awareness of a sense of community by expanding their knowledge of the numerous, contact points, services, and opportunities for participation available in Fairfax County.

