

**WHY CLOSE UP?**

Close Up's Austin Academy is your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make new friends while learning about the government and history of Texas! Our fun instructors will help you discover the people and places that make Texas so unique through visits to the most popular sites in the state's capital.

Throughout your time in Austin, you will take part in discussions and debates with students just like you and learn that your voice really matters! You will not only discover what it takes to be a good citizen and a good leader, you will return home excited and ready to make a difference in your own community.

Don't miss out on this unforgettable and exciting experience in Austin!

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Making new friends and sharing ideas with students from throughout Texas;
- Walking in the shoes of a college student at the University of Texas at Austin;
- Discussing the history of Texas through must-see sites, including the Texas State Capitol; and
- Taking part in an exciting mock election where you can be elected the next Governor of Close Up!

**JUNE 12**

Depart for Austin



**Lunch and Orientation:** Get to know your Close Up instructor and meet new friends from throughout Texas

**Three Branches of Government Workshop:** What is the structure of Texas state government? What impact does government have on your life?



**Bullock Texas State History Museum:** Immerse yourself in the story of Texas

**Dinner and Free Time at Austin's Park & Pizza:** Have fun with your friends playing arcade games, miniature golf, etc.!

**JUNE 13**

Breakfast

**Legislative Issues Workshop:** Take on the role of a Texas legislator as you debate and vote on today's most pressing issues

**Tour of Capitol Visitor's Center and the**



**Capitol Building:** Examine the site where Texas laws are made

**University of Texas at Austin Campus Tour:** See what the life of a college student is like at UT-Austin!

**Lyndon B. Johnson Library:** Examine the life and legacy of our 36th President, a famous Texan

Dinner at the hotel

**Election Workshop:** Consider qualities of a good leader and nominate a candidate for Governor from your workshop group

**Mock Election:** Discuss the role and importance of the executive branch as you elect a Close Up Governor from amongst your peers!

**JUNE 14**

Breakfast



**Voting Polls Open:** Cast your ballot for the next Governor of Close Up!

**Community Action Workshop:** What actions can citizens take to address issues within their communities?



**Group Reflection:** Discuss ways you can take your Close Up experience home

**Pioneer Farms:** Step back in time and experience Texas history first-hand.

Lunch in Austin

Depart for home

*Sample Schedule. Subject to Change.*

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Close Up's Austin Academy is designed to bring the democratic process alive for students by providing hands-on opportunities to examine the history and government of the state of Texas. Using simulations, visits to key historic sites, and a variety of workshops, students will deepen their understanding of how the three branches of government interact, learn what it means to be an engaged citizen, and begin to develop the skills necessary to make a difference in their own communities.

## PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Austin Academy aims to build students' sense of connection to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Over the course of three days, students will learn about Texas's history, undertake a hands-on examination of the structure and functions of Texas state government, and visit a university campus. Throughout the program, students will gain a greater understanding of effective citizenship in a democracy and of the impact that the state government has on their lives. Specifically, Close Up will help students meet the following objectives:

### **Objective 1: Understand the three branches of government and develop an in-depth understanding of the legislative process.**

Key Components include:

- **Three Branches of Government Workshop:** Students will build a foundational understanding of how Texas government functions.
- **Mock Legislative Session:** Students will debate current policy issues and take on the role of Representatives in the legislative process as they simulate a session of the Texas House of Representatives.
- **Texas State Capitol:** Students will tour the Texas Capitol, examine where the legislative process actually takes place, and engage in fun, history-focused activities at the Visitors Center.

### **Objective 2: Develop a greater understanding of Texas history and how historical context has influenced the current government structure.**

Key Components include:

- **Bullock Museum of Texas History:** Students will take part in a guided exploration of the Museum's three gallery floors and discover the personal stories of the people, places, and events that shaped the state of Texas.
- **Pioneer Farms:** Students will have the opportunity to visit one of six themed historic areas, such as an 1873 Texian Farm or an 1887 Cotton Planter's Farm. Each unique site will take them back in time to experience Texas history first-hand.

### **Objective 3: Expose students to the importance, possibility and achievability of higher education.**

Key Components include:

- **University of Texas at Austin:** Students will visit and tour the campus of the University of Texas at Austin with Close Up staff, where they will experience what a college campus is like and discuss the importance and attainability of a college education.

### **Objective 4: Provide students with the background, tools, and context to become active citizens in their own communities.**

Key Components include:

- **Characteristics of a Good Law Workshop:** In order to prepare students to consider issues and identify potential solutions for problems in their own communities, students will participate in a small-group workshop, assess the strengths and weaknesses of laws, and come up with criteria for creating effective legislation.
- **Community Action Workshop:** Students will examine ways citizens can make an impact in their local community. Students will identify key issues in their own communities and begin to develop a plan for action.

## ABOUT CLOSE UP

Close Up is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization that educates and inspires young people to become informed and engaged citizens.

For almost 50 years, Close Up has partnered with districts across the country to design challenging and hands-on civic, history, and government-based educational programs. The Close Up programs complement classroom learning, develop critical thinking skills, and provide students with practical opportunities to connect their classroom studies to present-day events.

## PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- All program logistics and planning;
- Top-notch instruction from trained educators;
- Custom-designed curriculum and program schedule;
- 24/7 supervision including night monitors;
- 3 meals-a-day and lodging;
- Round-trip transportation to Austin and around the city;
- Night monitors; and
- Liability insurance.

All Close Up activities are designed with your student's safety in mind, and our unsurpassed record demonstrates safety and security is our top priority.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Shannon Ahrens  
sahrens@closeup.org  
402-480-0166