# CIVICS RENEWAL NETWORK

## Alayna Piwonski

**Teacher** Tim Knudson    **School** Peninsula High School | Gig Harbor, Washington

**Issue** Our public policy problem is that standard high school start times are too early. The average high school student needs 8-9 hours of sleep, and because of their irregular sleep patterns (they tend to stay up late and sleep in late on the weekends, which can affect their biological clocks and hurt the quality of their sleep).

**Project Description** Sleep deprivation is a major problem among school-aged adolescents, particularly high schoolers. We propose moving the school day back one hour. The proposed solution will allow students one hour of extra sleep. In order to carry out our proposed public policy, we must go to the Peninsula School District Board of Education. Our district has the authority to choose its own start and end times, as well as its own scheduling and transportation routes. The only organization responsible for carrying out our proposed public policy is the Peninsula School District itself, making the process less complicated. Individuals include Superintendent Chuck Cuzzetto and the members of the Board of Directors. We can gain their support by explaining to them the effects and facts of sleep deprivation in teens.

**Project Outcome** We contacted Superintendent Cuzzetto and this is what he said, "I would be happy to come to your classroom and listen to your research. It may be of value to bring another administrator from our office as well. I'll ask Mr. Knudson to coordinate a good time to make this happen. Thanks for tackling an issue that folks have been wrestling with for a very long time." Then, our semester ended.

**Request** What we would really like is to restore the funding of the Center for Civic Education. CCE was funded by a Congressional earmark, which were abolished in 2011. Ever since, the Center has continued mostly on donations and grants, but is unable to really reach out, recruit, and recognize schools that create thoughtful projects and change public policy.