



JAMES MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

LEADING THROUGH EXCELLENCE AND EFFICIENCY



13719 White Heather Drive
Houston, TX 77045 – 4421

Carlotta O. Brown, Principal
Tel: 713-433-9801
Fax: 713-434-5242

August 2021

RE: United States Government
Teacher - Jeff Plastrik

Students & Parents,

Welcome to **United States Government**. My name is **Jeff Plastrik**, and I will be your teacher for this one (1) semester course this year. The other part of your Social Studies curriculum as a Senior will be one (1) semester of Economics taught by either Ms. Reyes or Ms. Nguyen.

Across the United States, US Government is usually taught to Seniors in their last year of high school. It requires you to think with a complexity that you have now acquired as a young adult. US Government prepares you for the awesome responsibility of being an American Citizen or Resident. With the knowledge and skills that you learn in this course, you will be the essential part of the American experiment in self-government – the citizen voter. It is the responsibility of you and your generation to make the choices that will guide America during your lifetime. If you think we can do a better job in running our country and leading the world, then it is incumbent on you to use this course to learn how to change America to what you think will repair our nation and world.

Our study will include the four foundings of the United States. The first founding was in 1776 as the United States separated itself from Great Britain for the reasons outlined in the Declaration of Independence. The second founding was in 1787-1789 when the US Constitution was written and ratified, creating the federal government that still today is the basic structure of our country's governance. The third founding was in 1861-1870, when the Civil War altered the course of America toward a more democratic republic. The fourth founding includes all the governmental changes since 1870 and the continuing work that you and others will make into the future as Americans attempt to make a "more perfect Union."

I am a lifelong resident of southwest Houston. My parents moved to Westbury in 1962 and I graduated from Bellaire High School in 1979. In addition to having 5 (five) teaching certificates, I hold two college degrees, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Houston and a J.D. from the South Texas of Law. I have participated in US politics on a grass roots from the time I was in elementary school. My first political rally was in 1968 in Hermann Park. I have served as a Precinct Judge for the neighborhood near Welch Middle School. I regularly attend political protests and Political Party Conventions. During class I will share personal photos from my visits to Washington, DC and more recent places like Selma and Seneca Falls.

I look forward to teaching you and you helping you graduate. Let's have a great and healthy year.

Jeff Plastrik