California Democracy School
Civic Learning Initiative

Investigation, Service, and Civility for the 21st Century

A three-year civic learning initiative funded by the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and directed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education in partnership with the Los Angeles County Education Foundation and the Los Angeles County Office of Education to institutionalize civic competencies in Los Angeles County high schools to prepare students for college, career, and citizenship in the 21st century.

The Initiative will engage ten high schools in Los Angeles County to work as professional learning communities to receive (at no cost) professional development, resources, guidance, coaching assistance, and teacher stipends to implement effective civic practices in classrooms. The project will strengthen existing initiatives including the Common Core State Standards, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and Civic Mission of Schools. Partners include the Mills College Civic Engagement Research Group, the Spencer Foundation and UCLA’s Institute for Democracy, Education and Access.

All public high schools in Los Angeles County are invited to apply. Information and criteria can be found in the attached packet. Space is limited.

For more information, please contact:
Michelle M. Herczog, Ed.D.
Consultant III, History-Social Science
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Division of Curriculum and Instructional Services
(562) 922-6908
Herczog_Michelle@lacoe.edu

Apply to join the
California Democracy School Initiative today!

APPLICATION PACKET
DEADLINE TO APPLY: MAY 1, 2013
Goals and Objectives

As schools move forward to prepare all students for college and career, there is a third "c" we must also pay close attention to - preparing all students for citizenship in the 21st century. In preparing students for success, schools are charged with providing opportunities for students to chart their own path. Will they go to college? Will they follow a career path? But one thing is certain. If they live their lives in the United States of America, they will be living in a democracy founded on principles of freedom, equality, and justice codified in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. While it is vitally important to our nation's future that every student be prepared to succeed in higher education and in the workforce, it is vital to the health and future of our democracy that our schools also prepare students for a lifetime of knowledgeable, engaged, and active citizenship.

The goal of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative is to institutionalize high quality civic learning practices in ten high schools across Los Angeles County to provide all students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become committed, informed, and engaged citizens in the 21st century. Our goal is for all students to leave high school able to:

• participate in civil and productive dialogue about current local, national, and international issues;
• understand and respect the electoral process by registering to vote and voting in elections as informed, engaged citizens; and
• investigate and address community public policy issues by utilizing critical thinking and problem solving skills, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration skills needed for effective civic life.

Los Angeles County’s diversity is a great civic asset. We aim to include schools whose students reflect this diversity. Selected high schools from Los Angeles County will embark on a three-year journey to acquire (at no cost), professional learning community structural support and guidance, professional development, resources, coaching, teacher stipends, and technical assistance needed to create a school culture committed to institutionalizing high quality civic practices for all students. Unlike traditional professional development “one-shot” approaches, the Initiative will leverage the Common Core State Standards, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and the Civic Mission of School initiatives to establish the structures that need to be in place to sustain effective civic practices over time.

School teams consisting of lead teachers, school site administrators and parent representatives will focus on three critical pedagogical practices:

• Inquiry and Investigation - thoughtful, problem solving approaches for addressing public issues that promote critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration through social media and technology.
• Service - guided experiential service that builds on youths’ capacities to improve society in tangible and visible ways with an intentional focus on research, action, and reflection for impacting public policy.
• Civility - discussion of controversial issues in meaningful and respectful ways critical to the political process and survival of democracy.

Working as professional learning communities, school teams will receive professional development led by expert civic education scholars and practitioners, opportunities to implement and reflect upon civic learning practices with guidance and support from a full time civic learning coach, and planning time to institutionalize inquiry and investigation into required coursework for all students. An annual event for schools to showcase their work to educators and policymakers, leadership training for school administrators, and a professional development module and user guide will strengthen the Initiative’s capacity to replicate the program across a variety of school settings. Each school that “graduates” from the program will be honored as a California Democracy School and receive a plaque, banner, and special recognition. The Democracy School Program is part of a nationwide initiative to strengthen civic learning across states.

By developing school cultures for learning and building schoolwide/communitywide capacity, we hope to institutionalize civic learning as a meaningful, contextualized approach to fully prepare all students for college, career, and civic life in the 21st century.
Overview and Timeline

YEAR ONE: 2013 - 2014
Summer Institute: July 15 – 19, 2013
School Teams will work as professional learning communities to:
• embrace a shared commitment to the learning of each student;
• develop a deep understanding of the purpose and elements of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts;
• acquire a deep understanding of the goals, benefits, rationale, and proven practices of civic learning as described in the Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools Report;
• learn about the Partnership for 21st Century Skills initiative to understand the function of the 4 Cs - critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation, as a competency-based approaches to literacy and civic learning;
• create a focus on learning by identifying what we want students to learn;
• build a collaborative culture by defining a process to reach consensus and establishing norms to conduct collective inquiry and action experimentation of "best practices" for integrating the Common Core State Standards for English-Language Arts, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and high quality civic learning;
• create a results orientation by developing/identifying common formative assessments to monitor student progress and guide instructional practices.

Investigation of Public Issues: September 27-28, 2013
Part One: Civil Dialogue about Controversial Issues
Participants will receive concentrated in-depth professional development for utilizing pedagogy to lead classroom discussions that are powerful and equitable to help students practice and understand the relationship between controversial issues and democracy.

Investigation of Public Issues: October 13, 2013
Part Two: Service Learning as Guided Experiential Civic Learning
Participants will acquire professional development to understand service learning as an authentic experience that builds on youths' capacities to improve society in tangible and visible ways through a cycle of research, action, and reflection.

Investigation of Public Issues: November 16, 2013
Part Three: Impacting Public Policy
Participants will compare and contrast the elements of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and high quality civic learning to engage students in thoughtful, problem solving approaches that promote critical thinking, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration skills to impact public policy issues. Through a design research process, educators will develop investigation exemplars to be implemented in classrooms.

Classroom Practice
Teachers will develop and implement at least one investigation exemplar in their classroom and collect student work. The Civic Learning Coach will observe and provide feedback and technical assistance as needed.

Professional Learning Community Meetings (1-2 hour meetings once each month at individual school sites)
Operating as a PLC, school teams will work within a continuous cycle of inquiry to develop and implement instruction, establish formative benchmarks for assessing progress, analyze student work and/or data, and revise instruction as needed.

School/District Leadership Committee Spring Meeting (one-half day)
Meeting will engage school site and district administrators across all schools in conversations to investigate the conditions necessary to support and institutionalize this innovative instruction, and the role of school leaders to ensure these conditions are in place. As a result, conditions will be identified and put in place to build capacity and sustain efforts over time and thus, inform the program director of the conditions that must be in place to replicate the model in a variety of school settings.

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Summer Institute: July 2014 (five days TBD)
School Teams will work as professional learning communities to:
• analyze and share student work as part of a continuous cycle of inquiry to revise instructional practice of investigation exemplars;
• establish an end-of-course assessment and rubric to measure acquired Civic Learning Investigation knowledge and skills. This may be in the form of a student portfolio, a project, or public presentation that incorporates reading, writing, speaking, and media technology;
• identify existing civic learning curriculum programs that can be adopted to strengthen or support investigations;
• submit a mini-grant proposal up to $4,000 to acquire additional training and materials from an approved list of civic education programs as needed;
• develop a plan to operationalize Civic Learning Investigations within the school’s instructional program. Based on individual school needs, schools may choose to reorient their 12th grade government course, create a 9th grade elective, integrate civic practices within English courses or design other innovative approaches.

**Implement Civic Investigations**
Implement the plan developed to operationalize Civic Learning Investigations within the school’s instructional program with coaching/technical support of Civic Corp Coach.

**Professional Learning Community Meetings** (1-2 hour meetings once each month at individual school sites)
Operating as a PLC, school teams will continue the cycle of inquiry to develop and implement instruction, establish formative benchmarks for assessing progress, analyze student work and/or data, and revise instruction as needed.

**School/District Leadership Committee Meetings** (half day meetings in October 2014 and May 2015)
Meetings will engage school site and district administrators across all schools in conversations to investigate the conditions necessary to support and institutionalize this innovative instruction, and the role of school leaders to ensure these conditions are in place. As a result, conditions will be identified and put in place to build capacity and sustain efforts over time and thus, inform the program director of the conditions that must be in place to replicate the model in a variety of school settings.

**Showcase Event**
Each school will conduct formal presentations of their programs at an end-of-year event (i.e. Constitution Day Conference, state social studies conference, regional convocation) to showcase the initiative to school/district administrators, schools, colleges and universities, policymakers, government officials (i.e. legislators, justices, judges, appointed and elected officials), the public and private sector.

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Role and Responsibility of California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative

The program director and staff will be responsible for providing school teams (8 members from each school) with the following:

• All professional development including facility, continental breakfast, lunch, presentations, materials, and resources for all participants at no cost to schools/districts.
• Stipends for participating teachers (6 teachers per school site): $1,000 for Year One; $1,000 for Year Two; $500 for Year Three.
• Stipend for a School Site Civic Learning Coordinator (one per school): $3,000 each year.
• Reimbursement of cost for substitute teachers needed for teachers to participate in professional development held on weekdays during the school year.
• A Civic Learning Coach available to facilitate monthly professional learning community meetings, observe classroom practices, provide coaching and technical assistance to participating teachers, and serve as a liaison to the School Site Civic Learning Coordinator and program staff.
• Facilitation of school/district leadership meetings to provide school site and district administrators with information, training, and assistance to institutionalize civic practices with instructional programs.
• Recognition plaque and banner for schools that graduate from the program after three years.

Role and Responsibility of Schools

Participating schools will be responsible for the following:

• Commitment of a team of eight members consisting of one school site administrator, the School Site Civic Learning Coordinator, a parent/family representative from School Site Council, PTA, or English Learner Advisory Council, and teachers and/or department chairs.
• Full participation of team members in all professional development, meetings, activities, and events.
• A School Site Civic Learning Coordinator to act as a liaison between the school team and the Civic Learning Coach, help facilitate professional learning community meetings, provide assistance to team members as needed.
• Schedule time and location for professional learning community meetings, one to two hours each month at school sites.
• Establish an end-of-course performance-based summative assessment and rubric to measure acquired Common Core/Civic Learning investigation knowledge and skills. This may be in the form of a student portfolio, a project, or public presentation that incorporates reading, writing, speaking, and media technology.
• Plan and implement a civic learning plan within the instructional program of the school to provide an opportunity for all students to develop civic learning competencies.
• Develop a policy to institutionalize the plan into the instructional program.
• Conduct formal presentations of their programs at the end-of-year Showcase Event.
• Participate in focus groups, surveys and other program evaluation activities.
• Submit a yearly progress report of activities.

LACOE is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. To request reasonable accommodations and for more information contact Michelle Herczog at (562) 922–6908 or by email at Herczog_Michelle@lacoe.edu.
APPLICATION FORM

School Information
School Name_______________________________________________________________

School District______________________________________________________________

School Address______________________________________________________________

City, State Zip______________________________________________________________

Principal_______________________________________________________________________

Phone ___________________________ Email ________________________________

Affirmation
We affirm that the following eight individuals will serve on the School Team:

___________________________ ___________________________ ____________
School Site Administrator  Signature           Date

___________________________ ___________________________ ____________
School Site Civic Learning Coordinator  Signature           Date

___________________________ ___________________________ ____________
Parent/Family Representative  Signature           Date

___________________________ ___________________________ ____________
Teacher  Signature           Date

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Teacher  Signature           Date

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Teacher  Signature           Date

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Teacher  Signature           Date

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Teacher  Signature           Date

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Teacher  Signature           Date
**Affirmation**
We approve and will support the activities of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<td>District Superintendent</td>
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| School Board President                                                   | Signature | Date |

| PTA and/or School Site Council Representative                           | Signature | Date |

| Teacher's Union Representative (preferred but not required)             | Signature | Date |

**Narrative Proposal**
Schools are also required to submit a narrative proposal (1000 word limit), double-spaced, 12 point font with the name of your school on each page. Please respond to the following questions:

1. What are your reasons and/or rationale for submitting this application?
2. What conditions are in place to support your school’s participation?
3. What are your expected outcomes and/or benefits as a result of becoming a California Democracy School?

**NOTE:** No application will be considered without this signed Affirmation and Narrative Proposal.

Please return this completed application on or before May 1, 2013, to:
Michelle M. Herczog, Ed.D.
Consultant III, History-Social Science
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Division of Curriculum and Instructional Services
9300 Imperial Highway, ECW Room 236
Downey, CA 90242

**Schools will be notified by Friday, May 24, 2013**

For more information, please contact
Michelle Herczog at
(562) 922-6908
Herczog_Michelle@lacoe.edu