



# CALIFORNIA DEMOCRACY SCHOOL

## AWARD APPLICATION

**For California Elementary, Middle, and High Schools**

**Application Packet**

**2025 - 2026**

**Application Deadline: March 13, 2026**

**<https://www.lacoe.edu/services/curriculum-instruction/history-social-science/ca-democracy-school>**



**Los Angeles County  
Office of Education**

## Background

The California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative is a *first of its kind* approach to institutionalizing civic learning for all students across entire grade levels in schools. Directed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the initiative originally engaged 12 high schools in Los Angeles and Orange Counties who successfully completed the program. These schools were awarded California Democracy School status for instilling high quality civic inquiry and informed action across one or more grade levels to empower all students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective life-long civic engagement

## Purpose

The goal of the California Democracy School Award program is to recognize elementary, middle, and high schools that are providing high quality civic learning for all students as part of an integrated curricular program or stand-alone curriculum across one or more grade levels.

## Award Criteria

To qualify for the award, schools must provide evidence for establishing civic learning across an entire grade level in which all students engage in the following five components of high-quality civic learning. These components can be integrated and implemented in any subject area in which all students in the designated grade level are enrolled.

1. Formulate an inquiry about a current problem or issue
2. Research and analyze multiple perspectives about potential causes and solutions
3. Participate in a civil dialogue to understand different perspectives
4. Reach an informed conclusion
5. Engage in civic action designed to positively impact the problem or issue

## Award Process

Schools across California are invited to apply for the California Democracy School Award. Once applications are received and reviewed based on the scoring rubric, schools will be contacted to prepare for a site validation visit. Schools that meet the required criteria will be recognized with a plaque and banner.

2025–2026 CALIFORNIA DEMOCRACY SCHOOL AWARD TIMELINE		<b>Submit applications by email by 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2026, to:</b>  Elaina Garza Coordinator III, History-Social Science Los Angeles County Office of Education <a href="mailto:Garza_Elaina@laoe.edu">Garza_Elaina@laoe.edu</a>
Call for Applications	Fall 2025	
Application Deadline	March 16, 2026	
Completion of Site Validation Visits	April 24, 2026	
Civic Showcase Richard Nixon Presidential Library Yorba Linda CA	May 16, 2026	

For more information, please contact, Elaina Garza, Coordinator III, History-Social Science, Los Angeles County Office of Education, (562) 922-6994 or [Garza\\_Elaina@laoe.edu](mailto:Garza_Elaina@laoe.edu)



**Los Angeles County Office of Education**  
**2025 - 2026 California Democracy School Award Program**

**APPLICATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
County-District-School (CDS) Code – 14 digits

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Name (*If your school is selected, this school name will be engraved on the award plaque.*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code and Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ext.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code and Fax Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Email Address



*I certify that I have reviewed the information contained in this application and, to the best of my knowledge, it is complete and accurate. I further certify that:*

- *The Office for Civil Rights does not have any outstanding findings of civil rights statute violations by the school or district that may affect the school;*
- *There are no pending lawsuits by the Department of Justice against the district alleging that the school, or the district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clauses; and*
- *The school or district is addressing or has addressed any identified areas of noncompliance under federal or state laws and regulations.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Superintendent's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## School Information

1. Current school enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Insert your school profile including demographics and Multilingual Learners:
3. Which category best describes where your school is located?  
☐ Urban    ☐ Suburban    ☐ Rural
4. What is your school calendar? ☐ Traditional    ☐ Year-round    ☐ Modified
5. Is your school a charter school?    ☐ Yes    ☐ No

## Part 1: Civic Outcomes for Students

Describe the civic knowledge acquired by students, connecting these learnings to the CA History – Social Science Standards and Framework.

Describe how students have learned and practiced analyzing different perspectives and the use of deliberative processes to reach consensus.

Describe work completed to grow student appreciation of public duty and civic responsibility.

Describe mechanisms for assessing students' civic knowledge, skills and dispositions.

## Part 2: School Environment

Describe the curriculum used to engage all students in at least one grade level in high quality civic learning. Be sure to address instructional strategies used that differentiate for all learners.

Describe the assessment system used to determine if students have mastered civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Describe the type, frequency and content of professional development provided in civics.

Describe how civic learning integration is communicated with families and community members.

### Part 3: School/District Sustainability

Which curricula has been adopted for a stand-alone course or integrated into an existing course?

What policy is in place to ensure sustainable, civic learning professional development for teachers?

How is student learning measured and reported? (e.g., Senior projects, classroom-based formative and summative tasks, portfolios, capstone projects, graduation requirement).

How is school/community support measured and reported?

# California Democracy School Award Scoring Rubric

Grand Total \_\_\_\_

Reader's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Civic Outcomes for Students

Excellent    Approaching    Incomplete

(5)

(3)

(1)

a. **Civic Knowledge** - Description of civic knowledge acquired by students, connecting learning to the CA History – Social Science Standards and Framework.

☐☐☐

b. **Skills** - Description of the mechanism for students learning, practicing the analysis of different perspectives and the use of deliberative processes to reach consensus.

☐☐☐

c. **Dispositions** – Describe work completed to grow student appreciation of public duty and civic responsibility.

☐☐☐

d. **Dispositions** Describe mechanisms for assessing students' civic knowledge, skills and disposition.

☐☐☐



## 2. School Environment

Excellent (5)	Approaching (3)	Incomplete (1)
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e. **Curriculum** – A clear description of the curriculum is used to engage all students with in at least one grade level in high quality civic learning. Description includes instructional strategies used that differentiate for all learners.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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f. **Assessment** – A clear description of the assessment system to determine if students have mastered civic knowledge, skills and dispositions.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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g. **Professional Development** – A clear description of the type, frequency and content of professional development provided in civics.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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h. **Home/Community Communication** – A clear description of the plan to communicate civic learning integration with families and community members.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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3. School/District Sustainability		Excellent (5)	Approaching (3)	Incomplete (1)
j.	<b>Curriculum</b> – Curricula has been adopted for a stand-alone course or integrated into an existing course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	<b>Professional Development</b> – Policy is in place to ensure sustainable, civic learning professional development for teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	<b>Accountability</b> – Policy is an adopted measure and reports student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	<b>School Community Support</b> – Structures and systems are in place measure and report school/community support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total points awarded:		_____	_____	_____