

**Los Angeles County Office of Education  
Civic Engagement Recognition Program**

**K-8 Civic Learning Pathways to the  
State Seal of Civic Engagement**

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# K-8 Civic Learning Pathways to the State Seal of Civic Engagement

The Los Angeles County Office of Education established the Los Angeles County Office of Education Civic Engagement Recognition Program to assist schools in supporting and celebrating civic engagement of young people in grades five and eight across Los Angeles County.

The attainment of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to earn the State Seal of Civic Engagement awarded in grades eleven and twelve, should not begin in high school but should be instilled in every child's education, beginning in Kindergarten. Civic learning is a fundamental component and function of public education in order to prepare all students for college, career, and civic life.

This Pathways document<sup>1</sup> is an important tool for establishing civic learning pathways for elementary and middle school students to ultimately meet the criteria of the State Seal of Civic Engagement in high school. It also lays out the criteria for students in grades five and eight to earn the Los Angeles County Office of Education Certificate of Civic Engagement.

Once a classroom teacher, in consultation with site and district leadership, determines that a student has met the criteria, the district or school may submit a [LACOE Certificate Request Form](#) to designate the name of the school, school district, contact person, and list of students in grade five and/or eight who have met the criteria. A Los Angeles County Office of Education Certificate of Civic Engagement will be issued for each student and personalized with the student's name, school, and district. Certificates will be sent electronically to the contact person listed for distribution to students. Students, grades five and eight, in all public schools and independent charters in Los Angeles County are eligible.

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<sup>1</sup>Adapted from the work of Matt Hayes, History/Social Science Coordinator, SDCOE; Thomas Herman, Director, California Geographic Alliance; Marika Manos, Ed. D., History/Social Science/Civics Coordinator, OCDE; Emily Schell, Executive Director, California Global Education Project



### **State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) Criteria**

In order for students in grades eleven and twelve to be eligible to earn the State Seal of Civic Engagement issued by the California Department of Education, they must meet the following criteria (below). More information about the State Seal can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp>

**SSCE 1** Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;

**SSCE 2** Demonstrate a competent understanding of United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;

**SSCE 3** Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;

**SSCE 4** Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection;

**SSCE 5** Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community and/or society.

### **Los Angeles County Office of Education K-8 Civic Learning Pathways Criteria**

In order for students in grades five and eight to be eligible to earn the Los Angeles County Office of Education Certificate of Civic Engagement issued by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, they must meet the criteria found in the three pathways described below. Each district is responsible for determining if individual students have met the criteria and submitting the LACOE Certificate Request Form.

**Pathway 1** Students demonstrate a knowledge of the economics, geography, history, principles, and foundations of our American democracy (Aligned to SSCE Criteria 1, 2).

**Pathway 2** Students demonstrate civic dispositions and traits (Aligned to SSCE Criteria 4, 5).

**Pathway 3** Students demonstrate an ability to solve public problems by engaging in civic democratic processes (Aligned to SSCE Criteria 2, 3, 4, 5).

For more information on the Los Angeles County Civic Engagement Recognition Program and the Los Angeles County Certificate of Civic Engagement, please contact

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## Grade Level Pathways<sup>2</sup>

	Lower Elementary	Upper Elementary	Middle/Intermediate
<b>1. Students demonstrate a knowledge of the economics, geography, history, as well as principles and foundations of our American democracy.</b>			
<p>Students successfully engage in standards-aligned tasks that demonstrate their understanding of economics, geography, history, and the historical foundations of American democracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students explain how people make choices about goods and services at a local level.</li> <li>Students describe the physical and human geography of their communities using maps, models, and other representations.</li> <li>Students demonstrate a basic understanding of the past and how events in the past have helped to shape their community, state, and nation.</li> </ul>	<p>Students answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is it important to have norms, rules and laws?</li> <li>How do governments work?</li> <li>How is local government organized?</li> <li>What is the role and responsibility of government?</li> <li>What is the role and responsibility of citizens?</li> </ul> <p>Students demonstrate knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can describe the physical and human geographic features that define our community.</li> <li>I can identify the role and responsibilities of local leaders and decision-</li> </ul>	<p>Students answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did California become a state?</li> <li>How did the United States become a nation?</li> <li>How is the state government organized?</li> <li>How is the federal government organized?</li> </ul> <p>Students demonstrate knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can describe the American Indian nations in our local region, California, and across the nation.</li> <li>I can describe the physical and human geographic features that define our state and nation.</li> </ul>	<p>Students answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did the events leading to America's founding influence the development of American constitutional democracy?</li> <li>How have the aspirations and ideals of the founders been realized for some but not for all?</li> <li>What is the role and responsibility of government in a constitutional democracy?</li> <li>What is the role and what are the responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy?</li> <li>How much power should the government have and what should it do?</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Content for indicators was excerpted and adapted from the [History/Social Science Framework for California Public Schools](#) and the [Global Competence Framework](#) from California Global Education Project.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students understand the ideals and principles of our American democracy.</li> <li>● Students describe the roles and responsibilities of government officials in their communities.</li> <li>● Students explain the need for and purposes of norms, rules, and laws.</li> </ul>	<p>makers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ I can explain how decisions are made in my local government and community.</li> <li>❑ I can identify state and national symbols and icons.</li> <li>❑ I can explain what it means to be fair, honest, and respectful.</li> <li>❑ I can describe what it means to be a good citizen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ I can describe the series of events that led to the American Revolution.</li> <li>❑ I can describe the basic ideas and principles of the U.S. Constitution.</li> <li>❑ I can identify the three branches of government and the role and responsibility of each.</li> <li>❑ I can explain the role and responsibilities of citizens.</li> <li>❑ I can identify state and national symbols and icons and describe what they represent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ To what extent should governments follow the patterns of the past or respond to contemporary challenges with new ideas?</li> </ul> <p>Students demonstrate knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ I can describe the principles of federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, the nature and purpose of majority rule, and the ways in which the American idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights.</li> <li>❑ I can describe the purpose and function of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government at state and federal levels.</li> <li>❑ I can describe the basic rights of individuals protected by the Bill of Rights.</li> <li>❑ I can describe attempts to abolish slavery, and to address injustices/ inequalities in areas such as labor, race, and gender to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence for all Americans.</li> <li>❑ I can explain the role and responsibilities of citizens.</li> </ul>
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**2. Students demonstrate civic dispositions and traits.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can describe civic virtues and democratic principles such as: equality, fairness, and respect for legitimate authority and rules.</li> <li>• Students recognize the contributions from diverse individuals in a variety of settings.</li> <li>• Students interact with others responsibly in the classroom and in the community.</li> <li>• Students reflect on their actions in the classroom and school community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>reflect</b> on the impact of their actions in the classroom.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>act</b> as model citizens in their classroom and school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can follow classroom and school rules.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can engage with others respectfully.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can be fair, honest, and helpful to others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can recognize the value of others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>reflect</b> on the impact of their actions in the school and community.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>act</b> as model citizens in their school and community.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can follow classroom, school, and community rules and laws.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can engage with others respectfully.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can recognize the value of others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can contribute to the welfare of others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>reflect</b> on the impact of their actions in their communities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students <b>act</b> as model citizens in their communities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can follow classroom and school rules, as well as community laws.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can engage with others respectfully.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can recognize the value of others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can contribute to the welfare of others.</li> </ul>
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**3. Students demonstrate an ability to solve real-world problems by engaging in civic democratic practices.**

<p>Students work collaboratively to address issues that are authentic and important to individuals and groups at local, state, national, or international settings by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying a problem or issue that is compelling and relevant.</li> <li>• Understanding diverse perspectives about the causes and potential solutions.</li> </ul>	<p>Students participate in a <b>civic engagement project</b> to improve life in their classroom or school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can identify a problem that is important to myself and others in my classroom or school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can gather information about the problem identified.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can discuss a problem in my classroom with peers based on information gathered.</li> </ul>	<p>Students participate in a <b>civic engagement project</b> to improve life in their school communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can identify a problem that is important to myself and others in my classroom, school, or community.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can gather evidence and multiple perspectives about a problem.</li> </ul>	<p>Students participate in a <b>civic engagement project</b> to improve life in their community, state, or nation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can identify a problem that is important to myself and others in my community, state, or nation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can gather evidence and multiple perspectives about a problem.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can discuss a problem with peers and adults based on evidence gathered, in ways</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engaging in dialogue that is civil and respectful to gain deeper understanding of the complexities and controversies that may surround the issue.</li> <li>● Reaching a conclusion through consensus that will lead to action.</li> <li>● Taking informed action to address the problem in ways that are effective and responsible.</li> <li>● Reflecting on the process and action taken to gain insights for further civic engagement projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can work with others to think of a solution to a problem.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can solve a problem with the help of my teacher.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can reflect about what I learned and what it means to be a good citizen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can discuss a problem with peers based on evidence gathered, in ways that are civil and respectful.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can work collaboratively with others to find a solution to a problem, based on evidence gathered, discussed, and analyzed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Working with peers and adults, I can take action that is responsible and effective toward addressing a problem e.g. volunteerism, community service, civic engagement with policymakers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can reflect about what I learned and what it means to be a good citizen.</li> </ul>	<p>that are civil and respectful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can work collaboratively with others to find a solution to a problem, based on evidence gathered, discussed, and analyzed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Working with peers and adults, I can take action that is responsible and effective toward addressing a problem e.g. volunteerism, community service, civic engagement with policymakers through meetings, letter writing, town halls, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I can reflect about what I learned and what it means to be a good citizen.</li> </ul>
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